



POLISH LEAGUE AGAINST DEFAMATION

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

Warsaw, 29 March 2018

ATTN
Los Angeles
USA

Dear Sir/Madam!

In the film posted by the ATTN portal via Facebook on <https://www.facebook.com/attn/videos/1703940066308112/>, concerning an amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), and focusing on the issue of the Holocaust, there were several serious lies about Poland and its participation in the Shoah.

We wish to stress that our action does not constitute an attack on the freedom of speech, but is a manifestation of the defence of the truth and combat against lies that you are publicly spreading.

The film made available by ATTN is an example of exceptional historical falsification and manipulation. The creators of this production state that “Polish authorities played an essential role” in organising the Holocaust. Even in the most scornful critiques in the foreign media, despite repeatedly suggesting the “whitewashing” of Poland’s history, did not resort to formulating such lies, and did not dare to write that during World War 2 the Polish authorities were complicit in the orchestration of the German death machine. In contrast to the many European states, such as France and Norway, the Polish government never collaborated with Germany!

The Poles were the first to alert European and American leaders to the Holocaust. It included reports by Jan Karski (1940-1942) and Witold Pilecki (1943-1945) on the persecution of Jews in occupied Poland, life in the ghettos, and genocide in the German extermination camps. In December 1942, based on Karski’s reports, the Polish government in exile prepared the diplomatic note The Mass Extermination of Jews in German Occupied Poland which was sent to the governments of the United Nations. The Polish government urged them to condemn the crimes of the Nazi Germans, punish the criminals, and devise effective means of stopping the mass extermination. The document described the planned extermination of Jews (living in Poland or deported by the Germans to Poland from other countries in Central and Western Europe, including from Germany), and the extermination of the Polish nation. Jews, Poles, Romani and people of other nationalities were being murdered in the German extermination camps.

In occupied Poland, there was not a single organisation representing the Polish nation which would support the German occupation policies. Among other things, this was the reason why German repressions targeted at Poland were much more severe than those at other countries, such as the Netherlands, France and Belgium.

Hundreds of thousands of Poles helped Jews survive the war and the Holocaust at the risk of their own lives. Individuals, entire families and villages, the Polish underground movement, and special organisations, all helped the Jews. One of these was the “Żegota” Council to Aid Jews- a Polish underground organisation which helped Jews on a mass scale (fake identification documents <<50-60 thousand>>, financial benefits, residential and medical aid, helping children, fighting against black-mailers, etc.). This was the only such organisation in occupied Europe.

The Jews were also being helped by the Catholic Church. They received shelter in more than 70 Polish cloisters and parsonages, Polish priests issued false baptism certificates to them, etc. During the war, Poles saved thousands of Jews from extermination (according to estimates, 30-120 thousand Jews were saved in occupied Poland). Several to a few dozen people were involved in the saving of each Jew. It is estimated that several hundred thousand Poles provided Jews with various forms of aid (at least 200-300 thousand, and according to some historians, 1 to 1.2 million).

Poles make up the largest group among the Righteous Among the Nations, i.e. citizens of various states who saved Jews during the Holocaust. Let us remind you that in occupied Poland aiding Jews in any way was punishable by death, with the Germans administering this penalty not only against individuals, but also against entire families and villages. Poles were not responsible for the Holocaust. Boiling down Polish-Jewish relations only to this fragment of history, and giving it an excessive importance and scale, is not only unfair, it is, more importantly, false. It is a sign of anti-Polonism.

The producers of the film indicate that the alleged “state” collaboration by Polish people was exemplified by the actions of the police (presumably the Blue Police) and railwaymen. Again, let us remind you that as a result of their 1939 invasion of Poland, Germany and the Soviet Union carved up the territory of Poland, introducing their own administration into the occupied areas. The rightful Polish government was in exile, and had no say in the German and Soviet occupation policies. In the German case, this resulted in the Holocaust. The so-called Blue Police was a formation created by and subordinated to the German authorities. Its actions are to be blamed on the German occupying force.

Furthermore, ATTN wrote a comment in relation to the critical opinions of Internet users about the “complicity” of the Polish authorities in the Holocaust. In its comment, ATTN stated that “factions of the Polish government” were more inclined to cooperate with the Nazis to aid in the implementation of the Final Solution than to protect Jews. What ATTN meant by this, we do not know.

The moralistic film by ATTN, according to which Poland should follow in the footsteps of South Africa in settling its own past, has one fundamental flaw. This flaw is its complete obliviousness to Poland’s history. The resulting film is a pack of lies and a mix of images, which adds false information to Polish history.

We demand you promptly amend the information included in the description of this film.

Yours faithfully,

Polish League Against Defamation