



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on November 17, 2025

## “I Beat Hitler” Says 98-year-old Trump Supporter

Meet Piri Katz, a strong supporter of a man whom she, at 98, can call “kid.” That man would be President Donald Trump. Katz may, too, have some choice words for those who’d impugn Trump as a “Nazi,” “Hitler,” or even just “authoritarian.” You see, Piri actually lived, and suffered, under Nazi tyranny, having been thrust into WWII concentration camps.

Piri’s story is a moving one of survival, but it also raises an issue. Since many people will say “Never again,” where does the threat of 21st-century tyranny really lie? And if history doesn’t exactly repeat itself but does rhyme, who today reflects Hitler- or Stalin-like despotism?

Piri may have her answer. (Or maybe not; she may be loath to thus categorize anyone today.) But first, a bit about Piri’s story.



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### When Darkness Falls

As American Thinker (AT) [wrote](#) last Wednesday, in a few days, Piri

will celebrate her 98th birthday. That alone is a milestone worth celebrating. However, the fact that she was once known only as 20,444 makes this birthday especially gratifying.

Piri was the seventh of 11 children born into an orthodox Jewish family that lived in then-Czechoslovakia’s Carpathian Mountains in a small town called Tibiva. Her parents owned two flour mills, and their property was filled with horses, geese, chickens, and all kinds of fruit orchards.

The simple life in Tibiva meant farming, school, religious studies (for the boys), observing the Sabbath, and other Jewish holidays that saw family and friends gather at the local synagogue.

Then Hitler came....

On Passover Eve, 1944, the Nazis burst into Piri’s home and took the entire family (along with other Jews in the community) to the Munkatch ghetto. The only ones from Piri’s family who were spared were a brother and a sister who had emigrated to America years earlier.

... A few weeks later, Piri arrived at Auschwitz and became a number: 20,444. (By this point in the war, many death camps had stopped tattooing and restarted numbering.) Her head was shaved, and she was given a filthy prison gown to wear. No bra or underwear, just a lice-infested striped gown.

... When the Holocaust was over in 1945, Piri had been imprisoned at Auschwitz, Geislingen,



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and Dachau, where the U.S. Army finally liberated her and other survivors.

And now, 80 years later, Piri can say, "I beat Hitler. I'm still here." (You can read more about her story [at AT](#).)

What's perhaps most tragic here, though, is that "Never again" rings hollow because few recognize tyranny in its nascent stages. This is one reason it continually bedevils man.

## Often Invisible to Most

Leaping to mind here, too, is the story of a late Ukrainian-descent woman who was great friends with someone close to my heart. As a girl living during Soviet tyranny, her father had the entire family go to bed fully clothed, jackets included. She learned the "method to this madness" one night, the hard way, when communist thugs descended on her home. They unceremoniously pulled her entire family from their dwelling and forced them to march through the cold. Sufficiently clothed, they survived. Not all families did.

The woman's father obviously could identify tyranny *in time*. Not all families did. This is because history doesn't actually repeat, *precisely*, but only does rhyme. Too many don't recognize the rhyme, either. So what are the signs of would-be tyranny?

Many will talk about "Left" or "Right," fearing one side or the other. The problem is that these terms are widely misunderstood. For example, it's establishment and history-book doctrine that Adolf Hitler and his Nazis were "right-wing." Yet it isn't just, as is often mentioned, that at issue are "National Socialists" (a simple but noteworthy point). It's also that WWII-era pontiff Pope Pius XII [reflexively called such people](#) "left-wing Nazi extremists." Was he right?

Well, consider that [the only consistent definition](#) of "liberal" or "left-wing" is "[a desire to change the status quo](#)." The Nazis certainly were left-wing in this sense, in that they were major change agents, to say the least. But the left-right paradigm, a French Revolution-born phenomenon, is relativistic and hence a poor guide.

Thus do some propound a totalitarianism-anarchy spectrum, with the ideal government falling somewhere in between. Yet while this relates to the amount of freedom, it tells us nothing about the *type*; it's quantitative, not qualitative. More specificity is required.

## The Next Hitler or Stalin Won't Be Hitler or Stalin

So how do we recognize the next demon in sheep's clothing? First note that modern tyranny has tended to share certain commonalities. For starters, it exalts the state. WWII-era fascist Italian dictator Benito Mussolini once proclaimed, "Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state." Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, Hitler, and Chinese dictator Mao Zedong all epitomized this, too, creating powerful totalitarian governments. Present-day nominally "communist" (fascist, really) China also embodies this. And it all makes sense. Only big government can deliver big tyranny.

Now, question: What American political entity has for decades, more than any other, tried to grow government? What entity has looked to government to remedy every woe? Well, apropos here is a comment NYC mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani made during his November 4 victory speech.

"We will prove that there is no problem too large for government to solve," he said, "and no concern too small for it to care about." (Yes, such as what light bulbs you use, how you sort your garbage, or if your



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child sells lemonade.)

Note something here, too. Translated, Mamdani is saying government can solve *any* problem. Yet this would require omnipotence and omniscience, and what is *the* entity possessing those qualities?

God.

So Mamdani is clearly deifying government. That's always a red flag.

Speaking of which, modern tyrannies, from Stalin's to Mao's to Hitler's to Mussolini's to Beijing's today, have persecuted the Church. And what American political entity — and which ideologists — currently persecutes Christians?

Hint: It's the one that shuttered churches during Covid. It's the one whose minions try to destroy Christian businessmen for not being party to sexual devolutionary ("LGBTQ+") affairs. It's the one that ever attempts to purge all religion from government via Establishment Clause perversion.

Yet even this doesn't truly elucidate the matter.

## The Ultimate Guide

In reality, it would be easier if we had an actual yardstick for judging threats. And thankfully, we do.

That is, if morality came in a jar, what would be on the ingredients label?

Virtues would be — those "[objectively good moral habits](#)." A quite comprehensive list is: Faith, Hope, Honesty, Charity, Courage, Justice, Temperance, Prudence, Chastity, Diligence, Patience, Kindness, Forgiveness, Humility, and Love.

So now let's apply this with a few examples. When facilitating irresponsibility (the hand-out mentality) and class warfare, are you encouraging Diligence — or the sin of envy? When advocating "defunding the police," slap-on-the-wrist consequences, and open borders, are you operating by Justice and Prudence? When pushing sexual devolutionary "standards," are you reflecting Chastity? Does touting abortion as "choice" bespeak of Kindness and Love? Does deifying government reflect Faith (in the right thing)?

Of course, the above errors reflect a lack of more virtues than just the ones indicated. And few if any of our politicians are fonts of rectitude. Nonetheless, the ethereal yardstick of virtue informs about who's who and what's what.

This is why our Founders stressed that virtue in the people was a prerequisite for having a healthy republic. For leaders too often reflect the darkest side of the people, and as that darkness grows, tyranny looms on the horizon.



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