

# Auschwitz event shows unhealed war wounds

By Jonathan Luxmoore  
Catholic News Service

WARSAW, Poland — The 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz Nazi death camp drew pledges that the genocide perpetrated there should never happen again, but also showed that some wounds inflicted during World War II have not healed.

Some Jewish groups criticized the ceremonies organized by the Polish government as failing to place enough stress on the Jewish dimension of the Nazi annihilation campaign. About 90 percent of the estimated 1.5 million people killed at the camp were Jews.

A handful of Jewish demonstrators also protested the presence of a cross and a church in the area of the death camp site, saying Christian symbols were inappropriate for what is basically a Jewish cemetery symbolizing the Holocaust.

At the same time, some of the strongest criticisms of the Nazis' World War II crimes against the Jews came from Catholic leaders.

The German bishops said Nazi-era German Catholicism shared the blame for the Holocaust.

At the Vatican, Pope John Paul II said Auschwitz marked one of the darkest chapters of human history.

"Never again anti-Semitism!" he said Jan. 29. "Never again genocide!"

Auschwitz is the German name for the Polish town of Oswiecim. The twin concentration camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau which composed the Auschwitz complex were liberated by Soviet troops on Jan. 27, 1945. The troops found about 7,000 survivors.

Along with Jews from throughout Europe, 70,000 Poles, 15,000 Russians and 23,000 Gypsies died at Auschwitz.

A Polish government-sponsored survey published before the anniversary ceremonies showed that 47 percent of Poles regarded Auschwitz as a place of primarily Polish martyrdom and 8 percent as primarily a site of Jewish extermination. Twenty percent believed the death camp symbolized joint Polish and Jewish suffering.

Speaking at Birkenau Jan. 26, Jean Kahn, head of the European Jewish Congress, said Jewish organizations resist efforts "to Christianize the Holocaust by the Catholic Church."

Meanwhile, U.S. Rabbi Avraham Weiss and 10 followers picketed the Catholic Church adjacent to Birkenau and protested the presence of a huge cross at Auschwitz.

A cross and church "are improper on the territory of Auschwitz, just as a Jewish star or synagogue would be at a Catholic cemetery," said Rabbi Weiss.

Bishop Adam Smigielski of Sosnowiec, the diocese where Oswiecim is located, said the cross must remain as a recognition that the camp's murder victims included many Christians.

Polish President Lech Walesa was criticized for not mentioning Jews in two of his three speeches during official ceremonies.

Andrzej Zakrzewski, head of the Polish government's anniversary organizing committee, rejected the criticism and accusations that the official ceremonies downplayed the Holocaust.

"The president, like many Poles, does not distinguish between Poles and Polish Jews," he said.

For Walesa, Jews "were simply Poles of the Mosaic faith," he added.

Zakrzewski said that the ceremonies had an interreligious dimension with prayers read from many religions.

"This was perhaps the first time that Muslims had prayed at a Jewish ceremony," he said. This is "a fact important not only for religious, but for political and moral reasons, too."



An unidentified concentration camp survivor, wearing his prisoner number attached to his jacket, weeps Jan. 26 as he stands in the crowd of people attending the Jewish ceremony in Auschwitz Birkenau.

Zakrzewski and Polish Catholic leaders emphasized that Poland was a victim of Nazi Germany and that Poles were not responsible for the concentration camps in their country.

"The Holocaust's perpetrators were German Nazis although Auschwitz's heritage has landed on Poles," said Bishop Stanislaw Gadecki, head of the Polish church's Commission for Dialogue with

Judaism. An anniversary statement issued by the Polish bishops expressed "clear opposition" to anti-Semitism and said Poles were "unwilling witnesses of the Jewish extermination."

It is false to "look on every Pole as a Nazi collaborator, or perceive the Catholic Church as being anti-Semitic," the Polish bishops added.

The German bishops called Auschwitz "the symbol of the destruction of European Judaism."

They criticized the Nazi-era Catholic Church as "a church community which turned its back too much on the destiny of the persecuted Jewish people."

An "anti-Jewish attitude continued to live in Catholic circles" during the Nazi era causing some Catholics to remain "indifferent to the crimes against Jewish life" while others "supported the crimes and became criminals themselves," the German bishops said.

Catholic leaders in several countries said Auschwitz holds lessons for today. The pope said it must serve as a warning for today's violent times and help usher in a season of peace and mutual respect.

Archbishop Oscar H. Lipscomb of Mobile, Ala., said remembering Auschwitz should help the world to end the violence in the Balkans and Rwanda.

There is also an important lesson in the "bitter enforcement of the draconian immigration laws of the period, restrictions which kept this country from becoming an asylum for Jews, Catholics and others that it should have been, and should be now," he said.

Archbishop Lipscomb is chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

## Dining Around the Diocese

### MR. DOMINIC'S AT THE LAKE

Fine Italian Cuisine

Delicious appetizers, soups, veal dishes, vegetarian, chicken, fish, and homemade pasta.

10% Senior Discount  
Serving Lunch & Dinner



4699 Lake Ave.  
865-4630

### CRYSTAL BARN

Light Dinner Menu

Fresh Baked Bread  
Tossed Greens Salad-Choice of Dressing  
Seasonal Accompaniments

- Roast, Aged Prime Rib ... \$10.95
- Chicken French ..... \$8.95
- Veal Parmesan ..... \$9.85
- Jamaican Pork Chop .... \$9.95
- Sole Almondine ..... \$8.95
- Surf and Turf ..... \$14.95

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday  
Buy any light dinner entree and receive \$5.00 off a second entree.  
With this ad. Offer expires 2/12/95

CRYSTAL BARN...  
what a good restaurant should be.  
2851 Clover Street, Pittsford  
381-4844

Fish Fry Every Friday ... \$9.95

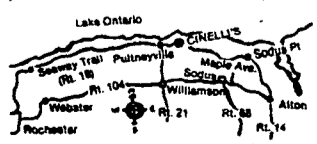
### CHERRY'S

254-8464  
235 West Ridge Road (Between Lake & Dewey)  
SERVING AUTHENTIC POLISH & UKRAINIAN FOOD  
Pierogi & Golombki Lunch & Dinners  
Fish Dinners every Friday  
20% OFF Any Entree with this ad  
Good for lunch & Fri. & Sat. Dinners-Dine-In Only.  
(Not valid with other coupon offers)  
Lunch: M-F 11am-2pm; Dinner: M-Sat. 6pm-10pm  
FREE PARKING IN REAR

### SCOTTSVILLE STEAK HOUSE & LOUNGE

Serving Dinner Daily  
• Steaks • Prime Rib  
• Full Menu  
• Senior Citizen Specials  
• Party Room  
Friday Night Early Bird Special  
Haddock Fish Fry \$5.95  
formerly the Oatka Restaurant  
17 Main St., Scottsville, NY (716) 889-7350  
HOURS: T-Thurs. 11:30am-9pm; Fri. 11:30am-10pm;  
Sat. 4:30-10pm; Sun. 12:30-9pm. Closed Mon.

### Cinelli's COUNTRY HOUSE RESTAURANT

One of Wayne County's Finest Restaurant & Party Houses.  
Fine service, a great view, wonderful food, and a marvelous menu are just the beginning. Choose from between 10 and 12 daily specials. Sunday Specials from our country ovens include Roast Leg of Montana Lamb, and Fresh Roast Pork served with country dressing and pan gravies.  
Serving lunches Tues.-Fri. from 11:30am; dinners Tues.-Sat. from 5pm; Sun. 12:30-7:30 pm. Closed Monday.  
A BIG CITY MENU AT COUNTRY PRICES  
Reservations are Recommended  
(315) 483-9154 • 6007 Lake Rd., Sodus, NY  


### LAMPFLIGHTER

A Special Place for Special People  
February Specials  
Rack of Lamb \$15.95  
Chicken Florentine \$12.95  
Maitred Rib \$12.95  
Portofino \$15.95  
Lobster, shrimp, crabmeat & scallops sauteed in olive oil with artichoke hearts & olives & served over a bed of pasta  
Serving Lunch Tues.-Fri.  
Dinner Mon.-Sat.  
Located Down the Road from the Greece Marriott  
831 Fetzner Rd.  
corner Maiden Lane  
225-2500

### BOSDYK'S Restaurant & Cocktail Lounge

After Mass try one of our delicious Sunday Specials  
Roast Turkey & Dressing ..... \$6.99  
Center Cut Broiled Pork Chop ..... \$6.99  
  
Fresh Haddock Fish Fry served everyday  
Party Room for gatherings of up to 60 people  
430 Spencerport Road (corner of Long Pond)  
(716) 247-7690