

**CULTURAL
AWARENESS**

OBSERVANCE



**Days of Remembrance
Information Base**

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Days of Remembrance
People



<https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005260>

When Switzerland closed its borders to Jewish refugees, Paul Grüninger, who was in charge of the Swiss border police in an area on the Swiss-Austrian border, falsified documents to allow 3,600 Jews to enter and stay in Switzerland. Though he was convicted of breach of duty and left destitute, he never regretted his actions. He said, *“My personal well-being, measured against the cruel fate of these thousands, was so insignificant and unimportant that I never even took it into consideration.”*

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous/gruninger.asp>

Oskar Schindler was an ethnic German who joined the Nazi party in 1939. He moved to Poland after the German invasion and became wealthy through his army contacts and cheap labor from the Jewish ghetto. After witnessing the atrocities committed against Jews in the ghetto, he started housing his workers and other Jews in barracks at his factory. He created a fake munitions factory and placed the Jews on “Schindler’s List” to protect them from the Nazis.

<http://www.ushmm.org/information/exhibitions/online-features/special-focus/oskar-schindler>

Emilie Schindler was essential to her husband Oskar's efforts to protect Jews during the Holocaust. Once while Oskar was away, she encountered Nazis taking 250 Jews to a death camp. She convinced them that the Jews were needed at the factory. They were near starvation, and 13 had died. She worked tirelessly rehabilitating them, and all but three recovered. Survivors of the Schindler barracks saw her as a mother figure that did everything she could to protect and provide for them.

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/emilieschindler.html>

In June of 1944, a 32-year-old businessman named Raoul Wallenberg volunteered to go to Budapest to aid in the effort to save Hungarian Jews. Once there, he became a representative of the newly established War Refugee Board. Wallenberg made countless sacrifices for the victims of Nazi violence, including convincing the Swedish government to issue Swedish passports to over 20,000 Hungarian Jews, sheltering upwards of 13,000 Jews in buildings over which he flew the Swedish flag, and carrying food and medical supplies to Jews on marches. One account states that Wallenberg stood in front of Hungarian fascists attempting to seize Jews housed under the Swedish flag and shouted, "*This is Swedish territory...if you want to take them, you'll have to shoot me first.*"

<http://isurvived.org/Frameset4References/-Wallenberg.html>

Maximilian Kolbe, a Catholic priest, was arrested by the German Gestapo in 1941 for hiding upwards of 2,000 Jews from Nazi persecution at his friary in Poland. He was sent to Auschwitz concentration camp. After a man from Kolbe's barracks went missing, 10 men were chosen to be sent to Block 13, a dark room where prisoners were confined to starve to death. One of the men selected, Franciszek Gajowniczek, cried out about his wife and children. Kolbe stepped in and volunteered to take his place. While in confinement, Kolbe led the fading men in songs and prayer, and after three weeks of starvation and dehydration, Kolbe was murdered with an injection of carbolic acid. His bravery was honored on October 10, 1982, when Pope John Paul II canonized him—in the presence of Franciszek Gajowniczek.

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Kolbe.html>

Dr. Eugene Lazowski is a little-known guardian of over 8,000 people in the Rozwadow ghetto and surrounding areas during the Holocaust. As a young doctor, he worked for the Polish Red Cross and frequently risked death in order to help his Jewish neighbors. Along with a fellow Polish colleague, Stanislav Matulewicz, Lazowski discovered that injecting individuals with a vaccine containing the dead epidemic Typhus would have them test positive for the disease without displaying any of the associated symptoms. Lazowski injected thousands of residents of the Rozwadow ghetto, causing the Nazis to refuse deportation to death camps and issue a quarantine of the area. They assumed the infected would perish from the widespread epidemic. The good doctor's clever actions earned him the nickname, "the Polish Schindler."

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/lazowskibio.html>

Sofia Kritikou sheltered the Kazanskys, a Jewish family, in her home in Athens, Greece for the duration of the war. When the Kazanskys first came to stay with the hard working single mother, she wasn't aware that they were Jewish. Though even after discovering the truth, she didn't expel the parents and their three children from her home, despite the steep consequence for hiding Jews.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous-women/kritikou.asp>

At the start of World War II, Irena Sendler was a 29-year-old social worker in Warsaw. When the Warsaw ghetto was sealed off in 1940, close to 400,000 people had been driven inside the ghetto walls. As expected by the Nazis, poor hygiene and overcrowded conditions caused high death rates among those contained. Sendler requested a permit to enter the ghetto under the guise of inspecting sanitation conditions and made connections necessary to smuggle Jews out and into hiding. Three years later, Sendler was tasked with smuggling children into orphanages and institutes for abandoned children throughout Poland. The exact number of lives she is responsible for saving is unknown.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous-women/sendler.asp>

When the deportation of Slovakian Jews began in September of 1944, Anna Igumnova took responsibility for her Jewish colleague, Alice Winter, and Alice's 11-year-old daughter Erika. Igumnova found a room at an abandoned hotel with a sunken bathtub for Alice and Erika to hide in during the day and brought them food and books every night. When the time was right, she took the chance and moved Erika to the mountains, where a peasant family agreed to house her for a fee. Igumnova traveled to the mountains every other week to pay the peasant family in exchange for the child's safety. In April 1945, Alice was reunited with Erika and the rest of her family and continued to keep in touch with the woman who saved her life until the late 1980's.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous-women/igumnova.asp>

Countess Maria von Maltzan was born into a wealthy family in Germany in 1909. After joining some of the initial resistance movements against the Nazi party, she frequently took Jews into her own home and fed and protected them--right under the noses of the Gestapo. Over the course of the war, Maria provided a haven for more than 60 Jews and arranged for their escape to safety. She took many risks and was prepared to pay the ultimate price to save Jews from persecution.

<http://www.auschwitz.dk/maltzan.htm>

For over two years, Miep Gies helped to hide the Frank family and four others from Nazi prosecution. After the family was discovered and arrested on August 4, 1944, Miep found the cloth-bound diary kept by the youngest Frank daughter, Anne. Without the actions of Miep and her family, The Diary of Anne Frank, one of the most-read books in the world, would not exist.

<http://www.miepgies.dk/>

Known as quite possibly the only person to ever volunteer for imprisonment at a concentration camp, Witold Pilecki willingly spent two and a half years in Auschwitz as a secret agent of a resistance group. Pilecki infiltrated the camp in order to organize resistance and send information about the horrors behind the barbed wire. He built a functional radio transmitter from scraps around the camp and used it to tell the world about the gas chambers and mass graves. In 1943, when he began to suspect the Nazis knew of his actions, Pilecki escaped the camp and worked to personally convince Allied powers of the Nazi's plans.

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Witold_Pilecki.html

In December 1938, Nicholas Winton was a 29-year-old London stockbroker. Over the next year he would become a hero, responsible for saving the lives of hundreds of Jewish children. At the time, countries willing to take in the endangered children (Britain and Sweden) didn't have formal organizations established to care for them once they arrived. Winton took the burden on his own shoulders and with the help of a few dedicated friends, he raised money, organized transport, and found stable foster homes for 669 children. Those that lived through the Holocaust because of his selfless actions call themselves Winton's children.

<http://www.powerofgood.net/story.php>

In 2015, Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds was recognized posthumously by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. Seventy years earlier, Edmonds selflessly protected Jewish prisoners of war under his command when he stood up to the German commander in charge of the camp. When the commander demanded that the Jewish prisoners step forward to be separated and prepared for transport out of the camp, Edmonds replied, "*We are all Jews.*" After being threatened with a gun to his head, the U.S. soldier answered, "*If you shoot, you'll have to shoot us all.*"

<http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2015/12/02/458166709/u-s-soldier-posthumously-honored-for-protecting-jewish-pows-in-1945>

Anton Sukhinski's reputation before World War II was not accurate to the valor of his true character. In June of 1943, Sukhinski offered protection to the Zeiger family and three young women. He hid them in his back yard cellar and provided for their basic needs as well as he could. Even after neighbors blackmailed him and firefights ensued, taking the life of one of the young women in the cellar, Sukhinski's offer stood to the refugees. He continued to keep them safe and alive for nine months until the liberation.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/stories/sukhinski.asp>

In 1941, the safety of kids in the children's home in Canet Plage, France fell into the hands of twenty-six-year-old Lois Gunden, an American French teacher from Goshen, Indiana. The haven situated on the seaside of the Mediterranean became home to Spanish refugee children as well as young Jews, smuggled out of a nearby internment camp. One day, when the children went out on a walk, a policeman came to the home to arrest three of the Jewish kids. To buy time, Gunden told the policeman the children wouldn't return for several hours. Later, when the policeman returned, she told him that the kid's clothes had just been laundered and needed more time to dry. The policeman never returned, and the Jewish children were saved from persecution.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous-women/gunden.asp>

Anton Schmid was an Austrian who was drafted into the German army during World War II. While stationed in Vilna, Lithuania, he used his position to help the Jews at every opportunity. Schmid aided Jews with jobs, permits, provisions, shelter, and transport to safer areas. He even hid some in his apartment and office. Although he was warned that the Nazis had heard of his activities, he persisted in helping the Jews until he was arrested and executed for treason in 1942.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/stories/schmid.asp>

Chiune-Sempo Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat, was in Lithuania in 1940 when foreign diplomats were asked to leave. While preparing to go, he met a Jewish delegation requesting Japanese transit visas so they could travel to reach Curacao, a Dutch colony they saw as their only option as most countries had closed their borders to Jewish immigrants. Sugihara defied orders from his superiors and worked tirelessly, issuing thousands of life-saving visas until he was forced to leave the country.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous/sugihara.asp>

Jonas and Felicija Radlinskas were Tatar Muslims who lived with their three daughters in the village of Raižiai, Lithuania. In 1942, they took in Dora and Shifra Reznik, Jewish sisters who were the only two members of their family not killed by the Nazis. The sisters had been wandering for months before they arrived at the Radlinskas' home and the couple took them in and hid them. The Radlinskas protected the Rezniks for almost two years until the area was liberated in 1944.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous/radlinskas.asp>

Carl Lutz, the Swiss vice-consul in Budapest, Hungary, negotiated with Nazis and the Hungarian government to issue letters allowing 8,000 Hungarian Jews to emigrate to Palestine. He actually issued tens of thousands of the letters. Earlier, he had helped 10,000 Jewish children go to Palestine. He also established 76 safe houses around Budapest, calling them Swiss annexes. With his wife Gertrud, he freed Jews from deportation centers and death marches. The Lutzes saved 62,000 Jews.

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/five-rescuers-of-those-threatened-by-the-holocaust-55112043/?no-ist>

Jean Phillippe, a chief of police in Toulouse, France, used his position to help Jews and resistance fighters. In 1943, when he was ordered to provide a list of all Jews in his precinct, Phillippe instead resigned and joined the resistance. He was caught, imprisoned, and tortured. In 1944, he was executed. In his resignation letter, Phillippe wrote, "*I believe that we have no right to deport our fellow citizens and that any Frenchman who becomes an accomplice to this infamy is a traitor.*"

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous/phillipe.asp>

André Trocmé, the pastor of the Protestant congregation in Le Chambon, France, urged his congregants to shelter Jews after deportations began in 1942. The village became a haven for hundreds of Jews fleeing the Nazis. The entire community worked together to rescue Jews, viewing it as their Christian obligation. Despite being pressured, arrested, and imprisoned for five weeks, the minister refused to obey government orders to stop helping the Jews.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous/trocme.asp>

Henry Christian Thomsen was an innkeeper in Snekkersten, Denmark, who joined the Danish resistance. He saved hundreds of Jews by helping them escape Nazi-occupied Denmark. His inn was a meeting place for fishermen who used their boats to take Jews to Sweden, where they were safe from the Nazis. When the number of Jews seeking help grew, Thomsen bought a fishing boat to help transport them himself. He was caught and sent to a concentration camp in Germany, where he died in 1944.

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous/thomsen.asp>

Maria Olt lived in Hungary during World War II. During an appointment, she saw that her physician, Dr. Kuti Nevo, was wearing a yellow emblem. He told her that he feared for his family's safety. Olt took Nevo, his wife, and their newborn daughter to a small village where she created false identities and documents for them, hiding them in safety until after the war. She borrowed money to rent apartments where she sheltered multiple Jewish families, providing for all their needs.

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Olt.html>

Willy Tal was born in Amsterdam in September 1922. With the outbreak of the war, Willy found work as a male nurse in the Jewish Hospital for the mentally disturbed, giving him a temporary reprieve from deportation. On January 21, 1943, by order of Eichmann, around 900 mentally disturbed hospital patients and 500 hospital staff were deported to Auschwitz. Though there was an advanced warning of the deportation and some 100 workers went into hiding, Willy refused to abandon his patients and was sent with them to Auschwitz. Willy was murdered there on April 30, 1943.

http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/bearing_witness/hanukkah-menorah-willy-tal.asp

Tzipporah and Dov Cohen, a young couple interned in the Kovno Ghetto just after the outbreak of the war, gave birth to their daughter on January 18, 1942. The child, named Hinda Cohen, was transferred to the Aleksotas Work Camp with her parents the following year. During the day, Tzipporah and Dov left the camp with the other adults to work in the airport, while the children and the elderly stayed behind. On March 27, 1943, Tzipporah and Dov left their daughter in the care of the elderly prisoners for the afternoon. When the workers returned at the end of the day, they realized the horror that had taken place in their absence: no children remained in the camp. All the children had been deported to the death camps.

http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/bearing_witness/children_holocaust_cohen.asp

Elie Wiesel was born in 1928 in present-day Romania. He was 15 years old when he and his family were deported by the Nazis to Auschwitz. His parents and younger sister perished as a result of the Holocaust. After the war, Wiesel wrote what would become his internationally acclaimed memoir, *“Night”*, which has since been translated into more than 30 languages. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter appointed Elie Wiesel as Chairman of the President’s Commission on the Holocaust. Then, in 1986, Wiesel won the Nobel Peace Prize for his activism in preserving the events of the holocaust.

<http://www.eliewieselfoundation.org/eliewiesel.aspx>

Anthony Acevedo was a medic with the US Army's 70th Infantry Division during World War II when he was captured by Germans at the Battle of the Bulge. As a prisoner of war at the Buchenwald concentration camp, he was charged with taking care of his fellow prisoners. He kept a diary of events and logged the names of those that died to ensure their sacrifice would be remembered.

<https://www.ushmm.org/learn/timeline-of-events/1942-1945/us-army-medic-pow-diary-entry>

Days of Remembrance
Events



<https://www.ushmm.org/learn/holocaust-encyclopedia>

It is estimated that close to 5,000 mentally or physically disabled young patients living in institutionalized settings were murdered in the German *Euthanasia Program*. Starting in October 1939, public health authorities began to persuade parents of children with disabilities to admit their kids to select pediatric clinics throughout Germany and Austria. While there, the patients were murdered by medication overdoses or starvation at the hands of specially recruited medical staff.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

Concentration camps were created to serve as detention centers to imprison and eliminate what the Nazis called enemies of the state. They earned the name “concentration camps” because of the physical concentration of prisoners in one location.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

The Israeli Parliament established Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom Hashoah), to be observed on the 27th day of Nisan of the Hebrew calendar. The Hebrew calendar is a lunar calendar, so the date changes each year in the United States. Observances and remembrance activities occur throughout the week of remembrance, which runs from the Sunday before Holocaust Remembrance Day through the following Sunday.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

In the fall of 1943, martial law was imposed on Denmark by German authorities in response to a few acts of resistance. Later in the year, a German businessman warned Danish authorities of an impending plan to deport all the Danish Jews while they were operating under martial law. Over the course of the following nights, 7,200 of the 7,800 Danish Jews were helped into hiding and ferried to Sweden in small fishing boats.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, responding to mounting political pressure, called for an international conference to facilitate the emigration of refugees from Germany and Austria, and to establish an international organization to work for a solution to the refugee problem. In early July 1938, delegates from 32 countries met at the French resort of Evian on Lake Geneva. During the nine-day meeting, delegates rose to express sympathy for the refugees, yet most countries, including the United States and Britain, offered excuses for not letting in more refugees. Only the Dominican Republic agreed to accept additional refugees.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

On January 22, 1944, nearly a year and a half after the news of Hitler's "Final Solution" plan reached the United States, President Roosevelt issued an executive order that established the War Refugee Board—an initiative tasked with rescuing "*the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war.*" Those that worked for the Board claimed that its greatest setback was that it was created too long after they were made aware of the atrocities. John Pehle, the head of rescue operations, said this about the modest achievements of the Board: "*What we did was little enough. It was late...late and little, I would say.*" In the end, the War Refugee Board helped save the lives of about 200,000 Jews.

<http://isurvived.org/Frameset4References/-Wallenberg.html>

The word anti-Semitism means prejudice against or hatred of Jews. The Holocaust is history's most extreme example of anti-Semitism.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

The term *genocide* did not exist prior to 1944. Raphael Lemkin, a Polish-Jewish lawyer, sought to describe Nazi policies of systematic murder of the European Jews. He formed the word *genocide* by combining *geno-*, from the Greek word for race or tribe, with *-cide*, from the Latin word for killing.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

In 1953, the state of Israel established Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, in order to document and record the history of the Jewish people during the Holocaust as well as to acknowledge the countless non-Jewish individuals who risked their lives to save Jews. Yad Vashem began to award the title "Righteous Among the Nations" in 1963, and since that time, 26,119 rescuers from 51 countries have been acknowledged for their efforts.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

The Holocaust was the persecution and murder of over 6 million men, women, and children by the Nazi regime in the 1930's and 40's. The Nazis believed the German race to be superior and declared the Jews an inferior threat.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

The word Holocaust comes from Greek origins and means “sacrifice by fire,” or “a thing wholly burnt.”

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

In 1933, the Jewish population in Europe stood at about 9.5 million, which represented over 60 percent of the world's Jewish population at the time. By 1945, nearly two of every three European Jews were killed as a result of the Holocaust.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

During the Holocaust, German authorities targeted the Jewish population as well as other groups they perceived as racially inferior, such as Roma (Gypsies) and the Slavic people (Poles, Russians, and others). Additionally, other groups were persecuted on political, ideological, and behavioral grounds, including communists, socialists, Jehovah's Witnesses, people with disabilities, and homosexuals.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

Nazi anti-Semitism linked negative and false images of Jews with modern pseudo-scientific beliefs. Among these stereotypes were those derived from centuries-old anti-Jewish thinking, which incorrectly presented Jews as murderers of Christ, agents of the devil, and practitioners of witchcraft. The Nazis linked these negative stereotypes to a “Jewish way of thinking” that they believed was based on genetics and, therefore, not subject to change. They used this belief to justify the discrimination, persecution, and, eventually, physical murder of Jewish people.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

On the night of November 9, 1938, the Nazis destroyed synagogues and the shop windows of Jewish-owned stores throughout Germany and Austria (an event now known as the *Kristallnacht* or Night of Broken Glass). This event marked a transition to an era of destruction in which genocide would become the singular focus of Nazi anti-Semitism.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

The assessment of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's role during the Holocaust is made difficult by the relative lack of documentation about his thinking. After the entry of the U.S. into the war in December 1941, Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill determined that the number one priority was to win the war, which would ultimately lead to the rescue of Jews and other victims of the Axis powers.

<http://www.ISurvived.org/>

Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group: killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, or forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

In May 1939, the *St. Louis*, a ship carrying 930 Jewish refugees holding legitimate landing certificates, left Germany for Cuba. During the voyage, the certificates granted by the Cuban government were invalidated. Only 22 refugees were allowed entry. President Federico L. Brú insisted the ship leave Havana. The refugees were refused entry into the United States. While en route back to Europe, several countries agreed to take in the refugees; however, as Hitler's armies invaded Western Europe, many of the refugees became victims of the Final Solution.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

Between 1940 and September 1944, inhabitants of the small French village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon and surrounding towns provided shelter for an estimated 5,000 people fleeing German authorities; 3,000-3,500 of whom were Jews. Residents of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon offered refuge in private homes, farms, and schools, and even forged I.D. cards and helped victims cross into Switzerland.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

On August 4, 1944, the hiding place of the Franks and van Pels was betrayed and they were each sent to concentration camps. Miep Gies hid Anne's precious diary, keeping it for a year until official word arrived that Anne was dead. On that dreadful day, she reached into her desk drawer, removed the bundles of paper and handed them to a shattered Otto Frank. "*Here,*" she told him, "*is your daughter Anne's legacy to you.*"

http://www.miepgies.dk/new_page_3.htm

The Holocaust isn't the only occurrence of genocide in the last century. In 1982, the Guatemalan government, using the Guatemalan Army and its counter-insurgency force, began a systematic campaign of repressions and suppressions against the Mayan Indians whom they claimed were working towards a communist group. The two-year series of atrocities is sometimes called "The Silent Holocaust." Psychological warfare and intimidation were deliberate strategies in terrorizing Mayan communities in the country.

http://www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/g_guatemala1.html

The Holocaust isn't the only occurrence of genocide in the last century. In 1970, Cambodia was under the rule of a monarch, Prince Sihanouk, until he was deposed in a military coup. Five years later, Prince Sihanouk and his followers had joined forces with a communist guerrilla organization known as the Khmer Rouge and took down the Cambodian military leader in charge. Under the Khmer Rouge's leadership, all political and civil rights were abolished. Children were taken from their parents and sent to forced labor camps. Factories, schools, universities and hospitals were shut down. Lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers and professionals in any field (including the army) were murdered, along with their extended families. Civilian deaths in this period—from executions, disease, exhaustion and starvation—have been estimated at well over 2 million.

http://www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/g_cambodia1.html

Days of Remembrance
Milestones



https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_ph.php?ModuleId=10005143

More than six decades after the Holocaust, the horrors of Bosnia, Rwanda, and Darfur are sobering reminders that preventing future genocides and mass atrocities remains an enormous challenge. Yet genocide is not the inevitable result of ancient hatreds or irrational leaders. As we learn more from past genocides about the risk factors, warning signs, and triggering events of these crimes, we are also learning that they can be averted and that genocide can be prevented.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

The history of the Holocaust raises difficult questions about our responsibility as a nation to offer refuge and rescue to persecuted people from beyond our borders. As we mark the 22nd anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, we reflect on contemporary cases of genocide. Despite warnings of imminent violence made by General Roméo Dallaire, the head of the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda, the world failed to act, and 800,000 people were murdered within 100 days. As long as genocide remains a threat, we must ask ourselves about the consequences of action—and of inaction.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

The Center for the Prevention of Genocide works on three distinct fronts: bolstering the will of decision makers to prevent and respond to genocide and mass atrocities, strengthening the movement of organizations and experts with similar concerns, and shaping public attitudes so that citizens demand action to prevent genocide.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

Millions of ordinary people witnessed the crimes of the Holocaust. Across Europe, the Nazis found countless willing helpers who collaborated or were complicit in their crimes. What motives and pressures led so many to abandon their fellow human beings? Why did others choose to help?

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

The Holocaust was not an accident in history; it occurred because individuals, organizations, and governments made choices that not only legalized discrimination but also allowed prejudice, hatred, and ultimately mass murder to occur. Silence and indifference to the suffering of others, or to the infringement of civil rights in any society, can—however unintentionally—perpetuate these problems.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

In 1948, the United Nations declared genocide to be an international crime; the term would later be applied to the horrific acts of violence committed during conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and in the African country of Rwanda in the 1990s. An international treaty signed by some 120 countries in 1998 established the International Criminal Court, which has jurisdiction to prosecute crimes of genocide.

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

Remembrance obligates us to focus not only on memorializing those who were killed but also to reflect on what could have been done to save them. History teaches us that the Holocaust might not have occurred if governments and leaders had spoken out during the Nazi rise to power. Could more people have been saved if individual citizens had raised their voices to force their governments to act—if only to offer safety and refuge?

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

Days of Remembrance

Quotes



https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_ph.php?ModuleId=0&MediaId=535&MediaId=559

"...We remember all whose lives were lost or forever altered by the Holocaust. And we are challenged to think about what might motivate us to respond to warning signs of genocide today. History teaches us that genocide can be prevented if enough people care enough to act. Our choices in response to hatred truly do matter, and together we can help fulfill the promise of Never Again."-U.S. Holocaust Museum

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

"Nobody asked who was Jewish and who was not. Nobody asked where you were from. Nobody asked who your father was or if you could pay. They just accepted each of us, taking us in with warmth, sheltering children, often without their parents—children who cried in the night from nightmares."—Elizabeth Koenig-Kaufman, a former child refugee in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

"There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest." — Elie Wiesel

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

"The persecution of Jews in the General Government in Polish territory gradually worsened in its cruelty. In 1939 and 1940 they were forced to wear the Star of David and were herded together and confined in ghettos. In 1941 and 1942 this unadulterated sadism was fully revealed. And then a thinking man, who had overcome his inner cowardice, simply had to help. There was no other choice." —Oskar Schindler, 1964 interview
<http://www.ushmm.org/>

Before his arrest for trying to save three Jewish boys by disguising them as students, French priest and boarding school director Lucien Bunel said, *"I am told that since I am responsible for all the children at the Petit College, I do not have the right to expose myself to possible arrest by the Germans. But do you not think that if that happened and if, per chance, I should be killed, I would not thereby bequeath to my students an example worth far more than all the teaching I could give?"*
<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/righteous/bunel.asp>

Elie Wiesel stated, *"Although we today are not responsible for the injustice of the past, we are responsible for the way we remember the past and what we do with the past."* Only through the process of facing history and ourselves can we hope to reduce the hatred and prevent further violence.
Goldstein, Phyllis (2012). *A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism*. (359) Brookline, MA: Facing History and Ourselves.

"We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Whenever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must—at that moment—become the center of the universe."
- Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, December 10, 1986
<http://www.eliewieselfoundation.org/nobelprizespeech.aspx>

“Human suffering anywhere concerns men and women everywhere. Our lives no longer belong to us alone; they belong to all those who need us desperately.”

- Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, December 10, 1986

<http://www.eliewieselfoundation.org/nobelprizespeech.aspx>

“It is often said that Anne [Frank] symbolizes the six million victims of the Holocaust. I consider this statement wrong. Anne’s life and death were her own individual fate, an individual fate that happened six million times over. Anne cannot, and should not, stand for the many individuals whom the Nazis robbed of their lives. Each victim had his or her own ideals and outlook on life; each victim occupied a unique, personal place in the world and in the hearts of his or her relatives and friends.”

- Miep Gies

Muller, Melissa. (2013) *Anne Frank, The Biography*. (402) New York, NY: Metropolitan Books.

“I want to be useful or give pleasure to the people around me yet who don’t really know me. I want to go on living, even after my death!”

- Anne Frank, March 25, 1944

Muller, Melissa. (2013) *Anne Frank, The Biography*. (402) New York, NY: Metropolitan Books.

One—two—three...
Eight feet long,
Two strides across, the rest is dark...
Life hangs over me like a question mark.
One—two—three...
Maybe another week,
Or next month, may still find me here,
But death, I feel, is very near.

I could have been
Twenty-three next July;
I gambled on what mattered most,
The dice were cast. I lost.

- Hannah Senesh, Budapest, 1944

Lee, Carol Ann (2006). *Anne Frank and the Children of the Holocaust*. (144) New York, NY: Puffin Books.