

to bother to find out what all of the causes are. It is much easier to find someone to blame, to find a scapegoat. For Mr. Jones, "outsiders" are handy scapegoats.

It is usually easy to recognize the Mr. Joneses of the world. They are the people who can say, "If only we didn't have so-and-so, everything would be okay." These persons will find one enemy to explain everything that is wrong. "If only we didn't have Jews —" or "If only we didn't have hippies —."

But nothing is that simple.

Prejudiced people who scapegoat say the same thing about all groups that are different from their own. No matter who the prejudice person is blaming, that "enemy" is "lazy" and "dirty" and "dangerous." The prejudice person warns everyone against "marrying those people" or "getting close to those people" or "believing anything those people say." You can substitute almost any kind of human being for "those people," but the prejudiced person's remark and warnings will be the same.

That is because the scapegoater does not hate any one person in particular. He hates a "group that is different," and his hatred covered all the members of that group.

Defending Prejudice

When people say the kinds of things that Mark, for example, said about Jeff, they do not always know that they are guilty of prejudice. Most prejudiced people try to hide their true fears from themselves as well as from others. These people feel good only when they believe that there are others who are not quite as good as they are.

Practically nobody will admit to being prejudiced. Practically everybody agrees that prejudice is cruel and ugly. That is why people have been forced to defend their prejudice. And that is why their defenses have been pretty strange!

In the nineteenth century, for example, many people tried to use religious excuse to cover their prejudice. They said that slavery was a way of introducing the Christian religion to the Africans, who had their own, different religion. It was obvious to the majority of people that this was not a very good excuse, and so many people tried to find a better one. These people turned to the idea that some people were born better than others — smarter, nice-looking, with better manners, and more honest.

Today we know that this is completely untrue. Today we know that, any way you look at it, there is no excuse good enough to defend prejudice.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How might a person go through life learning prejudice?
2. Why is real prejudice harder to deal with than ignorant prejudice?
3. Some people hold that prejudice is an essential element of maintaining self-esteem. Others, like Professor Gordon Allport, have argued that prejudice may be the result of deprivation and frustration which create hostile impulses that are then displaced upon a logically irrelevant victim. Based upon this article, how do you react to these ideas?

DEFINITIONS

real prejudice: keeping one's prejudice even after the facts are known.

scapegoating: placing undeserving blame on a person or group.

THE MAYOR'S CHOICE

What Would You Do?

Choices. Whether to make a saving phone call. Whether to deliver electric shocks to an innocent stranger. Whether to obey an authoritarian leader. Choices. This anthology is filled with sharp examples of people compelled to make choices. Often these decisions are agonizingly difficult, but they cannot be avoided. Yet, the choices we make do matter and therefore they should be examined carefully. The following clear example of a decision immediately immerses the reader into the real world of brutal decision making.

It is the year of 1944. The Second World War is still in full fury and Germany occupies much of Europe, including Greece. The Greek people are unhappily resigned to the Nazi invaders, but there are small pockets of underground resistance. Occasionally, a German soldier is killed by Greek partisans. Consequently, the Germans institute a basic rule. For every German soldier killed by civilians in an occupied village, twenty men from that village would be immediately executed.

One clear evening, three Greek commandos from a neighboring village enter a village and kill four German soldiers. Soon they are all caught and held by the Nazis.

The German commanding officer asks to see the mayor of the village. The mayor is an unusual man. He is a pacifist, a man who does not believe in any killing, even in war. The officer explains to the mayor about the twenty-to-one rule of German occupying forces. In compliance with this rule, eighty Greek males from the village had been rounded up. The officer states that they will all be shot at sunrise the next morning. These same men are right now digging a large ditch in the village courtyard. Tomorrow morning, they will descend into that ditch,

which will be surrounded by machine guns. At the officer's signal, the eighty men will all be executed.

The mayor is horrified by this suggestion and pleads for the lives of his townspeople. The German officer smiles and then offers the mayor a deal. He informs the mayor that he can save the lives of his people only if he agrees to the following action: On that same morning, the three partisans will be placed near the ditch with their hands tied behind their backs. The German officer will take an empty rifle and hand it to the mayor. If the mayor wishes to save the lives of his townspeople in the ditch, he must bash in the heads of the three rebels until they are dead.

The German officer explains that the mayor will have the night to consider his offer.

The next morning, the scene is set just as the German officer pictured it. Eighty men look up from the ditch and wonder what will happen to them. The courtyard is filled with weeping wives and confused children. All wait for the mayor's decision.

'This story is adapted from the movie version of John Fowles' The Magus.

64

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What alternatives were available to the mayor? What goal could have been achieved by any of the mayor's actions? What should the mayor have done?
2. Are the partisans ultimately responsible if any of the townspeople die?
3. Suppose the following happened: The mayor took the gun from the German officer and readied himself to strike one of the partisans. It is clear that all of the partisans have been beaten up badly. But through his bloodied mouth, one of the partisans yells "Long Live Greece" just as the mayor is about to hit him. The mayor realizes that he cannot kill these people, throws aside his gun, and places himself with the partisans, expecting to die. The order is given and the German machine gunners execute all the men in the ditch. Then, the three partisans are shot. But, the mayor is left to live with the memory of his choice. Not three, not eighty, but eighty-three men have died. If this occurred, what judgment would you make? Is the mayor a coward?

Source: Furman, Harry, ed. "The Mayor's Choice: What Would You Do?" *The Holocaust and Genocide: A Search for Conscience—An Anthology for Students*. Harry Furman, ed. New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1983.

AN OLYMPIC ATHLETE'S DILEMMA: WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Harry Furman, Kenneth Tubertini and Richard F. Flaim

There are few situations in life that do not have as a component the necessity to make a decision on moral and political values.

Anthony Peterson is 21 years old and a sprinter at the University of Pennsylvania. Anthony has been in training for over two years for the day he will participate in the 1936 Olympics in Munich, Germany. He is very excited about representing his country and about the glory that may be his.

However, much controversy surrounds this Olympics. Adolf Hitler has become Chancellor of Germany, and the Nazis have been persecuting Jews and all sorts of leftist political groups. Hitler has been gearing up for the Olympics where he intends to prove that the Germans are the most physically perfect "race" in the world. The Olympics will be a great propaganda event for the Nazi German government.

Anthony has been approached by a group of athletes who have been reevaluating the situation. They tell Anthony that they should not participate in the Olympics in Germany because to do so is to legitimize Hitler's policies. After all, America's participation in the world Olympics is not as important as taking a moral stand against the Nazi policies.

Anthony must decide what to do. Should he participate in the 1936 Olympics?

80

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What alternative courses of action are available to Anthony? What are the consequences of each alternative?
2. Does Anthony have a responsibility to his teammates? To himself?
3. Relate this dilemma to the decision faced by American Olympic athletes who were asked by their government to boycott the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. What are the similarities and contrasts? What should American athletes have done?
4. Some critics argue that "sports boycotts" are symbolic, meaningless substitutes for real action that can be taken by governments. Such people believe that a boycott of the 1936 or 1980 Olympics would not have accomplished anything. How do you react to this argument?
5. At the 1972 Olympics held in Munich, Germany, Palestinian terrorists attacked the Israeli pavilion and murdered twelve members of their Olympic team. In response to this event, Olympic officials held a ceremony in the stadium in which there were two minutes of silence in memory of the slain Israeli athletes. How do you react to this response?

ANNA'S DILEMMA

What Would You Do?

Not all Germans supported the Nazi program. Some actively opposed it. Others were silent in their opposition. Some were put to the test.

Anna is a German citizen who lives with her husband, Wilhelm, and their three small children in a comfortable home in Munich, Germany. Munich in 1938 is a center of Nazi activity in Germany. Anna's husband is a high-ranking civil service employee and a member of the Nazi party. Wilhelm's high-paying job was a reward for his loyalty to the party. Although Anna leads a comfortable life and is happily married, she disagrees with the Nazi philosophy and her husband's party activities. She especially deplores the anti-Jewish laws and decrees that Hitler's government has imposed.

During her childhood Anna's family developed deep friendships with a number of Jewish families in their town, and Anna learned to respect their cultural and religious differences. By 1938, the Nuremberg Laws are in effect and *Kristallnacht* ("Night of Broken Glass") has recently occurred. Jews in Germany have systematically been stripped of their political, economic, and social rights. Some Jews are attempting to leave the country to avoid what they consider to be eventual catastrophe.

One night, a friend of Anna's approaches her and explains that he is secretly hiding Jews in Munich until he can find transportation for them to leave Germany. This is risky business because it is considered a racial crime against the *Volk*, the German people. Anna's friend asks her to help him by hiding two members of a Jewish family who are wanted by the Nazis. He explains that because of Wilhelm's position, nobody would suspect Anna. Also, Anna's property includes a rarely used guest house located in a wooded corner. Anna is offered about 500 dollars for her cooperation.

Anna is aware that, if caught, she and her family could face serious consequences. Also, she could jeopardize her husband's good job and her family's security. On the other hand, she realizes that what the Nazis are doing to the Jews, with widespread public support, is morally wrong. She has long believed that those who remain silent when human rights are being violated are also guilty. Anna's friend tells her that he will come back the next morning for her decision.

122

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What values come into conflict in this story?
2. What is Anna's responsibility to her husband? Children? The Jews? The government? The law? Which is greatest? Explain.
3. Should Anna agree to hide Jews?
4. How frequently do you think this kind of situation occurred? Why?
5. Who should be held more responsible, a person with high ideals who, on practical grounds, accepts the Nazi policies toward the Jews; or the person with no ideals who believes in being practical all the time and accepts Nazi policies toward the Jews? Explain.
6. Evaluate the following statement: "All that is necessary for evil to win out over good is for good men to do nothing." How does this relate to Anna's dilemma?

DAVID ROSENSTEIN'S DILEMMA

What Would You Do?

What are one's obligations to oneself? family? community? Which takes precedence?

David Rosenstein is a doctor living in the city of Berlin. He has a young wife and two small children. David is well-known in the community as a good doctor who serves his patients well. As a result, he has become prosperous and well-regarded. He lives in a beautiful home and experiences many of the cultural advantages of success.

Germany has undergone dramatic change. With the rise of Hitler in 1933, there has been violence and tension in the streets. David has hoped that Hitler and the Nazis were only trying to segregate Jews; all else that Hitler said was taken as little more than campaign talk. But the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 increased the actions taken against Jews. Rosenstein can no longer vote and he is heavily taxed by the Reich. He also can no longer serve non-Jewish patients. Yet he remains a dedicated doctor to those that need him.

It is now 1938 in Germany. Dramatic changes are called for in the life of the Rosenstein family. David thinks he could leave his beloved Germany even though emigration quotas are severely restricted. As a doctor, his position could help him to leave the country if he were willing to leave his wealth in Germany. But David has been approached by a group of people who want him to participate in an organization designed to help protect and give comfort to Jews in need in the city. As an influential doctor in the community, Rosenstein's friends feel he has a responsibility to stay in Germany.

Rosenstein understands that the decision to be made is a difficult one. He is torn by his responsibility to his family, his people, his community, and himself.

412

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What should David Rosenstein do?
2. It is important to remember that by 1938, it was very difficult for many Jews, especially those of lower economic levels, to leave Germany. The Nazis demanded high fees from those Jews who wanted to leave. As of the summer of 1938, nothing happened in Germany that had not already occurred to Jews in the past. In 1938, how would Jews have known what was ahead?
3. Can one really say which is wiser—to stay or to go? Have there been historical examples of persecuted people who stayed and survived?

A POLICEMAN'S DILEMMA

What Would You Do?

Jews fared differently in each of the occupied countries. In Poland, the Baltic countries, Germany and Austria, 90% were killed. In Finland and Denmark almost all were saved. In Italy 20% of the Jews were killed and in the Netherlands, 75% were killed. What factors made the difference?

Christian Vander Tozel is a member of the police force in occupied Amsterdam. Christian is a Catholic who attends church regularly. The occupying Nazis make it clear to the Dutch that they intend to be harsh toward Jews and toward all "radicals" who would harbor them or help them in any way. The Nazis intend to elicit the active support of the Dutch police in rounding up the Jews. At the same time, the Catholic Church in Holland, the most outspoken Catholic Church in Europe, denounces the

deportations from the pulpit and forbids Catholic policemen from participating in hunts for Jews.

Christian, as a policeman, knows the Germans will expect him to participate in rounding up the Jews. He has been a good family man for twenty-five years and deeply loves his wife. One evening, Christian's squad leader comes to notify Christian that his squad has been ordered to conduct a raid on a house suspected of harboring Jews.

What should Christian do?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What alternatives are available to Christian? What are the probable consequences of each alternative?
2. What is Christian's responsibility to his wife? His squad? The Church? Himself? The Jews? The law?
3. What would happen if all Dutch policemen acted in the way you suggested for Christian?
4. Is there any cause in which a person should be willing to risk his or her own safety, security, or even life itself? Explain.