



POLISH LEAGUE AGAINST DEFAMATION

11/8 Chmielna Street, 00-021 Warsaw, Poland
www.rdi-plad.org

The Polish League Against Defamation statement regarding the Prime Minister's words on Munich conference

The Holocaust was genocide orchestrated and conducted by the German Third Reich during World War 2 which resulted in the deaths of approximately 6 million Jews across Europe, including 3 million Polish Jews. This fundamental fact must never be forgotten.

The Good Name Redoubt - The Polish League Against Defamation believes that historical truth should be the basis for identity building and the responsible shaping of the future. In the context of the Holocaust, it is necessary not to confuse the perpetrators with the victims of the German Nazi crimes. Therefore, we are fighting against the use of the false term "Polish death camps".

We are aware that history as a whole, and especially that of World War 2, is not black and white. At the Munich Security Conference, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said that anyone stating that there had been individual "Polish perpetrators" aiding the Germans in the Holocaust would not be punished. It is worth remembering that some individuals (irrespective of their nationality), under the conditions of the German occupation, served as helpful tools for the German perpetrators of the Holocaust. This is why, in addition to "Polish perpetrators", the Head of the Polish Government also truthfully pointed to Russian, Ukrainian and Jewish perpetrators.

In order to not make historical discussions fruitless, we must acknowledge that, during World War 2, vile and even criminal, behaviour could have been observed in every society and in every nation. This, however, does not change the fact that the division of roles during the brutal German occupation of Polish lands was clear: it was the Germans who orchestrated the Holocaust and perpetrated it, terrorising many individuals from European nations to aid them. This German terror did not spare Jews or Poles.

Marginal elements in the Polish and Jewish populations were used by the Third Reich, under absolute terror, as police units, such as the Blue Police formed from among Polish citizens and the Jewish Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst operating in ghettos. The Jewish resistance in ghettos and the Polish Underground State executed the demoralised officers of the aforementioned formations, as well as other informants and collaborators. This best illustrates the attitude of the Polish and Jewish nations to those who joined the cause of the German murderers.

We want Polish history to be told truthfully and objectively in Poland and abroad. Surely, the Jewish nation has the same wish. If we are to reveal the truth about the past, we must remember the times which bring us glory, as well as those which deserve condemnation.

The fundamental facts must not, however, be blotted out. The controversy generated by the amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) shows that one can never repeat often enough that it was Germany which orchestrated the Holocaust and the crimes against Polish people. Any attempt to misrepresent these roles constitutes unacceptable historical revisionism.

Please remember:

1. Poland was the first and one of the biggest victims of World War 2.
2. The extermination camps, in which several million people were murdered, were not Polish. These were (Nazi) German camps in Poland occupied by Nazi Germany.
3. The Poles were the first to alert European and American leaders to the Holocaust.
4. Poland never collaborated with Nazi Germany.
5. Poland was one of the few countries in occupied Europe in which helping Jews was punishable by death.
6. Hundreds of thousands of Poles helped Jews survive the War and the Holocaust at the risk of their own lives.
7. Poles make up the largest group among the Righteous Among the Nations, i.e. citizens of various states who saved Jews during the Holocaust.
8. As was the case in other countries, during the War there were also cases of shameful behaviour towards Jews in occupied Poland, but this was a marginal phenomenon on the scale of society as a whole.
9. During the War, Polish people, especially the intelligentsia and the political, economic and cultural elite, etc. were executed on a massive scale.
10. In the post-War period, some attempts were made to falsify the history of the Holocaust, including the attitude of Poland towards the Jews during the War.
11. The term "Polish death camps" has been used in public for years, which falsifies history and the memory of the Holocaust.
12. In early February 2018 prominent German politicians publicly admitted on several occasions that the full responsibility for the Holocaust lies with Germany.