

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0051/09
pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure
by Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka, on behalf of the UEN Group
to the Council

Subject: European conscience and heroes of the fight against totalitarianism

What action does the Council propose to take in response to Written Declaration 0044/2008 - P6_TA(2008)0439 adopted by the Parliament on 9 September 2008, which proclaims 23 August as the European Day of Remembrance for the victims of Stalinism and Nazism? What response does the Council have to the Prague Declaration, adopted at the Prague Conference, 'European Conscience and Communism', on 3 June 2008?

Does the Council support the Prague Declaration's proposal that an Institute of European Memory and Conscience be established, as a European research institute for the studies of totalitarianism and as a pan-European museum/memorial for all the victims of totalitarian regimes, demonstrating the comparison of crimes committed against humanity by totalitarian Communist and Nazi regimes?

In addition, does the Council support the initiative taken by the UEN group to proclaim 25 May as the International Day of the Heroes of the Fight Against Totalitarianism?

25 May is the anniversary of the execution of the death sentence on Rotamaster Witold Pilecki, the only person who voluntarily went to a concentration camp during World War II in order to organise the resistance movement there and collect information about mass murders, and who after his escape from Auschwitz fought first the Nazi, and then the Communist regimes.

Establishing the International Day of the Heroes of the Fight Against Totalitarianism would be a great way of keeping a living memory of the past and the people like Czech Karel Stransky or German Otto Küssel and many others who, similarly to Witold Pilecki, should be written into the awareness of Europeans as the heroes of the totalitarian age, because of their dedication, faithfulness to ideals, humanism, honour and courage.

President Vaclav Klaus of the Czech Republic, the country holding the Presidency of the EU, has already voiced his support for this initiative.

What is the Council's position towards the group's proposal? Would the Council agree to support proclaiming 25 May as the International Day of the Heroes of the Fight Against Totalitarianism?

Tabled: 09.03.2009

Forwarded: 10.03.2009

Deadline for reply: 31.03.2009