

Holocaust Comments

by Hilmar von Campe

The atrocity and inhumanity of the Holocaust was the extreme consequence of the arrogance of man, of human beings who set themselves up above all others despising the value of human life. The then executive director of the Holocaust Memorial Council in Washington, Rabbi Dr. David Weinstein, received me twice and I apologized to him for the suffering Germany had inflicted on the Jewish people.

I told Rabbi Weinstein that the crimes of the Nazis were only possible because of the moral cowardice of so many of us non-Nazis. We Christians, the so-called good people, had a relative morality and only small personal goals.

The opportunists outnumbered by far the men of the resistance who paid with their lives for opposing Hitler and his gang. Remembering the Holocaust the focus should be on the bystanders and the appeasers of evil who were silent when faced at the beginning of the process with discrimination and injustice committed against others. It was not God who let the Holocaust happen. It was us who rejected His Commandments. David Weinstein made me his friend.

My father died in a Soviet concentration camp in Poland no less inhuman than the Nazi camps. I have forgiven the Poles and the Russians as I need forgiveness myself.

If the suffering of millions of people is to have any meaning, it can only be the lesson that out of guilt and suffering, a spirit of forgiveness, reconciliation, and common destiny can arise, leading in turn to the birth of a new human society where humanity obeys the laws of its Creator.

Before the Holocaust was the evil spirit of hatred, class- and race-war, abuse of power, and despising of human life. My restitution for the atrocities committed by a German government in the name of Germany is the commitment of my life to fight this spirit of evil in whatever form it appears so that the truth of God can be established who commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

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Connections, P.O. Box 60326, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80960-0326, Toll Free Keynote Address Scheduling: 1-800-728-1779, Email: orders@voncampe.com