



THE BELGIANS REMEMBER THEM

Rue St-Marcoult, 14 - 7830 SILLY - +32 68/286.466 - belgian.remember@gmail.com

Silly, December 2nd, 2020

Dear Mr Minister of State,

Recently, I was struck by information discovered by chance on the Internet. In doing further research, I discovered that a monument dedicated to former Baltic Waffen SS had been inaugurated in Zedelgem two years ago. Below is a summary of my research.

Under the law against the denial of the Holocaust and against the apology of Nazism, I personally find it unacceptable that a Belgian official body, such as a communal body, should be allowed to take part in this kind of demonstration. I know that recently you also spoke in the House with a bill banning all Nazi signs and demonstrations.

Attached are copies of what I have found regarding this file. Could you help me by advising me in the most appropriate way and method to intervene for the removal of this monument from the Belgian public space?

Here's what it's all about

On September 28, 2018, a monument to the "Latvian Legionaries" was unveiled in the British military camp of Zedelgem at the end of the war.

It appears that the individuals placed in this camp had been part of the German troops and had operated in the Baltic countries as well as on the Eastern Front. Among these were about 12,000 Latvians who were part of the 15th and 19th divisions of the Waffen SS. These units were made up of Latvian nationalist elements who for the most part were not forcibly recruited but placed themselves under the SS banner in order to fight their then enemy, the Soviet Union.

Reports and testimonies from both Western and Soviet Allies describe precisely the nature of the abuses committed by these individuals against the civilian populations and the Prisoners of War they arrested. Attached is a declassified report from the CIA regarding the activities of these legionaries.

By seeking further information concerning the history of the events that this monument symbolizes, the reasons that led to its inauguration and the people involved in the process of its realization, it is clear that Latvian representatives have intervened with Belgian personalities sensitive to the theses developed by the Latvian instigators, among others, the Museum of Occupations of Latvia and its president Valters Nollendorfs. As for the Belgians, we quickly notice that a member of the Zedelgem Municipal Council was the link between the Flemish municipality and the Latvians. He is Pol Denys, a member of the Vlaams Belang, who seems to have a service record that fits perfectly with the sentiments of his Baltic correspondents.

The case is rather sensitive if I judge the reaction of the Latvian State which has removed from the calendar of the National Memory the celebration of the famous «Day of the Legionary» which brought together those nostalgic for the SS in demonstrations that made enough noise for the Latvian Human Rights Committee to be moved and demand its ban.

I am surprised at the recklessness, or rather the gullibility, of the communal authorities of Zedelgem who seem to have been abused.

It is equally appalling and unconscionable that the speeches at the inauguration clearly pay tribute to the SS-Standartenführer (Colonel) Vilis Janums, holder of the highest German honours of the Second World War, whose resume could make some great Nazi criminals pale with envy.

Furthermore, I wonder why there were no reactions to this controversial event and its organizers?

Could you advise me as to the most appropriate method of removing this monument from any list of Belgian memorials? I suspect that the matter may become political and lead to undesirable violent reactions if we do not take all the necessary precautions.

I am prepared to intervene so that the memory of those whose lives and youth are commemorated for our freedoms will not be tarnished by these unfortunate and even unacceptable acts as they occurred in Zedelgem.

This monument and what it evokes represent for Belgium and for the victims of Nazism an infamy, an insult. It must absolutely disappear from the national public space. Our dignity is at stake!

I thank you in advance for the attention you will give to this letter.

Kind regards,

Wilfred Burie,
President
"The Belgians Remember Them"