

Back to In defence of Auschwitz museum



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Re: Story of Auschwitz strangely incomplete, Opinion Nov. 7

One need only go to the official website of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau (<http://en.auschwitz.org.pl/m>) to see how baseless and perverse are Avi Benlolo's charges directed against the museum, in particular, as well as against Poland and the Poles.

The tragedy of the Jews is set out very clearly and fully. However, there is more to the story than Avi Benlolo wishes to acknowledge. The Holocaust did not start in Auschwitz, as he claims. Auschwitz was built in 1940 as a concentration camp for Christian Poles. Of the 150,000 Polish inmates, half perished. To commemorate these victims is not merely a display of "nationalism."

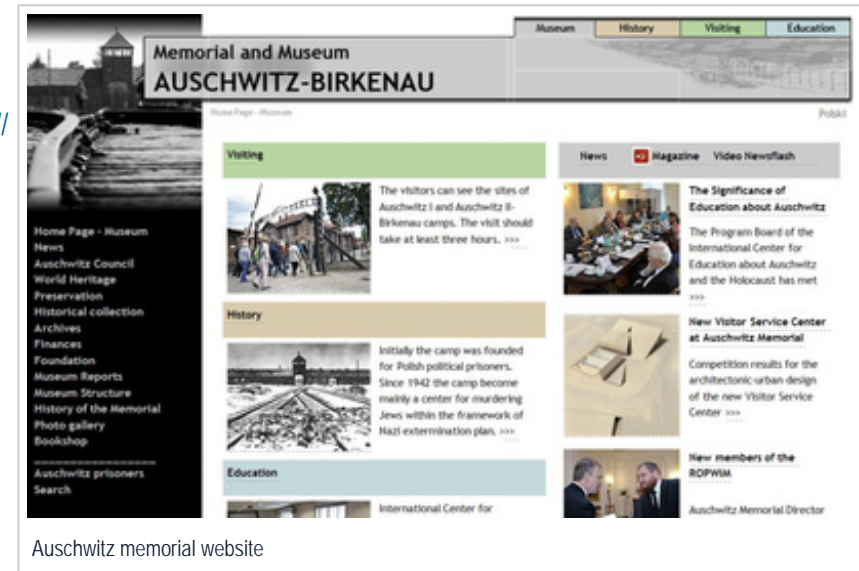
The vast majority of the 900,000 Jews who perished were killed by the Germans in the nearby death camp of Birkenau, which did not start its operation until 1942. They were mostly foreign Jews, because the largest death camp for Polish Jews was Treblinka.

After the fall of Communism, the entire museum had to be reorganized and the past was carefully researched and meticulously documented. The scholarship is a model of historical integrity.

The history of Polish Jews and the Holocaust is also explored in the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which is being built in Warsaw and paid for by the Poles. That museum's remarkable website is also available in English (jewishmuseum.org.pl/en/cms/home-page).

Avi Benlolo's insinuations that Poles continue to share the views of the Soviet-imposed regime are not only ugly and divisive, they discredit the Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies. It does not deserve friends like that. Nor do Canadians.

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Auschwitz memorial website

