

Rose Wilder Lane Explains Why Anti-Semitism Threatens Freedom

On [college campuses](#), among [celebrities](#), and among [socialist politicians](#), anti-Semitism is in vogue. Rose Wilder Lane would tell you it is no accident that freedom is simultaneously in retreat.

Rose Wilder Lane, the daughter of Laura Ingalls Wilder, was a famed journalist who [helped to ghostwrite](#) her mother's *Little House on the Prairie* books.

In 1943, Lane's book [The Discovery of Freedom](#) was published. Lane's writing and her ideas in the book are electrifying.

Throughout the book, Lane explains truths of human existence. A first truth, whether we understand it or not, is "[We] are free; [we] are self-controlling and responsible, because [we] generate [our] energy and control it. No one and nothing else can control it."

Importantly, Lane demonstrates a second truth; human cooperation is necessary for our survival:

Knowing the nature of human energy is not enough, because one person's energy is not enough either to preserve his life or to make it the kind of life he wants. His energy must be combined with the energies of others; he must know a second fact, that all men are brothers. There still remains a problem of method, the method by which men can act according to their real nature and their brotherhood.

Human suffering – socialism, communism, and fascism – begin when we deny self-evident truths. As Lane observes we are sadly all too ready to do so: "During some six thousand years

of the Old World's history, a majority of men have believed that some Authority controlled them."

"All pagan belief to the contrary," Lane writes, "human beings do not behave like seeds or tent-caterpillars. It is self-evident that a man is not a cell in a commune or a mass or a class or a race."

Lane believes that anti-Semitism is the inevitable result of believing that some humans should control others:

All over the Old World, again and again, for two thousand years, hatred of the Jews has flared up. It is always the hatred that comes from fear, and always—every time, in every instance—it is begun and fostered by men who are afraid of the knowledge that men are free.

Why the Jew? First, Lane explains, during their wandering for 40 years in the desert, the Israelites had to eliminate their slave mindset. Moses taught that humans are free:

[Moses] told them that they were responsible for themselves, that each one of them was free; that they could not have a god nor a King to control them and be responsible for them. He was always trying to pound it into their heads. "Ye are not murmuring against me, but against the God of Abraham." For the children of Israel were always murmuring. Whenever they could sneak a chance, they made a pagan god.

At last Moses yielded so far as to give them ten commandments. Not one of these tells a person what to do. They are negatives, addressed to the motives of an individual's acts. When slaves want a master to give them orders, what are they to make of such an order as, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods"?

So, "with reason" Lane observes, those trying to establish dominion over others "hate the Jews":

Four thousand years ago, a Jew said that men are free. Two thousand years ago, a Jew preached that men are free. In medieval Europe, the Jews came from Spain, knowing that men are free. That knowledge will destroy the whole Old World concept of the universe and of man, it will break up the foundations of Old World nations and States, and shatter the very basis of their subjects' lives.

Today, China is trying to elevate Premier Xi to the [status of a living God](#) with infallible authority. Yesterday, it was Hitler and Lenin. Lane writes,

Hitler truly says that no Nazi can be a Jew or a Christian. He persecutes Jews and Christians, and they say that he attacks religion. Actually he has a pagan faith that he is the Savior, the mystic Leader ordained by superhuman Powers to establish on earth the rule of the Master Race, the Millennium.

Lenin hated "religion, the opiate of the people." His devoted disciples destroyed the icons, persecuted the priests, defiled the churches—and ardently preached and practiced an utterly self-sacrificing faith in The Party. History (they have faith to believe) mystically ordains The Party to establish on the whole earth the millennial peace, plenty and justice of The Communist Commonwealth.

Lane shows that Jews and Americans have a common inheritance – humans are free:

Today the people called Jews are literally a race of all mankind. Like Americans, they have no common ancestry, no common religion or political philosophy, no common appearance, habits, manners or customs. They have no nationality nor common language. [Lane wrote before Israel was founded.] They have in common only one thing, a tradition. It is the tradition that Americans have—an

inheritance from men who once asserted, against the whole world, that men are free.

Tyrants are afraid of ideas that will topple them from power, so, Lane writes, “They are afraid of the Jew. They ward him off; they shut him out; they build walls around him; they kill him. Their actions show that they are afraid.”

Rose has a warning for America: “Wherever tyranny is strongest...attacks upon the Jew are most mercilessly atrocious.”

Tyranny and anti-Semitism go together. Do we ignore growing anti-Semitism at the risk to our own freedom?

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