

Erzbischof Dr. Rowan Williams

## **Archbishop's Holocaust Memorial Day Statement 2010: The Legacy of Hope**

*Erzbischof Rowan Williams ruft am Gedenktag der Opfer des Nationalsozialismus (Holocaust Memorial Day) dazu auf, Erinnerung nicht als Überwindung der Vergangenheit zu verstehen, sondern als Grundlage der Hoffnung für eine bessere Gegenwart und Zukunft. Durch das Erinnern der Gräueltaten des Holocaust und anderer Genozide können Menschen sensibilisiert werden für Ausgrenzung von Gruppen und diffamierende Zuschreibungen. Auch die Relativierung und Minderung des Wertes und der Würde eines Menschenlebens im Bezug auf Behinderung, Anfang und Ende des Lebens muss beunruhigen. So kann aus den Erfahrungen der Leidenden ein Vermächtnis der Hoffnung werden.*

Keywords: Anglikanische Kirche, Holocaust Memorial Day, Erinnerungsarbeit

"Hope without memory is like memory without hope" is the striking phrase by Sir Elie Wiesel brought forward by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust for the 2010 commemoration under the theme: 'the Legacy of Hope'. Elie Wiesel was awarded an honorary knighthood in 2006 as a public sign of the importance of the living memory that survivors of the Holocaust are for present day humanity. Our 2010 commemoration of the Holocaust has at its heart the survivors of the Shoah, the unique human beings who are the primary source for our continued attention, our understanding and our need to continue to work at the lessons in a world that seems not yet to have learned them.

As those who directly connect us and our children with that archetypal genocide pass from this life, we are confronted with the challenge of keeping alive the reality of what happened and of its defining significance. There may still be some 5000 Jewish and other survivors of the camps and of the years of Nazi occupied Europe. But tragically there are also many hundreds of thousands of people in this and other countries who are survivors of the many other genocidal events of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, including those atrocities that have taken place, like the Holocaust, on European soil.

We must support those who offer us the resources to remember and to engage with the Holocaust, whether by attending National Holocaust Memorial Day events, through the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust and especially its schools visits to Auschwitz-Birkenau, making use of the Wiener Library or the very many other organisations which enable us individually and collectively to hold on to the stark human realities and to absorb their meaning for us today.

We must attend to the signs at home and abroad of those attitudes in ourselves and in others which were the harbingers of the Holocaust. These include the dehumanising rhetoric which seeks to separate 'us' from 'them' and then to project all that is negative on to the other, on to "them". We need to be vigilant about every expression of ungenerous feeling towards people in need and all who may for a time be dependent on the wider community – the refugees and asylum seekers. We need to be alert to

the signs of a casual attitude to the value of human lives, whether by acts of terrorism or more subtly, in relation to disability, or the beginning or end of life.

We must surely attend not only to the survivors and their stories but also to what is to be their legacy. Will their legacy be a world in which such things no longer happen because we and our children have learned the lessons and acted on them? Or will their generation, with all its suffering, its tenacity and its offering of hope pass from us like a nightmare best forgotten?

I pray that Holocaust Memorial Day 2010 will prove to be the foundation for an enduring legacy of hope.

Quelle:

*<http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/937/archbishops-holocaust-memorial-day-statement-2010-the-legacy-of-hope.html> (2024-05).*