

## **Day of Commemoration and Admonition on the the second Sunday in September**

- Day of Action against Racism, Neo-Nazism and War -

- This year: Anti Fascist History Conference

Survivors of the Nazi concentration camps and prisons first gathered in September 1945 in Berlin to commemorate the victims of Fascism and call for justice to be done.

This second Sunday became established as the annual day of Commemoration.

The legacy to fill it with life has been passed on to our hands in the last few years as only very few survivors of the small German Resistance are still alive but aged.

In 2017 we continue the tradition to celebrate the Day of Commemoration and Admonition on the second Sunday in September with an Antifascist Rally.

Before that, on Friday and Saturday, we invite comrades from commemorative initiatives, schools, universities, memorials and all friends to a conference.

We plan to debate about the challenges, threats to and experiences with antifascist culture of commemoration in the 21st century.

The swelling up of German “aufarbeitungsstolz” - the pride of self-reflectively renovating one’s history – and the permanent self-praise, voiced by a governmental politics of selective historical memory aims towards further constructing a sort of new German identity that shall fulfill the desire to reassure the notion of a retrieved nation that has finally become “good” again.

This happens while verbal and physical attacks from right wing populist and their neo-nazi allies on refugees, refuge-supporters, minorities and leftists reach an all time high. All forms of anti-fascist memorials as well as Jewish graves are attacked across the country in an intensity unseen since the end of the war.

What is at stake, and what is indeed meant by the physical attacks, is the anti-nationalistic and anti-fascist tradition of commemorating holocaust, fascism and 2<sup>nd</sup> world war. A tradition that was established by survivors and many non-governmental activists against strong obstacles in a long struggle.

The Holocaust and the many crimes of German Fascism against mankind are far from being sufficiently reflected by today’s Germany. (The debate on not paying compensation to Greece, not paying the retirement money legally earned by slave workers, no commemorating of communist and left wing antifascists, to name some examples) The “zivilisationsbruch” - civilisation’s rift – inflicted by German “National Socialism” on mankind is still a challenge to make the memorial of the nazi-past a permanent source of “self-disquieting”.

A position of self-disquieting should be the starting point of an adequate, self-critical reflection of the present. A cognisance of history needs the knowledge of what has really happened and the comparative sight on the present to answer the question: what is similar between past and present? How can we make sure the past never repeats itself?

The Berlin Association of Antifascists will celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation in January 2018.

The passing away of the last witnesses marks a change in how the nazi-regime is remembered. The ongoing historisation and musealisation of resistance, of the besetment of innocent, of holocaust

and the German predation- and racist-extinction-warfare is altering the culture of commemoration by putting facts into perspective and rewriting history.

The Berlin Association of the Prosecuted of the Nazi-Regime / League of Antifascists is an independent and non-partisan institution.

We are committed to commemorating the persecuted and the resistance fighters. Their oath from 1945 is an admonition to us: Never again fascism and war!

Berlin VVN-BdA, March 2017