

Erzbischof Dr. Rowan Williams

Archbishop's Holocaust Memorial Day Statement 2007

Erzbischof Rowan Williams stellt in seiner Rede zum Gedenktag der Opfer des Nationalsozialismus 2007 (Holocaust Memorial Day) zwei kontrastierende Ereignisse aus 2006 vor: Er berichtet vom Ritterschlag Elie Wiesels durch die Queen von England und würdigt Wiesels Engagement im Holocaustgedenken als Holocaustüberlebender. Dass es verstärkt neue Formen von Aufklärung und Bildung braucht, wenn es keine Zeitzeug/innen mehr gibt, betont Williams mit Hinweis auf die Arbeit der Yad Vashem Foundation UK. Diesem Engagement stellt er die 2006 in Teheran stattgefundene Konferenz entgegen, die unter dem Titel "Review of the Holocaust: Global Vision" versuchte, die Historizität und das Ausmaß des Holocaust in Abrede zu stellen. Williams kritisiert den Versuch, den Holocaust als eine Folge von Zionismus und eines europäischen Schuldkomplexes einzuordnen oder ihn überhaupt nicht anzuerkennen. Williams betont, dass es für zukünftige Holocaustgedenkstage wichtig sein wird, das Wissen über die Ursachen und Auswirkungen des Holocaust genau und respektvoll zu erinnern.

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Two contrasting events of the last quarter of 2006 provide a pathway to this 2007 Holocaust Memorial Day. In different ways each highlighted very clearly why we shall continue to need an annual national Holocaust Memorial Day for the foreseeable future and why all British citizens should mark it.

The first was the award by Her Majesty of an honorary knighthood to Professor Elie Wiesel. I was privileged to attend the reception given in his honour by the Yad Vashem Foundation UK at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Listening to him speak and seeing him surrounded by his family, brought home the fact that he is a survivor, not of some mythical event, nor of an episode of history now vague and opaque to us, but a survivor of a real, recent and well documented series of events. Through his life's work he has enabled vast numbers of people to understand and appreciate something of the horror of what happened. We are indebted to him for the way in which he has honoured the memory of those who did not survive, by ensuring that they can be remembered. To use his own image, he has collected the tears of a whole generation.

The second event, a sad and shocking contrast, was the conference in Teheran sponsored by the by the Institute for Political and International Studies at the request of President Ahmadinejad and announced as a reconsideration of the evidence for the Holocaust.

The clear implication was that if it had happened at all, it had been greatly exaggerated from motives to do with Zionism and a European guilt complex. It cannot be acceptable to treat the systematic murder of six million Jews and others as a propaganda issue for a particular cause. It does only harm to the cause it purports to support and it brings disgrace upon those who abuse it in this way. This most appalling of crimes, contradicting all principles of human dignity, compassion and justice, must be

approached as a surgeon approaches a terrible wound on the human body: with extreme sensitivity, with the greatest skill and with a motivation that is rooted in a desire for healing. None of these were in evidence in the conference.

On this Holocaust Memorial Day in 2007 we need to be reminded by survivors such as Sir Elie Wiesel of the reality of the events that they survived. We need also to ensure that, when in future we have no survivors physically amongst us, the evidence that has been so painstakingly collected by organisations such as the Yad Vashem Foundation continues to be available to all who wish to approach and study it with the respect that is due.

Holocaust Memorial Day is not simply an annual opportunity for reflection on a past event. It is a day to recommit in the most practical ways to continue the struggle against the underlying anti-Semitic causes of that event which remain present and virulent within our communities in this country as in others. If 2006 was a year to mark the 350th anniversary of the ending of the exclusion of the Jewish community from this country, then may 2007 be the year in which we resolve in every local setting to combat anti-semitic language and behaviour with new vigour.

Quelle:

<http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/1268/archbishops-holocaust-memorial-day-statement-2007.html> (2024-05).