

**The Address of Radek Vondráček,
the President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament,
On the Occasion of
The Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust
And Prevention of Crimes Against Humanity
Senate of the Czech Parliament
27 January 2021**

We meet here again to honor the memory of the victims of the Holocaust. The world is a year older. But, unfortunately, it is not any wiser. It is not a better place. And it is not even more human.

We're one more year further away from Shoa. Though, its shadow still lies upon us. Even in 2020, European Jews, unfortunately, had to dread the rise of anti-Semitism.

In connection with the COVID-19 epidemic, the well-known triad of evil, which consists of ultra-leftists, ultra-rightists and Islamic radicals, has been complemented by conspiracy theories. There's talk of a world Jewish conspiracy again.

Social networks are filled with hatred and the members of anti-Semitic groups subsequently commit real terrorist attacks.

Why is all this happening? Where should we look for the beginning of the spiral of anger, hatred and violence? And how are we supposed to stop it?

Allow me to borrow a story from the Torah. The story of the battle with Amalek. The story symbolizes a struggle that has been repeated over and over again in human history. The struggle between freedom and slavery, between Messiahship and paganism, between good and evil.

Amalek, like all dictators and enemies of freedom, was well aware that the songs sung by the small nation that Moses had led out of Egyptian slavery were a threat to him.

He knew that wherever the songs sounded, there would be an end to his tyrannical rule. Therefore, he immediately attacked. Without warning, insidiously, from behind. All haters are cowards. They attack the defenseless, foreigners, women and children, the sick.

Adolf Hitler had the same instinct as Amalek. In his book, Mein Kampf, he angrily exclaimed that conscience was a Jewish invention. And with all his might he tried to silence this conscience. He tried to silence it once and for all.

He strove to find the "final solution" and finally silence the songs about freedom. There are still people like Amalek and Hitler in the world. Tyrants and haters who are afraid of human freedom, afraid of human conscience.

What followed, when Mein Kampf began to be implemented in practice, is a terrible tragedy for the Jewish people. This tragedy must be constantly remembered and must never be forgotten.

Not even relativized. Those who liken themselves to Jews during the Holocaust in order to give their political agenda a semblance of urgency and fatality deserve the harshest condemnation and the deepest contempt.

They disparage the memory of six million murdered.

They abuse them. They mock them. And if they themselves do not directly spread the evil, at least they are thereby paving it a way.

There was only one Holocaust, and this is how it should be interpreted. No one has the right to usurp it. On the other hand, this particular tragedy has a deep general meaning.

Hitler is dead, but Amalek is still with us. The evil that seeks to silence human conscience still lives. And we have to fight it again and again. The Jews in that story do not represent "just" one *nation*, but *a claim* that applies to the entire human family.

A claim to freedom, to conscience, to humanity. The choice is not primarily given by the genus, but by our actions.

Each of us has a choice whether to behave messianic or pagan. Whether we'll be Israel or Amalek. Whether we will be righteous among the nations, or an anti-Semite. Whether we will protect the weak or attack them.

I firmly believe and hope that the Shoah will not be repeated in any form. That such a great evil will never rise again. But in order for this not to happen, we must conduct daily battles with smaller evils. As Jan Palach put it: "People must fight against the evil they feel equal to measure up to".

The Jewish community is always among the first to respond when someone is being offended. When hatred and prejudice are being spread. When anyone is persecuted for their nationality, faith or opinion.

Thank you for that, Jewish community!

The Holocaust remains a permanent memento. Among the laws that the Lord gave Moses is the obligation to consistently fight against evil: "...you shall blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; do not forget!"

Yes, as human beings, we are committed to not allowing the evil within us to triumph. Never and nowhere.

WE WON'T FORGET!