



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0548-2015, **Version:** *

Preconsidered Res. No. 548

Resolution commemorating the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps on January 27th, 2015.

By Council Members Levine, the Speaker (Council Member Mark-Viverito), Cohen, Deutsch, Garodnick, Greenfield, Kallos, Koslowitz, Lander, Lancman, Levin, Maisel, Rosenthal, Treyger, Weprin, Van Bramer, Crowley, Koo, Williams, Cornegy, Miller, Chin, Constantinides, Eugene, Gentile, Mendez, Richards, Rose and Vallone

Whereas, According to the Simon Wiesenthal Center, early in 1942, the Nazi hierarchy formally decided on the "Final Solution" to the "Jewish problem" - annihilation; and

Whereas, Throughout occupied Europe, genocide was begun, and by 1945, at the end of World War II, six million Jews and millions of others had been killed; and

Whereas, Auschwitz-Birkenau was a huge complex of camps including Auschwitz and Auschwitz II-Birkenau, Auschwitz III-Monowitz and 45 satellite camps, each dedicated variously to killing centers, concentration, and forced-labor camps; and

Whereas, It has been estimated that a minimum of 1.3 million people were sent to Auschwitz between 1940 and 1945 and that of these, at least 1.1 million were murdered; and

Whereas, January 2015 marks seventy years since the liberation of Auschwitz by Allied forces; and

Whereas, The United Nations' Resolution in 2005 establishing January 27th as Holocaust Remembrance Day, on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, said in part:

“Reaffirming that the Holocaust, which resulted in the murder of one third of the Jewish people along with countless members of other minorities, will forever be a warning to all people of the dangers of hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice”; and

Whereas, In response to the destruction and depravity of the Nazi regime, institutions such as the Simon

Wiesenthal Museum of Tolerance New York, and elsewhere throughout the world, have been established, to honor the memory of the victims and through education help give meaning to the expression “Never Again”; and

Whereas, According to Selfhelp Community Services, Inc., in 2011 there were approximately 73,000 Holocaust survivors living in and around New York City, many of whom were liberated from Auschwitz-Birkenau; and

Whereas, Particularly in light of recent events in Paris, France, the words of Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, who was barely alive in Auschwitz as the camp was liberated by Allied forces, resound louder than ever:

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. Wherever 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; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York commemorates the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps on January 27th, 2015.

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