

“Forgotten Genocides” and the Alleged “Miseducation” of Hollywood Star Natalie Portman

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The immediate objectives are the total destruction and devastation of their settlements and the capture of as many prisoners of every age and sex as possible. It will be essential to ruin their crops in the ground and prevent their planting more

-U.S. President George Washington to General John Sullivan on May 31, 1779

Hollywood actress Natalie Portman has created a controversy among the Jewish community. The Jerusalem Post published a report on Natalie Portman's comments regarding the Shoah (the Holocaust) from the Jewish education she received. The title of the report 'Natalie Portman: Holocaust is no more tragic than other genocides' from an interview with 'The Independent' where she questioned her Jewish education she received that was solely focused on the Holocaust, disregarding every genocide that took place in history. "In an interview with The Independent published on Friday, the American movie star questioned prominence given to Holocaust education at the expense of other mass murders" the report said. "I think a really big question the Jewish community needs to ask itself, is how much at the forefront we put Holocaust education. Which is, of course, an important question to remember and to respect, but not over other things" Portman said. Portman was not saying that the Holocaust is any more or less important than other human tragedies in history. There is no doubt that the Holocaust was a tragic crime against the Jewish people in Europe, but for an educational institution to ignore all other genocides is a disservice to its students.

✖ Natalie Portman learned about the Rwandan Genocide when she visited a museum and was "shocked that while the Holocaust figured prominently into her education, a contemporary genocide did not". The Rwanda Genocide was responsible for more than 800,000 deaths (according to the United Nations estimates) of the Tutsi and moderate Hutu tribes, mostly civilians. On April 6, 1994, an airplane was shot down carrying Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana and Burundian president Cyprien Ntaryamira killing all on board. The next day, the genocidal killings began. It was a mass genocide with Washington's fingerprints. Washington wanted to assert itself in Central Africa by supporting the Rwandan Patriotic Front and the military branch, the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) led by Major General Paul Kagame, former head of military intelligence of the Uganda Armed Forces. Kagame was trained at the U.S. Army Command and Staff College (CGSC) located in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. According to Michel Chossudovsky of Global Research explained in a May 2000 article 'Rwanda, Installing a US Protectorate in Central Africa. The US was Behind the Rwanda Genocide':

From the outset of the Rwandan civil war in 1990, Washington's hidden agenda

consisted in establishing an American sphere of influence in a region historically dominated by France and Belgium. America's design was to displace France by supporting the Rwandan Patriotic Front and by arming and equipping its military arm, the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA)



But that was forgotten. It was forgotten that the Rwanda genocide occurred during a civil war which began in 1990 between the Hutu-led government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) which was composed of Tutsi refugees that had fled to Uganda after violence was initiated on them by the Hutu led government with members from Rwandan army, the National Police, government-backed militias and the Hutu civilian population. *"The civil war in Rwanda and the ethnic massacres were an integral part of US foreign policy, carefully staged in accordance with precise strategic and economic objectives"* Chossudovsky wrote. But, according to Jewish education, that's not important enough. *"I was shocked that that [genocide] was going on while I was in school. We were learning only about the Holocaust and it was never mentioned and it was happening while I was in school. That is exactly the type of problem with the way it's taught. I think it needs to be taught, and I can't speak for everyone because this was my personal education"* Portman told the Independent. *"We need to be reminded that hatred exists at all times and reminds us to be empathetic to other people that have experienced hatred also. Not used as a paranoid way of thinking that we are victims. Sometimes it can be subverted to fear-mongering and like 'Another Holocaust is going to happen.'"*

According to the Jerusalem Post several prominent Holocaust survivor advocates condemned Portman's comments including Colette Avital, the chairwoman of the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel who said *"Natalie should understand that the Holocaust which befell us cannot be compared to other tragedies - our empathy notwithstanding. It was not merely hatred, it was a policy whose aim was to systematically wipe out a whole people from the face of the world,"* she explained." Dr. Efraim Zuroff who heads the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Jerusalem office who is also a Nazi hunter commented on what Portman said *"with all due respect for Ms. Portman's great acting and directing talents, her success in the movie world does not turn her into an expert in history or on genocide."* That is true. But it is never too late to learn about what happened throughout history concerning mass genocides for example, Manifest Destiny and the greatest mass extinction in human history against the Native Americans, a human genocide committed by the U.S. government. The influential *Scientific American* wrote earlier this year that *"The atmosphere recorded the mass death, slavery and war that followed 1492. The death by smallpox and warfare of an estimated 50 million native Americans—as well as the enslavement of Africans to work in the newly depopulated Americas—allowed forests to grow in former farmlands."* There were between 19 million a (conservative estimate) to 100 million Native Americans killed in North America.

Here is a Documentary by Joanelle Romero:

Civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr once said:

Our nation was born in genocide when it embraced the doctrine that the original American, the Indian, was an inferior race. Even before there were

large numbers of Negroes on our shore, the scar of racial hatred had already disfigured colonial society. From the sixteenth century forward, blood flowed in battles over racial supremacy. We are perhaps the only nation which tried as a matter of national policy to wipe out its indigenous population. Moreover, we elevated that tragic experience into a noble crusade. Indeed, even today we have not permitted ourselves to reject or feel remorse for this shameful episode. Our literature, our films, our drama, our folklore all exalt it. Our children are still taught to respect the violence which reduced a red-skinned people of an earlier culture into a few fragmented groups herded into impoverished reservations

The Jerusalem Post quoted a Polish Chief Rabbi Michael Schudrich *"As human beings and especially as Jews, we need to be sensitive to all tragedies, to all genocides. As human beings and especially as Jews, we must ensure that all remember the uniqueness of the Holocaust, in it's scope and in it's scale."* Menachem Rosensaft, the general counsel of the World Jewish Congress, who teaches genocide law at Columbia and Cornell university both agreed and disagreed with Portman's assessment:

Of course all genocides, as well as all similar atrocities, are tragic and must be acknowledged and commemorated as such. And no one should engage in comparative suffering. I tell my students that from the point of view of the victims or their families, it really makes no difference if they were murdered in a gas chamber or with machetes. And, as World Jewish Congress president Ronald S. Lauder has emphasized, Jews must not be silent when Yazidis and Christians are persecuted and murdered by ISIS [Islamic State]

Then Rosensaft's opposing view suggests that the Holocaust is unique. *"At the same time, the Holocaust is unique – not worse and certainly not more tragic – because of its enormous, continent-wide scope, because of the complexity and systematic methodology of the annihilation and the willing participation of such an enormously broad-based part of not just German but other societies."*

Natalie Portman did recognize that the Holocaust was a tragic period in human history, but for the Jewish people to say that their Holocaust is unique and makes it more important than other genocides. In the controversial book *'The Holocaust Industry'* written by Norman G. Finkelstein said the following:

Its central dogmas sustain significant political and class interests. Indeed, The Holocaust has proven to be an indispensable ideological weapon. Through its deployment, one of the world's most formidable military powers, with a horrendous human rights record, has cast itself as a "victim" state, and the most successful ethnic group in the United States has likewise acquired victim status

All war crimes against Jews, African's (by various European empires), Armenians (by the Ottoman Empire), the Palestinians (under Israeli occupation), the Syrians (under the U.S. backed Syrian rebels and ISIS and every other new group created) and the Native American population by the U.S. government, all deserve equal historical recognition. I always say whether it's one life or millions of lives lost because of racism, hatred or a government that wants land for corporate profits are a crime against humanity. The Holocaust is an important part of history that all human beings can learn from, but so are other atrocities that have

occurred in the past and in our present time that deserves attention. World history is an important part of education as Natalie Portman made clear as she criticized the Jewish schools she attended in Maryland and on New York's Long Island. She learned about the Rwandan Genocide from a museum, not from an educational institution. There were numerous genocides committed on the all continents of the world, something many Americans and Israelis alike do not know since the education they receive on the subject is usually ignored. In *'The Holocaust Industry'* Norman G. Finkelstein, (who was a university professor) also criticized universities in America:

Most college professors can testify that compared to the Civil War many more undergraduates are able to place the Nazi holocaust in the right century and generally cite the number killed. In fact, the Nazi holocaust is just about the only historical reference that resonates in a university classroom today. Polls show that many more Americans can identify The Holocaust than Pearl Harbor or the atomic bombing of Japan

Natalie Portman just spoke the truth about her inadequate education. Now she has to face the Jewish press, Hollywood and its criticisms. What a world we live in.

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