

## Denying the Deniers

"There always comes a time in history when the person who dares to say that two plus two equals four is punished with death. And the issue is not what reward or what punishment will be the outcome of that reasoning. The issue is simply whether or not two plus two equals four."---Albert Camus, The Plague.

BRIDGES for a Just Community (formerly the NCCJ of Greater Cincinnati) condemns the recently held conference in Iran, "Review of the Holocaust Global Vision," sponsored by the Iranian Foreign Ministry and initiated by Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, as an affront to the entire civilized world.

In the face of documents, films, artifacts, and eye-witness reports confirming the atrocities of World War II, sixty-seven Holocaust deniers from thirty countries met to question whether the mass murder of six million Jews, of whom one and a quarter million were children occurred, and whether gas chambers as tools of extermination even existed. Among those in attendance was David Duke, former Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Holocaust happened, period. Still, it is necessary to deny legitimacy to this latest group of deniers. "I have been to Auschwitz. I saw the machinery of the Holocaust. It certainly looked real to me!" said Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations has criticized the motives of the conference sponsors: "No legitimate cause or agenda can ever be advanced by denying or belittling the immense human suffering caused by the murder of millions of Jews and other minority groups by the Nazi regime and its allies during World War II." So, too, has the American Jewish Committee, which in a recent statement said, "the conference ... seeks to embolden efforts to delegitimize Israel's right to exist and dehumanize Jews by supporting the vicious claim that Jews created the Holocaust for financial and territorial gain."

Joining with the governments of the United States, Great Britain, Germany and the Vatican, and people of good will worldwide, BRIDGES rejects the irrational hatred of the current Iranian government and calls upon all people of good will to do likewise.

In our experience, truth-deniers are peddlers of prejudice. In this case, the poison is that of anti-Semitism, and the antidote is defending the truth, honoring the truth, and most importantly, learning from the truth.

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