

## Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust January 28, 2000

We, High Representatives of Governments at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, declare that:

1. The Holocaust (Shoah) fundamentally challenged the foundations of civilization. The unprecedented character of the Holocaust will always hold universal meaning. After half a century, it remains an event close enough in time that survivors can still bear witness to the horrors that engulfed the Jewish people. The terrible suffering of the many millions of other victims of the Nazis has left an indelible scar across Europe as well.
2. The magnitude of the Holocaust, planned and carried out by the Nazis, must be forever seared in our collective memory. The selfless sacrifices of those who defied the Nazis, and sometimes gave their own lives to protect or rescue the Holocaust's victims, must also be inscribed in our hearts. The depths of that horror, and the heights of their heroism, can be touchstones in our understanding of the human capacity for evil and for good.
3. With humanity still scarred by genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, anti-semitism and xenophobia, the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils. Together we must uphold the terrible truth of the Holocaust against those who deny it. We must strengthen the moral commitment of our peoples, and the political commitment of our governments, to ensure that future generations can understand the causes of the Holocaust and reflect upon its consequences.
4. We pledge to strengthen our efforts to promote education, remembrance and research about the Holocaust, both in those of our countries that have already done much and those that choose to join this effort.
5. We share a commitment to encourage the study of the Holocaust in all its dimensions. We will promote education about the Holocaust in our schools and universities, in our communities and encourage it in other institutions.
6. We share a commitment to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to honour those who stood against it. We will encourage appropriate forms of Holocaust remembrance, including an annual Day of Holocaust Remembrance, in our countries.
7. We share a commitment to throw light on the still obscured shadows of the Holocaust. We will take all necessary steps to facilitate the opening of archives in order to ensure that all documents bearing on the Holocaust are available to researchers.
8. It is appropriate that this, the first major international conference of the new millennium, declares its commitment to plant the seeds of a better future amidst the soil of a bitter past. We empathize with the victims' suffering and draw inspiration from their struggle. Our commitment must be to remember the victims who perished, respect the survivors still with us, and reaffirm humanity's common aspiration for mutual understanding and justice.

## Sweden Launches Holocaust Education Project

### Background:

The *Living History* information campaign was launched in the autumn of 1997. Its purpose was to disseminate knowledge and information about the Holocaust and, using the Holocaust as a starting point, to stimulate discussion on issues relating to democracy, tolerance, fraternity and the equal value of all human beings.

During the year that Living History has been under way, interest and involvement in Sweden have been very great. Activities have been started in many different forums — local authorities, schools and clubs.

The objective of Living History in 1999 is to carry on, in greater depth, the work commenced in 1998. The material produced last year will be disseminated to new groups, and activities will be conducted to intensify discussions and impart knowledge of how the material can be used as a point of departure for discussions about the Holocaust and issues relating to the basic values of society.

Various new activities will be started. Living History will, for example, work to bring together material in Sweden about the Holocaust. Living History will also stimulate and support various players in their work. This will take place mainly through networking, conferences and seminars.

### Holocaust Remembrance Day:

On 27 January 1999 the Government arranged a memorial ceremony for Holocaust survivors at the Stockholm Memorial to the Holocaust Victims, to honour the memory of the liberation of Auschwitz on 27 January 1945. In the evening, Living History and the Swedish Committee Against Anti-Semitism held a seminar on the theme of 'Whose is Auschwitz?'. Those taking part included Imre Kertész, the Hungarian author of *Man without a Destiny*.

### 'Tell Ye Your Children':

The book about the Holocaust, 'Tell Ye Your Children', continues to be distributed to schools, parents, educational associations and other users. A translation of the book into sign language is being issued on video. All eight/seven? language versions of 'Tell Ye Your Children' are to be made available on the Living History home page on the Internet.

### Study guide:

A study guide concerning morality, ethics, democracy and

human values 60 years after the outbreak of the second world war is being produced in co-operation with the Swedish educational associations. This guide will be used by study circles and in similar forums of discussion. The book '*Tell Ye Your Children*' forms part of this study material.

### Lecture series:

In co-operation with educational associations, Living History is arranging a series of lectures dealing with the Holocaust from various points of view. These lectures will be held around Sweden.

### Home page

The Living History home page will be developed with the addition, for example, of an in-depth factual presentation of the events that took place during the second world war, a section about the Warsaw Ghetto, a glossary and a gallery of historical figures involved. A guide to organised tours of the Holocaust camps is provided, with maps, facts and background reading.

### Film:

Living History's film inputs are continuing. The offer of seeing subsidised screenings of films about the Holocaust at the cinema still holds good in 1999. During the year, a number of seminars about film will be held in co-operation with the Swedish Film Institute. The aim is to provide in-depth knowledge of film and its uses as an educational tool in teaching about the Holocaust. One of the starting

points is the video package and educational material entitled, *The Image of the Holocaust* that were issued in 1998.

### Teachers' seminars:

Living History is to hold six one-day seminars for teachers concerning the Holocaust and the fundamental values of society. These seminars are being arranged in co-operation with the National Agency for Education, the Swedish Teachers' Union and the National Union of Teachers. During the year, a continuation course will also be held for teachers who have attended previous seminars.

### Gathering testimonies:

Living History will — in co-operation with the Jewish community, which is collecting data and material from survivors' organisations and other sources, and with Romany organisations — gather testimonies, documents and material from the second

### A Counterweight to Dark Forces - the Holocaust Web site on [www.levandehistoria.org](http://www.levandehistoria.org)

The Internet has become an important tool for obtaining information. With the rapid development of Internet-based information, it has become increasingly important to provide an informative and interesting counterweight to the dark forces which deny the very occurrence of the Holocaust.

In January 1998, as part of the Living History Project, the Swedish Government launched the Holocaust Web site on [www.levandehistoria.org](http://www.levandehistoria.org).

The site aims to reach young people, teachers and other interested persons.

The site contains:

- historical facts about the Holocaust,
- a forum for teachers where they can relate their experiences and exchange ideas. Examples of successful activities from schools and organizations,
- reports on recent, relevant research,
- accounts by various organizations of their activities in this field with examples of literature and films on the subject,
- links to other Web sites containing information about the Holocaust.

world war. This material will play a vital part in the establishment of a combined museum and resource centre dedicated to the Holocaust.

**Educational material:**

Living History will produce new study material that may be used in the school's teaching about the Holocaust.

**Conferences and seminars:**

During the year, Living History will arrange a number of conferences on relevant topics. The first, to take place in March, will cover organised tours of the extermination camps. This conference, aimed mainly at teachers, will be held in co-operation with the Swedish Committee Against Anti-Semitism.

**International co-operation:**

International co-operation on issues relating to education, research and remembrance of the Holocaust will be conducted both multilaterally and bilaterally. The 'Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research' that came into being on the initiative of Göran Persson, the Swedish prime minister, in spring 1997 is continuing its work. This task force includes the USA, UK, Germany, Israel, Poland, The Netherlands, France and Sweden. Under the other countries' aegis Sweden will, in the year 2000, arrange a world conference on Holocaust education in Stockholm.

**Bilateral co-operation:**

Bilateral co-operation relating to information campaigns, education and research about the Holocaust will be developed with Russia, the Czech Republic, Poland,



A book about the Holocaust in Europe 1933-1945

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. A Russian translation of the book 'Tell Ye Your Children' will be issued in the spring of 1999.

**Study visits:**

Study visits to Poland and Israel in the autumn of 1999, under the aegis of Living History, are planned.

**Research centre at Uppsala University:**

The National Holocaust Research and Education Centre at Uppsala University opened in the spring of 1998. The centre is currently offering courses about the Holocaust, and a number of research projects have been commenced.

A seminar on the theme of 'The Bystander in Holocaust History', featuring international researchers, will be held during the year.

**For further information:**

contact *Living History* on 08-405 10 00, Anna-Karin Johansson, the project leader Senior Administrative Officer Joakim von Scheele Senior Administrative Officer Maria Martinsson.

about his origins. Contrary to Christianity, which is based on equality of all human beings before God, Nazism was based on inequality.

Himmler needed obedient people like "domestic animals." To achieve this, he needed to educate people from childhood. In 1936, he established a law which said that every German child older than 10 had to receive a kind of "re-education." In this way, the new German population started to acquire a subordinated personality incapable of contradicting orders which came from people who were above them.

**Germanizing Poland**

In October 1939, when Poland had just been totally occupied, Hitler asked Himmler to Germanize Poland. While doing this, Jewish and Polish people were deprived of all their possessions and rights, and the lands were redistributed among the people with "pure" Germanic blood. The expropriated people were sent to concentration camps.

On 12th December 1940, Himmler created the "Racial

Register." People with pure Germanic blood and descendants of

“As students of history, we are interested in getting to know more about the Holocaust...”

them that had been absorbed by the Polish nation were registered there. The latter had to receive a treatment of re-education in order to be re-Germanized. All the people who were not registered were sent to the concentration camps. Heydrich was in charge of expropriating and transporting the expelled people to Germany. In June, 1940, the extermination camp of Auschwitz was inaugurated. Then in Treblinka and Maidanek two more camps were opened.

## Teaching the Holocaust Through Art

*Arieh Saposnik, Yad Vashem Quarterly Magazine, Volume 13, 1999, Jerusalem*

The International School for Holocaust Studies is publishing a teaching unit on the arts that is based on the awareness that the intellectual approach does not reveal certain aspects about the individual during the Holocaust and afterwards, and that there are parts of the human psyche that historical research, even philosophy, cannot reach. Art, however, allows us to probe the depths of the soul, enter areas otherwise inaccessible, and tap non-verbal sources.

The paintings in the unit were chosen because of their connection with works of literature. There are three short stories, each accompanied by several works of art. The stories (which are

also included in Yad Vashem's literature unit, "The Liberation," deal with the theme of liberation in two aspects: the historical event, the release of the victims of Nazi oppression after the Allies' Victory, and the broader concept, existentially, psychologically, and symbolically.

Liberation at both levels--the historical and the personal/human- is a juncture between "normal" reality and the "other" reality of the Holocaust. The works in the unit represent various attempts to confront this juncture and face the post-Holocaust world. The works of art expand upon the ideas discussed in the literary analysis and aim to elicit further thoughts and ideas.

(To order Yad Vashem publications, e-mail: [publishing@yad-vashem.org.il](mailto:publishing@yad-vashem.org.il))



## Our Studies of the Holocaust

*(Karen Grunberg and Sandra Simionati and teacher Rosy Aguila, IPPY Institute, Trelew, Argentina)*

Hello! As students of history, we are interested in getting to know more about the Holocaust and in this way be able to know about the terrible events that many of our ancestors had to go through. Here's what we have researched so far.

**The Nazis Were Looking for a Nation with Pure Germanic Blood**

Hitler named Himmler Chief Minister of the S.S. (The S.S. and the Gestapo were the executors of violent Nazi racism. These two organizations were based on two principles: racial selection and blind obedience. Blind obedience is what led to the killing of children, women and old people in gas chambers. And when the number of people was higher than expected they were thrown alive into graves of burning fuel. If the dogma of "pure blood" had been respected, Himmler would have had to kill most Germans, including himself. Even Hitler forbade any investigation

# The Center for Humanistic Education At the Ghetto Fighters' House

Raya Kalisman, Ghetto Fighters' House, Israel

The Center for Humanistic Education was established at the Ghetto Fighters' House in 1996. It mainly aims at exposing Arabs, Druze and Jewish high school students to the history of the Holocaust and its humanistic ramifications. The Center created a program specifically for these groups to enhance the understanding of the dangers of racism, prejudice and stereotyping in any society, to develop awareness of pluralistic values, as a basis for democratic institutions and real coexistence.

Our main goal is to promote intercultural activities, including in-depth discussion of the universal human implications of the Holocaust and its relevance for contemporary society in Israel and abroad. It is our belief that the study of the Holocaust raises the most basic questions of human life, and the image of man kind. Studying the Holocaust can bring people together, bridge cultural differences, and clarify our common heritage as human beings.

Holocaust education is a very sensitive issue in the Arab-Jewish dialogue. Discussing Holocaust issues can perhaps bridge the gaps that unfortunately still exist between the various sectors of Israeli society. We wish to create powerful bonds of common values and interests by discussing contemporary issues on the basis of cooperation and mutual respect. We believe that this is a necessary step toward achieving regional understanding.

Our approach is holistic, as we aim at all channels of the community – students, educators, school principals, parents and community leaders.

The program for students consists of four stages

1. One-day activity in "Yad Layeled". The activity is suitable for the entire school and is prepared in conjunction with the school staff. It includes a tour of the exhibitions and work in the workshops. (Speakers of Arabic are guided in their own language by junior guides who are graduates of the program.)

2. Ongoing seminar of approximately 12 meetings for students who have chosen to take part in the subject of Holocaust studies, after their first exposure in "Yad Layeled". The workshop activities are wide-ranging and include discussions about ethical and moral dilemmas. The resources of the Ghetto Fighters' Museum- exhibitions, films, testimonies, library and archives-serve as a basis for the workshops.

3. Multicultural summer seminar for students on the subject: Holocaust studies in a multicultural society.

4. Additional training for the junior guides and continuing multicultural encounters for graduates of the summer seminar.

Lesley Weiss, A volunteer of the Otzma program, from Louisville, Kentucky is writing about her experience with our students:



Ghetto Fighters' House, Israel

"Before I walked into the Asalam School, in the Danunn Village in the Western Galille of Israel, I could not have imagined the amazing experiences it would bring. As a Jewish

American, entering an Arab high school to teach the Holocaust, a subject often thought of as Jewish, I had no idea what to expect. As a volunteer at The Ghetto Fighters' House, Lochmei Hageataot, a Holocaust Museum and Education Center in the Western Galille of Israel, I began to work twice a week at the Asalam School to help with their book-sharing project."

The students are part of an intensive program to teach the global importance of studying the Holocaust. In conjunction with a class of American students at Central High School in Louisville, KY, the students have read Elie Wiesel's *Night*, and the two groups are discussing many issues from the book via letters and the Internet.

For the Israeli students, the project is sectioned into two parts, and they began the project during their sophomore year of high school. During the first year, these students participated in a number of educational seminars at the Center for Humanistic Education at Lochmei Hageataot, studying the Holocaust and its multicultural significance.

This year, as juniors, the students have been paired up with students from Central High School in Louisville as part of a book-sharing project. The two classes use modern technology to share their thoughts and feelings on the subject, and through their discussions they have explored how the lessons from the Holocaust do not solely apply to the Jewish population, but how the entire world is affected. The students related the Holocaust to current world events, examining closely how they personally are affected and discussing how they, as individuals and as a generation can help to end the terrible tragedies.

Over twenty-five hundred students have participated in the educational seminars at Lochmei Hageataot so far, and 650 of

those students have become young guides in Yad La'Yeled, the children's museum, after participating in a twelve seminar course. Two hundred and fifty Arabic teachers have worked with Lochmei Hageataot to learn to teach the Holocaust and its multicultural impact.

The Arab-Israeli students at the Asalam School are enjoying the project. "It is teaching us about a new culture, and it helps us feel closer to the Americans. The projects at Lochmei Hageataot teach that human is human and that we must work together for peace and an end to the violence in the world."

# Pope John Paul II at Yad Vashem

*Below is the official Vatican text of Pope John Paul's speech at Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem, Israel on March 23, 2000.*

I hear the words of the ancient Psalm rise from our hearts: "I have become like a broken vessel. I hear the whispering of many-terror on every side! As they scheme together against me, as they plot to take my life. But I trust you. O Lord I say, 'You are my God.'"

In this place of memories, the mind and heart and soul feel an extreme need for silence. Silence in which to remember. Silence in which to try to make some sense of the memories which come flooding back. Silence because there are not words strong enough to deplore the terrible tragedy of the Shoah. My own personal memories are of all that happened when the Nazis occupied Poland during the War. I remember my Jewish friends and neighbors, some of whom perished, while others survived.

I have come to Yad Vashem to pay homage to the millions of Jewish people who, stripped of everything, especially of their human dignity, were murdered in the Holocaust. More than half a century has passed, but the memories remain.

Here, as at Auschwitz and many other places in Europe, we are overcome by the echo of the heart-rending laments of so many. Men, women, children cry out to us from the depths of the horror that they knew. How can we fail to heed their cry? No one can forget to ignore what happened. No one can diminish its scale. We wish to remember. But we wish to remember for a purpose, namely to ensure that never again will evil prevail as it did for the millions of innocent victims of Nazism.

How could man have such utter contempt for man? Because we had reached the point of contempt for God. Only a Godless ideology could plan and carry out the extermination of a whole people.

The honour given to the "just gentiles" by the State of Israel at Yad Vashem for having acted heroically to save Jews,

sometimes to the point of giving their own lives, is a recognition that not even in the darkest hour is every light extinguished. That is why the Psalms, and the entire Bible, though well aware of the human capacity for evil, also proclaim the evil that will not have the last word. Out of the depths of pain and sorrow, the believer's heart cries out: "I trust in you, O Lord: I say You are my God." (Psalms 31:14). Jews and Christians share an immense spiritual patrimony, flowing from God's self-revelation. Our religious teaching and our spiritual experience demand that we overcome evil with good. We remember, but not with any desire for vengeance or an incentive to hatred. For us, to remember is to pray for peace and justice., and to commit ourselves to their cause. Only a world at peace, with justice for all, can avoid repeating the mistakes and terrible crimes of the past.



As Bishop of Rome and successor of the Apostle Peter, I assure the Jewish people that the Catholic Church, motivated by the Gospel law of truth and love and by no political considerations, is deeply saddened by the hatred, acts of persecution and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews by Christians at any time and in any place. The Church rejects racism in any form as a denial of the image of the Creator inherent in every

human being.

In this place of solemn remembrance, I fervently pray that our sorrow for the tragedy which the Jewish people suffered in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century will lead to a new relationship between Christians and Jews. Let us build a new future in which there will be no more anti-Jewish feeling among Christians or anti-Christian feeling among Jews, but rather the mutual respect required of those who adore the one Creator and Lord, and look to Abraham as our common father in faith.

The world must heed the warning that comes to us from the victims of the Holocaust and from the testimony of the survivors. Here at Yad Vashem the memory lives on, and burns itself into our souls. It makes us cry out:

"I hear the whispering of many-terror on every side! But I trust in you, O Lord: I say, 'You are my God.'" (Psalms 31: 13-15)