

## **The Legacy of Hope**

### ***Thought for the Day***

***Ephraim Borowski (Director, Scottish Council of Jewish Communities)***

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65 years ago today, Auschwitz, the most notorious of all the Nazi concentration camps, was liberated by the Allies. That anniversary is now marked by Holocaust Memorial Day.

Yesterday in Glasgow there was an intensely moving ceremony, attended by many political and religious leaders. We remembered the late Rev Ernest Levy, one of many Holocaust survivors who made their home in Scotland. He devoted the last years of his life to retelling his own nightmares so that others would not repeat them. We heard the moving reflections of school pupils of many different backgrounds who had visited Auschwitz.

And we heard from the Head Teacher of a small school in Tennessee, who brought home the unimaginable scale of the Holocaust – as if the entire population of Scotland had been wiped out, twice over – by setting her pupils the task of collecting just one paperclip for each victim. As their project caught the public imagination, they began to receive donations, some just in sympathy, some in memory of lost relatives, and some – the most moving for me – in memory of people whose name was not even known, as if their memory would somehow be perpetuated by that small piece of bent metal.

In a Jewish tradition that has now become universal, we also lit candles in memory of those who were killed – not just the six million Jewish victims, but the five million others murdered for their ethnicity, their beliefs, their disability, their sexual orientation, or whatever else set them apart from the Nazi ideal.

How inadequate are eleven candles for eleven million dead!

But, as Ernest Levy often pointed out, even one candle is enough to dispel darkness, and that is the legacy of hope that is the theme of this year's commemoration. We remember, not only to reflect on the depths to which human evil can descend, not only to commemorate the victims, but to do our bit to ensure that it should never, ever, happen again.

*Ephraim Borowski*

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