

OPEN LETTER

Vilnius, 1 September 2008

To His Excellency Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania
To Česlovas Juršėnas, Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania
To Gediminas Kirkilas, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania
To Algimantas Valantinas, Prosecutor General of the Republic of Lithuania

The Lithuanian Jewish Community did not fail to notice the quite rapid reaction of the country's President and Prime Minister, who urged law enforcement authorities and special services to find as quickly as possible the criminals (and their masterminds) who organized the attack on the LJC building in Vilnius on August 9-10.

But we respectfully wish to point out that this act of vandalism is not exceptional. It should be evaluated in the context of the neo-Nazi parade on March 11, biased media publications about the Šnipiškės cemetery, restitution of Jewish property (that delayed by the authorities), vandalism at Jewish cemeteries and mass murder sites, antisemitic articles in the press and on the internet. The Lithuanian Jewish Community has already mentioned the serious concern and anxiety caused by all these problems in its statement of 18 May 2008.

On 19 June 2008 we addressed the leaders of the Republic of Lithuania in an open letter concerning the aforementioned events and anti-Nazi Jewish partisans who are being persecuted by the Prosecutor's Office. We were hoping that the leaders of our state would politically evaluate the persecutions (which have no precedent in the post-war world) of ghetto prisoners, who are being accused of choosing the only possible means of defense in the face of mortal danger, that is, armed resistance to the Nazis and their local collaborators.

The fact that the persecution of anti-Nazi Jewish partisans was not evaluated politically, forces us to ask the following questions: Does Lithuania accept the victory of the anti-Hitler coalition at the end of World War II? Does the Republic of Lithuania accept the decisions of the international Nuremberg Tribunal? Do the courts and prosecutors of the Republic of Lithuania follow these decisions? Can the judges and prosecutors of our state follow a different policy from that of the Republic of Lithuania? Is the persecution of partisans and ghetto prisoners a part of official policy of the Republic of Lithuania or is it an act solely by the will of prosecutors and judges?

The President of Lithuania remarked correctly that the attack against the Jewish community building was a provocation against Lithuania. We think that the persecution of anti-Nazi Jewish people is an even more dangerous provocation against Lithuania than the act of vandalism against the community building. It is much easier to clean the walls and windows of the building at Pylimo 4, than it will be to wash away the signs of shame from the facade of the state if the persecution of anti-Nazi Jewish partisans is not halted.

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