

"Polish concentration camps" again - is it accidental?

By Edmund Lewandowski

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Do we really know what was preventing the idea of a National Holocaust Memorial in Poland? I do not know. Your idea that Poles do not want one might not be correct. Yes, you are for one in each country. This is your right to think so. If someone does not get excited about the idea, does not necessarily mean that is against it. Other people might have less enthusiastic approach to this particular idea for many reasons. Have you ever thought about it from different angle? There are Jews who do not want to have Memorial together with Christians. Wasn't this the case with problem of crosses at Auschwitz? What about Carmelites? Jews were protesting their presence in Auschwitz until they were relocated. From what I see my impression is that the Jews would not want to have the same memorial with Catholics. Have it crossed your mind that maybe Przemek was talking about this? To me is also incomprehensible why some Jews object to a common memorial.

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Do you know that Poland was the only country where people were shot on the spot for giving even glass of water to Jewish person, or for any other help given to Jews. Do you realize how many people were shot and never given the place at Yad Vashem? If someone was shot, usually the whole family was shot with them, who is to claim their deeds. Are you aware of a book by Zajaczkowski - „Martyrs of charity” - thousands of people died for helping Jews. Are you aware of Zegota? This was an organized help, very sophisticated. Including making false documents, relocating hiding Jews etc. I remember as a young boy living in very small town in Poland in 1960s I heard numerous accounts of Poles who helped Jews. None of them is recognized at Yad Vashem. They do not want/need recognition, they did what was right thing to do. I have never heard negative things about Jews from my parents nor from anyone in the community. It was a tremendous shock to me when someone in America called me anti-Semite - just because I am from Poland. My father spent war at a labor camp after being shot almost to dead in September of 1939 while defending Warsaw from Germans. My mother spent war on a village where she helped to take care of hiding Jews. She said that many people were shot for helping Jews. She never cared to describe publicly what she had done. Many times she talked to us, me and my brother, about details of delivering food, being afraid of Germans catching them and the obligation to help other human beings. I remember specifically, she said that these hiding people were targeted to be killed, so it was even greater obligation to help them. Both my parents were already teachers in 1939.

Do you know exactly what was going on in Jedwabne? Terrible tragedy, but what scope and why? I am ashamed of Poles who helped to carry out the killings. Please see the attached documents at the end of this entire reply. There is no doubt that Germans were the driving force. After all they controlled territory. But since when? Are you aware of the fact that this territory was occupied first by Russians? Are you aware of the fact that many Polish families vanished deported to Siberia? How did this happened? It is documented that Jews were welcoming Russian occupying forces in 1939.

There are documents to that effect at Hoover Institute at Stanford University. Then they the ones who pointed out to Russians who should go to Siberia. Again I have seen documents describing what was happening. Do you know that the Jedwabne investigation uncovered Lenin's statue being thrown into the grave on the top of the bodies? This speaks volumes, to use your language. Remember it was a war, these people were fighting. First Jews sent many families to death in

Siberia and than some people got revenge. Off course I am not saying this makes it right, but gives you understanding why my parents were so good to Jews (no former Soviet occupation) and why Jedwabne happened.

It was wrong to kill, but that was how these people felt. Poles were sent to death by communists, but when they killed communists it turned out they killed first of all Jews. Same in Ejszyski. Jaffa Elliach claims it was because Poles are anti-Semites. The truth is that her parents housed Soviet NKVD and it was an attack on the enemy in a war. What about Koniuchy? Have you heard anything about it?

So I respectfully do not agree with this collective responsibility and the scope of Polish hatred toward Jews. I am far from denying that there are no Poles who hate Jews, but I am not willing to carry the responsibility for them. Your web site has so much information regarded by Poles to be objective, for which you deserve great applause. The main is including Polish non Jewish victims as part of the Holocaust. Believe it or not, there was a conference of a Jewish Polish reconciliation group on the use of the word Holocaust, whether it can be used to refer to non Jewish victims.

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