

Distinguished Ambassadors, Religious Leaders, Esteemed Panelists, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to begin by thanking the Holy See Mission to the United Nations --for inviting Pave the Way Foundation to participate in this most important event on this solemn day of remembrance.

The leadership of Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Archbishop Bernardito Auza, and the staff of the Holy See must be recognized for initiating this unique forum --marking the liberation of the death camp Auschwitz 75 years ago today.

Pave the Way Foundation has been similarly blessed with strong unwavering leadership from our Chairman, Elliot Hershberg,-- our Boards of Directors, and Advisors-- and I thank them for their hard work and support. --I wish to personally express my gratitude to Michel Yves Bollore for his support and encouragement to seek the truth. --Most importantly, I wish to thank my wife and my partner for 50 years, Meredith.

Pave the Way Foundation was founded in 2002 to initiate cultural, educational, and technological exchanges between religions in order to build gestures of goodwill. --We identify non-theological obstacles in the diplomatic and political arena, - -unraveling and eliminating the barriers of disinformation --that serve to stoke distrust between religions. --Working quietly from behind the scenes, our many successes have, we humbly believe, changed the course of history. We talk to people who will not talk to each other.-- This is the reason we have been dubbed --“the most famous organization in the world that no one has ever heard of.”

Let me take you through the sequence of events of how we got involved in the question of the role of the Catholic Church, Pope Pius XII and the Holy See in the horror of the Holocaust.

In 2006, a prominent New York Rabbi requested we use our access in the Vatican to intercede on behalf of a Jewish journalist and author, Dan Kurzman.-- Mr. Kurzman was researching a book that would eventually be entitled ***“A Special Mission, Hitler’s Secret Plot to Seize the Vatican and Kidnap Pope Pius XII”***.-- It was based on Kurzman’s extensive interviews in the 1970s with General Karl Wolff, who was Chief of Staff of Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler and in 1943 became Supreme SS and Police Leader for Italy.

Kurzman’s book revealed Adolf Hitler’s orders to General Wolff, to prepare an invasion strategy of the Vatican. -- Nazi soldiers disguised as partisans would enter Vatican territory. They would kill any clergy they encountered. Subsequently, uniformed German military would rush into the Vatican to carry out a fake rescue of Pope Pius XII,-- who would either be "killed in combat" or transported to Liechtenstein and ultimately assassinated.

Through testimony, we later learned that the German military commanders tried to dissuade Hitler from ordering this invasion. They speculated that an arrest of the pope would be a military disaster, resulting in riots, which would strain much needed military forces elsewhere throughout occupied Europe. This military assessment was later leveraged by Pope Pius XII to end the arrest of the Roman Jewish community on October 16,

1943. The Pope ordered in writing and verbally, --the protection of what he called “this vibrant Jewish community” --to be hidden in 696 ecclesiastical and private locations, thereby saving 6,381 Jewish lives according to the latest statistical study.

When Mr. Kurzman revealed all of this to me, I was astonished. -- I believed, as many fellow Jews in my generation did, that in order to oppose communism, the Holy See was complicit with the Nazis.

I further believed the Church was only concerned with Vatican assets and was indifferent to the fate of European Jews.

I thought the Holy See refused to excommunicate the Nazis. Surprisingly, --Vatican documents show that in 1930 the German Bishops did excommunicate anyone who joined the Nazi party, wore the Nazi uniform or flew the Nazi flag. --These revelations compelled Meredith and me to rethink our personal beliefs and consequently started us, and Pave the Way Foundation, on a long journey, which continues to this very day.

Before interceding on behalf of Mr. Kurzman, we felt it necessary to perform due diligence. We began online research - into the archives of major newspapers including the Jerusalem Post, the New York Times, and many others.

I queried from 1939 to 1958 the subject of Pope Pius XII and the Jews. To my surprise-- I could not find one negative article. On the contrary, most of the press was positive toward the wartime actions of Pope Pius XII and the Vatican. I further discovered that the most prominent Jewish personalities of the

era praised the actions of the Church and specifically Pope Pius XII.-- Golda Meir, Albert Einstein, all of the Jewish organizations, the chief Rabbis of Rome, of Egypt, of Palestine, of Romania, of Denmark and many more showered the Catholic Church with unreserved praise. –

Most convincing to me were the words of a noted Hungarian Jewish scholar, JENÖ LÉVAI, who lived through the war. LÉVAI said of Pius XII,-- “it is a particularly regrettable irony that the one person in all of occupied Europe who did more than anyone else to halt the dreadful crime and alleviate its consequences is today made the scapegoat for the failures of others.”

How was this possible, that all who lived through the war, and actually experienced Nazi barbarism, had a diametrically opposite opinion of the Pope’s lifesaving actions-- from those who were born after the war?

Soon thereafter, Meredith and I traveled to Jerusalem, where we met with the chief Ashkenazy Rabbi of Israel to whom we revealed our findings. Rabbi Yona Metzger encouraged me to use my position with the Vatican to investigate everything possible on this subject. He said Holy Scriptures teach us --that **“ingratitude”** is one of the worst character flaws a Jew can have. If my suspicions were true, I thought at the time, then generations of Jews would have been denied the dignity of showing gratitude to their rescuers in the Catholic Church and the Vatican. I soon came to realize that the false narrative I had believed to be accurate was the result of a Soviet disinformation plan, initially hatched in February 1960,

two years after the death of Pius XII. Called “Operation Seat 12,” this plan was advanced in 1963 by theatrical media and propaganda, followed by a slew of poorly researched books.

I then presented this information to the Pave the Way Foundation’s Board of Directors for action.

Our Board knew we would be opening a “Pandora’s box,” but we felt that shining the bright light of truth on years of dark disinformation was worth any potential problems. We promised to reveal all the information we discovered whether - ***-positive or negative***. My wife Meredith and I traveled extensively to gather primary documentation. We interviewed eyewitnesses on video, who had first-hand information and went on the record. These revealing videos would prove very important, since many of those we interviewed have since passed away, but their indispensable testimony has been preserved.

We partnered with many international scholars, some of whom are with us today. We collected and posted online for public study thousands of wartime documents, many of which were discovered in the archives of individual dioceses throughout Europe.

Pave the Way Foundation brought together many scholars and invited many of the critics of the Vatican and the Papacy of Pius XII to multiple international symposia,-- the goal of which was to study the evidentiary materials of this era.

In 2006, when Pope Benedict XVI ordered the opening of the Vatican archives up to 1939, we expected all the critics of the

Catholic Church's supposed role in the Holocaust would come to the newly opened archives to research their theories and allegations. Shockingly, few ever did.

Nevertheless, our team of scholars did their research for them. To date, we have posted over 76,000 pages of primary sourced documentation along with eyewitness videos on our website. This research is all available free of charge for scholarly study.

For this effort, we thought we would be applauded by those historians who had been clamoring for war-time documents.-- Instead we were excoriated by those whose books and theories were totally discredited by the evidence we had unearthed.

In 36 days, Pope Francis will open six Vatican Archives, eight years earlier than canon law decrees. We fully expect much will be revealed and that our efforts over the last 14 years will be confirmed and advanced.

Through the presentations and documents, you will see today, we intend to respond to the following important questions:

1. What was the approach of the Holy See and the Catholic Church to the horror of the Holocaust?
2. During the rise of Adolf Hitler from the early 1920's, was the future Pope Pius XII (Eugenio Pacelli), as Holy See Ambassador to Germany, and the Catholic Church silent about the coming dangers?
3. Did the Holy See officially recognize the Nazi regime by signing a Concordat with Nazi Germany in 1933?
4. What was the Nazi opinion of the Catholic Church and, consequently, why was it targeted by Hitler for destruction?

5. Was Pope Pius XII an anti-Semite? Was he silent during the Holocaust? Why didn't he protest with a forceful public condemnation of the killing of the Jews?
6. Israeli historian and ambassador, Pinchas Lapide, who lived through the war, wrote in his book "Three Popes and the Jews,"-- that the Catholic Church saved between 847,000 and 882,000 Jews, which today would account for approx. 4,000,000 lives or 25% of the 16 million Jews worldwide. Is this figure accurate? If so, were the lifesaving actions of Catholic clergy, religious and family's actions individual acts of mercy as many have surmised or were they connected to directives of the Vatican and Pius XII?
7. Many Italian Jews have an animus for Pope Pius XII because they claim he was silent on October 16, 1943 during the arrest of the Roman Jews when 1259 Jews were rounded up and 1,030 were sent to Auschwitz. What are the documented facts of the actions of the Pope on that terrible day?
8. Was the Holy See complicit with aiding Nazis to escape punishment?
9. How, why and when did the esteem for the lifesaving actions taken during the Holocaust by the Holy See and Pope Pius XII begin to change? Was this the result of scholarship or propaganda?
10. Pope Francis has ordered that all of the Vatican Archives are be opened eight years early, on March 2, 2020. What can we expect to learn from each archive and why did it take so long to open them?

CONCLUSION

On this day on which we remember the horror of the Holocaust and give thanks for the liberation of Auschwitz, Pave the Way Foundation is grateful to have the chance to present here at the United Nations, some of the results of our efforts that make it possible to conclusively answer these questions.

Permit me to finish with a personal story.

In 1943, my father, Leonard Krupp and with all my uncles were sent to the European theatre. My dad was assigned to 4th Armored Division under commander, General George Patton and Lieutenant Colonel Creighton W. Abrams. In December 1944, dad's Division rescued the 101st Airborne Division in Bastogne in the infamous "Battle of the Bulge." Dad was wounded but after he recovered, he returned to service, where providentially, as a Jewish soldier, his unit liberated Buchenwald and Ohrdruf Concentration Camps. He personally took pictures of many terrible images that he showed to us when we were old enough to view them. They are permanently burned into my memory.

During a speech I delivered in Jerusalem on Mt. Zion on Yom Hashoah, I recalled a question I asked my dad so many years ago when he first unveiled the pictures he had taken in Buchenwald. "Daddy," I asked, "why are you showing me these terrible pictures of these dead people?" He answered, "So that we may never forget and so that these things may never happen again."

Today is a day we remember these atrocities, so they may never reoccur. We remember those who liberated Auschwitz and the other camps. And we remember with gratitude those, like Pius XII, and so many faithful Catholic bishops, priests, nuns and laypeople, who risked so much to save Jews from the fate of the camps. They are the reason many of us are here today