

To the Polish Center for Holocaust Research

Dear Madams and Sirs,

the published statement "In defence of Jan Grabowski's good name" saddened me deeply. I signed the letter by the Good Name Redoubt regarding the publishing activity of Mr Jan Grabowski because I consider Mr Grabowski's activity unreliable and unobjective. Unfortunately, the content and tone of your letter does not contribute to solving the problem but forms part of a discourse which brings harm to many people and, in my opinion, is deeply unfair. I would like to comment on several points made in your statement.

"On 7 June the Good Name Redoubt - Polish League Against Defamation in it's statement attacked our colleague..." - it was not our intention to attack Mr Grabowski, but to defend ourselves from an attack on our sensitivity and our code of values, on the Truth - based on our current observations.

- „...thus discredits at once both Jan Grabowski and all the historians all over the world that study the Holocaust, treating them as blind, deaf and not very intelligent. Clearly a charge of a light brigade.” - apart from the obvious irony and malice, the inferences are illogical - what is the basis for such generalised expressions? Your brief statement contains much more emotional and pejorative expressions referring to the League and the scientists who signed the statement without referring to any facts (except for the appearance of the League's statement).

"The signatories say that "Grabowski fails to adhere to the fundamental rules of researcher's credibility..." etc. This is how the League and those who signed the letter perceive Mr Grabowski's publishing activity - this is a fact worth considering. I do not know any of these people directly, perhaps I had a chance to talk to a few of them on some occasion, but not on this subject. The statement is a consensus between the opinions of the signed individuals, and each of them probably would place emphasis on different aspects, etc. This is an interesting research material, but you treated it in a completely unobjective, biased and emotional way - it's a great pity. You represent the Centre, which probably has some kind of official policy, but your statement lacks reflection, it does not consider the arguments, nor does it analyse the various aspects, meanings, relationships between notions and references to facts, but instead there is contempt and devaluing people, intentions, etc.

- "It is hard to prove the obvious, so we will not do so" - it's a pity that your statement lacks the search for the Truth; however, openness to academic debate with competent historians is a positive sign - unfortunately I am unable to participate due to being an IT and electronics specialist and a bioengineer. I do come from a small town where there used to be a Jewish ghetto, with a Jewish cemetery, where a lot of Jewish (and Polish) blood has been shed, where I heard my grandfather's stories about Poles and Jews coexisting, their good mutual relations but also some painful situations, where there were

more Jews before the War than Poles, but who were all Polish citizens. I am an enthusiast of history, I have read a lot of testimonies and books, I was taught how to think logically, objectify views, formalise knowledge, verify subjective views and measure the unmeasurable (e.g. physicians' opinions), optimise research methods, carry out studies with persistence, plan and perform experiments in a consistent manner, etc. It would seem that I am prepared for a discussion on merits with everyone who seeks the truth and presents their views in a rational way, but I cannot participate in this debate...

- "None of the 134 signatories deals with the history of the Holocaust." - there are many, believe me; at least in my generation everybody deals with the history of Holocaust, including my children... Poles deal with the Holocaust like nobody else in the world. Our land saw many dreadful events, although many of us had not been born yet to witness them. The history of Holocaust runs in my blood, is present in the history of my family, my city Warsaw, where I have lived for years, it is everywhere. The sooner you understand that you have no monopoly on knowledge about Holocaust, the better for all of you. Everyone has a right to this part of history and everybody participates in it in a certain way... our task is to combine these local mini-truths into one holy Truth... in this story Jews will always be mixed with Poles because we both have been through hell and I'm unable to tell who suffered more - those who died, those who survived or maybe those who were later born on this infernal land... only God knows what was happening in the hearts of those who were scared, who died, who were informers, who turned away helplessly, those who had the courage to help and die for others, to look at the death of their children... this is why we should be sensitive and show mutual trust. If Mr Grabowski hurts and stigmatises people, it is worth considering the issue and let the voice of those with a different view on the history of the Holocaust be heard - they are often witnesses, even if born after the War. Here, there are no Professors in Holocaust history, there are those who were wounded, killed, recovering and reminiscing, kind of absent... let us pray together and light the candles instead of numbering and classifying the victims, claiming rights, passing judgments and condemning - maybe then God forgives us all...

- "We totally agree with the president's care for truth" - it's a beautiful statement which is good to hear. We should search for it together. As a scientist, I know that nobody owns the Truth - it needs to be discovered patiently, modestly and persistently, without pride and irony - you don't own it and neither do we or they - we can reach it together. However, I know I want to serve the Truth and thus I ask Mr Grabowski and you, Madams and Sirs, to be the servants of the Truth, as we, being scientists, bear a special responsibility and have a special role to play...

I sincerely and personally apologise for all expressions in the League's statement which you found offensive or unfairly judgmental of Mr Grabowski's publishing activity.

My kindest and sincerest regards,

Artur Przelaskowski