

Reading 16C

OUTLINE: THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE: WORLD RESPONSES TO THE HOLOCAUST

I. What the Allies Knew and How They Responded:

A. The Newspapers:

1. 1938:

a.

b.

2. 1941:

3. 1942:

a.

1)

2)

3)

b.

1)

2)

RESPONSE: **Denials:**

B. Other Sources of Information:

1. World Jewish Congress:

RESPONSE:

2. U.S. Air Force:

RESPONSE:

3. Polish Underground:

RESPONSE: a.

b.

1)

2)

3)

WHEN THE ALLIES REFUSED TO BOMB AUSCHWITZ IN 1944, THE NAZIS WERE KILLING 15,000 JEWS EACH DAY. ONE BOMB, DESTROYING ONE GAS CHAMBER OR ONE RAILROAD LINE, MIGHT HAVE SAVED THOUSANDS OF LIVES.

4. **Jan Karski:**

a.

b.

RESPONSE:

ROOSEVELT INSISTED THAT THE WAR AND THE HOLOCAUST WERE THE SAME. TO HIM, FIGHTING THE GERMANS WAS AUTOMATICALLY HELPING THE JEWS. THIS OPINION ALLOWED THE HOLOCAUST TO CONTINUE AND RESULTED IN THE DEATHS OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF INNOCENT PEOPLE.

5. **Romanian Government:**

RESPONSE:

6. **Bermuda Conference:**

RESPONSE:

7. **Adolf Eichmann:**

RESPONSE:

8. War Refugee Board:

RESPONSE:

9. Escaped Prisoners:

RESPONSE:

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

B. Some Reasons for the Allied Responses:

1. War Propaganda:

2. Disbelief:

3. German Denials:

4. Anti-Semitism:

5. "Useless People":

THE LAST REASON IS PERHAPS THE MOST DISTURBING BECAUSE IT SUGGESTS THAT THE MORALITY OF SOME ALLIED BUREAUCRATS WAS NOT UNLIKE THE MORALITY OF GERMAN BUREAUCRATS.

II. What the Christian Churches Knew and How They Responded:

A. The Vatican:

1. The Pope:

2. The Concordat:

a. Papal Silence:

b. Vatican Opposition to the Third Reich:

3. “Final Solution”:

4. The Fate of the Italian Jews:

a.

1)

2)

b.

c.

d. Papal Silence:

1)

2)

3)

5. Rescue:

THE VATICAN SOURCES ESTIMATE POPE PIUS XII WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR SECRETLY DIRECTING OR APPROVING CATHOLIC ASSISTANCE TO HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF JEWS. HAD THE POPE MORE OPENLY AND OFFICIALLY CONDEMNED NAZI ACTIONS, MORE JEWS MIGHT HAVE BEEN SAVED.

6. Some Reasons for the Vatican Responses:

a. **Fear of Reprisals:**

b. **Fear for the Jews:**

c. **Catholic Lands:**

d. **Anti-Communism:**

B. Individual Protests:

1. German Catholic Opponents of Nazism:

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

C. Some Protestant Responses to the Holocaust:

1. Individuals:

a. **Andre Trocme:**

b. **Archbishop Damskinos:**

2. The Confessing Church:

a. **Niemoeller and Barth:**

b. **The Barmen Confession:**

c. **Dietrich Bonhoeffer:**

d. **Protestant Opponents of Nazism:**

3. Church Policy:

D. Some Reasons for the Protestant Responses:

1. Danger:

2. Religious Principles:

III. Summary

Shmuel Zygelboim wrote that the primary responsibility for the murder of the Jews was with the murders themselves. But, what drove him to despair and suicide was the realization that the Allies, too, shared the responsibility by refusing to help when and where they could.

THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MURDER OF THE JEWS LIES WITH THE PERPETRATORS, THE GERMAN DESTRUCTION MACHINE. BUT THE SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITY COMES FROM INDIFFERENCE AND REFUSAL TO ACT. THE ALLIES DID NOT DETERMINE "WHO SHALL LIVE AND WHO SHALL DIE," BUT THEY WERE INDIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SUCH DECISIONS. CHURCH OFFICIALS OF DIFFERENT CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS DID NOT CONTROL THOSE LIFE AND DEATH DECISIONS. YET, SOME OF THEM FAILED AS MORAL LEADERS OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.