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Georgians and the Holocaust
“Prejudice and Hate”
(A Production of the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust)

Black-and-white photographs of piles of bodies in Nazi concentration camps are displayed, with powerful background orchestral music. Next is a clip from the film Schindler’s List, showing Jews being deported while Nazi soldiers and other onlookers harass them.

The scene changes to show a close-up of Zell Miller, Governor of Georgia at the time this recording was made. His commentary is accompanied by black-and-white video clips of horrific scenes from concentration camps.

ZELL MILLER: We are in a time when the dark and ominous clouds of prejudice and division are gathering across our country, a time when our population is growing more diverse, but our tolerance for differences seems to be disappearing, a time that demonstrates why it is so important for all Georgians to know about the terrible history of the Holocaust, so that we are not doomed to repeat it. The Holocaust is a horror story from the time of World War II. It is a powerful lesson about how the flames of prejudice and discrimination against the Jewish people were fanned into hatred and into cruelty. They were herded into concentration camps, where they were gassed and starved or burned in ovens. But all of us need to learn and, yes, to remember this tragic chapter in world history, because it is a vivid reminder that discrimination and hatred can have devastating consequences.

The scene changes to a close-up of Oprah Winfrey, seated in front of shelves of books.

OPRAH WINFREY: A nationwide Roper Poll exposed that one out of three adults and half of all high school students never heard of the Holocaust.

Scene changes: Succession of individual high school students giving their responses after being asked about the Holocaust (Courtesy of The Oprah Winfrey Show).

FIRST STUDENT: I’m not familiar with the word holocaust.

SECOND STUDENT: I’ve heard that he was--this guy was really bad to them because he was—he just—he didn’t like them or something.

THIRD STUDENT: Holocaust. Hm. Holocaust. Nothing comes to mind about it right now.

FOURTH STUDENT: If you say the word “Holocaust,” death, destruction, discrimination. A lot of very bad things come to mind.

FIFTH STUDENT: There was a movie based on it. Stuff like that.

SIXTH STUDENT: Holo-what? [*Off camera interviewer: Holocaust*] Holocaust? Holocaust. [*Shakes his head.*] No, I don’t know what it is. What is it?

Scene changes to close-up of former Atlanta news anchor Monica Kaufman. Archival film footage depicting treatment of Holocaust victims continues as she speaks.

MS. KAUFMAN: Holocaust: a term used to express the systematic annihilation of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and their collaborators during World War II. In Eastern Europe from 1933 to 1945, millions of innocent people were sent to their deaths by a man named Adolph Hitler. I'm sure most of you have heard his name, but perhaps you don't know the history.

Scene changes to a close-up of then-Senator Max Cleland. Archival film footage continues, depicting treatment of Holocaust victims, as he speaks.

MR. CLELAND: Try to imagine a time and place where everything your family owns is taken away—all your possessions, including your home, your clothing, even your right to buy food for yourself—and only then can you begin to understand what took place over fifty years ago in Europe before and during World War II. This is not a scary fairy tale or just a bad story. It really happened. Sadly, this included up to one and a half million children, just like you.

Scene changes to a close-up of Holocaust survivor Benjamin Hirsch.

MR. HIRSCH: I'm a child survivor of the Holocaust—that is, I was a child at the time that the Holocaust was going on. As a child I wasn't supposed to cry. I couldn't cry, because we were always trying to hide, be away from being detected by the Nazis, who were around us at all times.

Scene changes to a close-up of Ms. Kaufman.

MS. KAUFMAN: To you the Holocaust may seem as if it happened when dinosaurs roamed the Earth. But in actuality it was around the time when your parents or grandparents were born. It was not that long ago. [*Archival film and photographs appear on the screen, intermittently with Ms. Kaufman's voice-over.*] On January 30, 1933, Adolph Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany. It was a day that the history of Germany was changed forever. And just three months after that, on April 1, 1933, a nationwide boycott of all Jewish businesses was ordered by the Nazis. Jewish and Christian citizens were intimidated and physically hurt for shopping at stores the Nazis said to boycott. But that was just the beginning of the horrible nightmares to come.

Scene changes to a close-up of Saba Silverman, who is identified as a daughter of survivors.

MS. SILVERMAN: They cut off the most religious man's head and put him [his head] on a broomstick and put a tallis [prayer shawl] around the broomstick and made the grandchildren march around with him. This is what he got for being religious.

Scene changes to a close-up of Ms. Kaufman.

MS. KAUFMAN: From 1933 to 1935 German schools taught [that] non-Aryans are racially inferior. Jewish children were prohibited from participating in Aryan clubs and other extra-curricular activities. They were also banned from playgrounds, swimming pools, and parks.

Scene changes to close-up of Alex Gross, a Holocaust survivor.

MR. GROSS: We could not go out on the street, we could not attend school anymore, we couldn't work. It was a terrible existence.

Scene changes to a close-up of Ms. Kaufman, accompanied intermittently by archival photographs and film.

MS. KAUFMAN: To continue the segregation of Jews from non-Jews, "No Jews" signs and notices were posted outside German towns and villages and outside shops and restaurants. Then the Nuremberg Laws were enacted. They were much like the "Jim Crow" laws that kept Blacks and Whites separate in the sixties in the United States.

Scene changes to a close-up of Lenny Wilkens, then coach of the Atlanta Hawks.

MR. WILKENS: I've encountered racism growing up, not so much as a youngster, because I lived in an area where there was a mixture of people. But when I went to college, it was the first time I experienced it. And I went to a school that had maybe six Afro-Americans there, and all the rest were White. And at dances, you know, people didn't want to associate with you or were afraid to, things like that. I remember playing [basketball] in a Christmas tournament down in Quantico, Virginia; and we saw signs that said, "White only." So I experienced that. As a young player my first year in the NBA, I went to the St. Louis Hawks; and you [people of color] couldn't eat in the restaurants downtown. And here I'm playing for this city.

Scene changes to a close-up of Ms. Kaufman.

MS. KAUFMAN: The Nuremberg Laws stripped German Jews of their citizenship. It meant German Jews had little or no rights in the country where they were born and raised. During the month of June in the year 1938 the Germans launched the first major wave of arrests of German and Austrian Gypsies [Sic; although currently considered pejorative, this was the accepted word for "Romani" or "Roma" at the time.]. You see, Jews may have been the primary victims but not the only victims during the period of the Holocaust. Thousands of people who

did not fit that “Aryan” mold also were persecuted. The Aryan-mold description was blonde, blue-eyed, and tall. With things already in total chaos, it was nothing to the Nazis to organize anti-Jewish riots. From November ninth through the eleventh it became known as *Kristallnacht*, the “night of broken glass.”

Scene changes to a close-up of Mr. Hirsch.

MR. HIRSCH: I lost my family—my mother, father, and one brother and sister. In July of—excuse me, in November of 1938 *Kristallnacht*, November the tenth, when I was six years old, my father was taken away by the Nazis. That very same day, I witnessed the destruction of the Friedberg [inaudible], which was our synagogue.

Scene changes to close-up of Ms. Kaufman.

MS. KAUFMAN: Throughout the night hundreds of synagogues, Jewish homes, schools, community offices, and Jewish stores were burned and looted. During the following year of 1939 on September first, the German army invaded Poland; and this marked the beginning of World War II. In order to make room for the “superior” Aryan race, the German army set forth to destroy Poland and the inhabitants of Poland because they were thought of as being “sub-human.” They killed members of unions, university professors, artists, writers, politicians, and even Catholic priests. Starting on November 23 the wearing of the *Judenstern* began. That’s the yellow six-pointed Star of David, which set apart Jewish people from all the rest of society. This meant any person who had any Jewish ancestry was to become a visible target of the Nazi state.

With Germany invading all parts of Europe, Jews and other victims of racial and ethnic hatred were being centralized in places called ghettos, forced-labor camps, and the all-too-popular concentration camps. To many, this activity seemed unreal.

Scene changes to a close-up of Sylvia Wygoda, who is identified as a daughter of a survivor.

MS. WYGODA: In my family my father took Samuel, eight years old, his son, my brother, to a farmhouse in the countryside in Poland; and some Christian farmers hid the boy. My uncle, as most other people, thought nothing could happen to him or his family, because he was a good person. He said, “I’m a good person. I’ve never done any harm to anyone, I’ve never broken any laws, I’ve never done anything wrong. I’ve been a good citizen.” So he went to the farmhouse in the country and took my brother back to the city, and they were both killed in Treblinka. He was a good person; but he was different, because his religion was different.

Scene changes to a close-up of Mr. Gross.

MR GROSS: I'd run away from home. Finally, when I came home, they clamped down all the restrictions surrounding our village, knocked on our doors at five in the morning, and took us all into the ghetto. It was nothing but a station on the road to hell.

Scene changes to a close-up of Monica Kaufman, accompanied by video footage of concentration camp and ghetto scenes.

MS. KAUFMAN: Once inside the confines of the ghettos and camps, those who lived there were doomed to endure starvation, disease, and ultimately death. Between the years of 1942 and 1945, the Germans decided to eliminate the ghettos and those within the ghettos who had survived against the odds. They transferred them to places called extermination camps. This was done to implement the plan called the "Final Solution"—that is, the extermination of all Jews in Europe. They were brought to either Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Chelmno, or a place called Auschwitz-Birkenau, where the largest number of European Jews and Gypsies were killed.

Scene changes to close-up of Alex Gross.

MR. GROSS: But unfortunately the average lifespan was somewhere around a month; if you were lucky, maybe around two months, maybe three months. I was there for eight months.

Scene changes to a close-up of Ms. Silverman.

MS. SILVERMAN: And my father grabs me by the hand, and he points to a corner of the cattle car, and he said, "You see this corner over here? This corner I took a knife and made a little hole so that your mother could breathe, because there were so many people on top of us in the—when we were being—sent to another concentration camp. *Black-and-white photograph of open cattle car and video of slow-moving train cars.*

Scene changes to a close-up of Ms. Kaufman. As she speaks, photographs and video from concentration camps are displayed, including victims' bodies and a can of the poisonous gas Zyklon, which was used in the chambers that were disguised as showers, as well as photographs of Resistance members, D Day, and Allies' liberation of the camps.

MS. KAUFMAN: After demoralizing journeys in cattle cars into the camps, the men were separated from the women and children. Then they were forced to undress and give away all of their valuables to their captors. Those who weren't fortunate enough to be chosen for forced labor were driven naked into gas chambers. The gas chambers were disguised as showers. They were gassed to death. It may seem as though the six million Jews and others victims went willingly to their death, but there were those who did put up resistance.

On June 4, 1944, the Allies landed in Rome, the day many had been waiting for. And on June 6, otherwise known as D Day, the Allied Forces invaded Nazi-occupied Western Europe,

beginning in Normandy, France. With the approach of the Allies getting closer to the camps, the Germans tried to hide their traces of genocide by deporting prisoners to camps inside Germany to prevent their liberation. Even though many died on the long journeys known as death marches, the liberation continued to free those who had endured years of victimization by the Nazi regime.

Scene changes to black-and-white photographs of U.S. soldier, whose daughter, Alexis Scott Reeves, speaks and is shown in close-up.

MS. REEVES: My father, who was in the Army and part of the liberators group that went to the liberation of Buchenwald, one of the concentration camps, and since that time he had become very passionate about educating people to what really happened during World War II and was really committed to telling the truth and spreading the word about what happened.

Scene changes to close-up of Matthew Nesbitt, who is identified as a Holocaust liberator, accompanied by black-and-white photos and video of horrific scenes from Buchenwald.

MR. NESBITT: When I asked Colonel Kramer [possibly Josef Kramer, commandant known as the “Beast of Buchenwald”?] whether he had any children, he said, yes, he had three beautiful little girls, and he loved his wife, and he had a good family life. And I said to him, “How can you do these things to these little children and men and women that never even did anything to you?”

And he looked at me as if I didn’t understand, and he said, “This is a job.” And he said, “And I’m dang [sic] good at this job.” And he sure was, when you consider all the bodies that were around.

Scene changes to photograph of General Eisenhower and others during the liberation of a camp, with Ms. Kaufman’s voice in the background, later shifting to a close-up of Ms. Kaufman.

MS. KAUFMAN: Germany finally surrendered on May 7, 1945, with many killed for no reason besides hate, a four-letter word that should never be used. And many people would like you to believe that the Holocaust never happened, never existed; however, this is not true.

Scene changes to a close-up of Mr. Wilkens.

MR. WILKENS: History is well-documented. We’ve got video—film of it, pictures of it. Now, they don’t lie, see? It’s there. It has happened.

Scene changes to close-up of Dominique Wilkins, former Atlanta Hawks Basketball team member.

MR. WILKINS: It definitely happened. And for people to say that, you know, it never happened and it was a myth, I mean, they're living in their own world. I mean, those things happened; and they're still happening today, in a sense, where you still have the hate crime.

Scene changes to actor Alan Autry, identified as a cast member of the television dramatic series In the Heat of the Night.

MR. AUTRY: If I hadn't read about the subject in newspapers over the years or seen some documentaries on television or talked to some people who had knowledge of the subject and in some cases talked to people who had lived through that terrible tragedy, I wouldn't know what to say. That's because, when I went to school, we weren't taught about the Holocaust. And, from what I understand, that same situation holds true today.

Scene changes to close-up of Ms. Wygoda.

MS. WYGODA: It's so easy for the Holocaust-deniers and the neo-Nazis to say, "This didn't happen." But if you don't have the information, you might be an easy victim yourself to them. Yes, you might be the victim and become a person full of hate, anger, bigotry—for no reason, just because you didn't have the proper information.

Scene changes to close-up of Rev. Lee Golman, followed by horrific images photographed during the Holocaust during/after liberation of the camps.

REV. GOLMAN: The events of the Holocaust are something that have marked the whole human family. Even though it is an event that Jewish people experienced simply because they were Jewish, all of us share in that experience.

Scene changes to close-up of Rabbi Alvin Sugarman.

RABBI SUGARMAN: In many ways that cruelty—saying that the Holocaust itself was a lie, that it never took place—in a sense makes it as if those who make that claim are killing the millions of people all over again. By denying their deaths in the Holocaust, they once again have fired up the furnaces of deceit, of treachery, and of murder.

Scene changes to close-up of Ms. Kaufman.

MS. KAUFMAN: Hitler killed anyone who did not fit his ideology of a perfect human being.

Scene changes to close-up of Rabbi Sugarman.

RABBI SUGARMAN: The cruelty layered upon cruelty that we learn when we study and confront the Holocaust was told to me when I was growing up to be the product of an insane nation. Not only was Hitler mad, but all those who followed Hitler and all those who carried out his orders were insane; they were crazy. That was an ultimate cop-out. These people were not crazy.

Scene changes to close-up of Cantor Isaac Goodfriend, with intermittent black-and-white images from the Holocaust.

CANTOR GOODFRIEND: Imagine just for a moment that these people, these killers, were the same as you and I. They had their daily routines, they had families, they came home every night to their families, listened to music, played with their children, but in the daytime they were killers.

Scene changes to close-up of Ms. Kaufman, with intermittent black-and-white video of neo-Nazi groups.

MS. KAUFMAN: From 1933 to 1945 there were the Nazis, and now there are the neo-Nazi skinheads. In fact, the numbers of neo-Nazi skinheads are growing at a rapid rate right where they started, in Germany. But Germany isn't the only place where these hate-filled youth are. They're right here in the United States.

Scene changes to close-up of Mike Greenlay, a member of the Atlanta Knights, a hockey team formerly based in Atlanta.

MR. GREENLAY: I'm originally from Canada, and I see it. I see it in Canada, I see it in the States, I see it wherever I go. It's—it really makes me mad when I hear stories of racism and bigotry. And the problem is, it's so easy to generalize, and it's so easy to stereotype people.

Scene changes to video of neo-Nazis marching and buildings burning with Ms. Kaufman's voice in the background, and finally focusing on a close-up of Ms. Kaufman as she speaks.

MS. KAUFMAN: According to reports there are now 3,300 to 3,500 neo-Nazi skinheads in 160 groups in forty states, and membership in these groups still is growing. And they're getting more members from kids just like you. The number of murders committed by neo-Nazi skinheads in America is increasing, and most victims have been members of minority groups: [*Video representing members of some minority groups*] Hispanics, Asians, Blacks, Jews, and even the homeless. Besides homicides, skinheads across the country have committed thousands of lesser crimes, including beatings, stabbings, shootings, and synagogue desecrations. Hate and prejudice are not limited to just the Jewish experience during the Holocaust.

Scene changes to close-up of ALAN AUTRY.

MR. AUTRY: My grandfather came over from—to California from Oklahoma shortly after the Dust Bowl and was faced with a lot of prejudices there towards the so-called "Okies" from

Oklahoma. People of his own race, people of his own faith [were] prejudiced against him for no reason other than what they'd been told and their own fears, somebody different.

Scene changes to close-up of MS. KAUFMAN.

MS. KAUFMAN: It is important we all remember the Holocaust, because the people who lived through it are old and unfortunately will not be here forever to tell what happened during the Holocaust.

Scene changes to close-up of CANTOR GOODFRIEND.

CANTOR GOODFRIEND: The longer we move away from the historic event, the more painful it gets: first, because, as survivors, the community of survivors is diminishing very quickly, and—because of age, and these are the only eyewitnesses who can testify that these things really did happen.

Scene changes to close-up of MS. KAUFMAN.

MS. KAUFMAN: We will not be able to hear from them what can happen when hate and prejudice can be carried to the extreme. Because it can happen to us, any of us, if we do not learn from history.

Scene changes to close-up of CANTOR GOODFRIEND.

CANTOR GOODFRIEND: How do you prevent a Holocaust from reoccurring? We hope by education.

Scene changes to close-up of former U.S. Congressman NEWT GINGRICH.

MR. GINGRICH: Studying the Holocaust should be a part of every American's life. When you visit the Holocaust Museum, if you visit scenes in Europe where it actually occurred—the death camps, when you visit the great museum in Israel, you learn firsthand the horrors of what humans can do to each other. I hope every one of you will study personally the lessons of the Holocaust and will learn that it can happen here, that it can happen to any people anywhere if they let hatred and prejudice run out of control and if they allow bad people to get into important positions. This is about your life, not the past. It's about your future, not the past. The Holocaust isn't part of every person's memory but what we can do and then should urge us on to work together to seek among all humans a better future, because together we can [inaudible—sounds like "clear"?] the world without ever again having a Holocaust.

Scene changes to close-up of former President Jimmy Carter.

MR. CARTER: I believe that you and I, as Americans, have a special responsibility to remember the Holocaust. To many of us, it may seem that it happened a very long time ago and very far away. It may even seem unreal. But it was real. I have visited concentration camps, where terrible things took place. And I personally know many innocent people who

suffered from the cruel crimes that were committed. The Nazis began by teaching racism and hatred. They falsely blamed their problems on people who followed different religions or were of different races or who came from different countries. As they gained control of the German government, they directed its full power towards killing the people that they hated. They murdered six million Jews and almost as many other people. The memory of the Holocaust must always keep us vigilant.

Our nation was born defending human rights, and it must continue to defend them. Our founders of our government said that all people are created equal, that God gave everyone the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And, they said, the purpose of government is to secure these rights for all people. We Americans have not always lived up to these ideas that are stated in the Declaration of Independence. We Georgians have not always been free of racism and prejudice. That's why we must never forget how terrible the consequences can be when hatred is allowed to run free. When any fellow human being is made to feel inferior, is abused, or is a victim of prejudice, all of us should be filled with shame. Americans must always speak out in defense of human rights in our own cities, in our own country, and around the world.

Scene changes to close-up of Monica Kaufman.

MS. KAUFMAN: If you find yourself hating or discriminating against others who may not be like you, take the time to understand the reasons for your own prejudices. Stand up for what you believe in and not what your peers may believe in. Understand and appreciate the unique qualities of various groups, and be open to other cultures around you. If you have time, plan to visit the [inaudible—sounds like “Zackler”] Holocaust Center located in Atlanta [As of 2021, a search revealed no such center in Atlanta; but the Bremen Jewish Heritage Museum contains the Weinberg Center for Holocaust Education as well as an extensive collection of artifacts and exhibits with relating to the Holocaust.] and the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., built to educate Jews and non-Jews alike to learn more about the Holocaust. I'm Monica Kaufman.

Video montage of public protest, demonstrations, parades, and other activities by hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and Neo-Nazis, accompanied by harsh music and periodically overlaid with the words “Prejudice,” “No,” “Ignorance,” “Bigotry,” and “No” in white letters on a black background, with actors' voice-overs of each word as it appears on the screen.

Scene changes to close-up of two adolescent girls.

FIRST GIRL: To learn more about prejudice, hate, stereotypes, or to find out about books on the Holocaust for kids, talk to your teacher or check out your local library.

SECOND GIRL: For information on videos, speakers, and other classroom resources on the Holocaust and on fighting prejudice, call Betty Cantor at the Anti-Defamation League at 404-262-3470. *As she reads the contact information, the scene changes to show “Betty Cantor/Anti-Defamation League/(404)262-3470” in white letters on a landscape photo background.*

Production credits appear in white letters on black background as slow orchestral music plays in the background.

END OF RECORDING

Transcribed by CS