

Richard Rampton QC speaks at YN Law Breakfast

20 June 2006

Highly respected barrister **Richard Rampton QC** today warned against the “complacent” belief that a Holocaust could never happen in a “civilised” country such as ours. The caution came during his address at a gathering of nearly 100 young lawyers in central London on **Tuesday 20 June** for **Young Norwood’s** inaugural **Law Breakfast**, organised by the **YN Lawyers** committee.

He said: “I would never be confident that it couldn’t happen again. The gigantic, industrial homicide that we call the Holocaust was principally conceived and perpetrated by citizens of Germany and Austria, two nations that could fairly be regarded at the time as amongst the most “civilised” on Earth... It is notorious that the Jews of those countries, by the time Hitler came to power in 1933, felt, and could be forgiven for feeling, that they were as fully assimilated, and therefore secure from persecution, as any Jews in the history of Europe had ever been.”

Mr Rampton expressed his opposition to the suggestion that England should make denying the Holocaust a criminal offence, as it is in Germany and Austria, **by saying:** “I am a free speech merchant and do not like laws that inhibit this important freedom. It is better to expose that kind of lunacy to the oxygen of discussion, where it can be destroyed by argument.”

He reflected on some aspects of the libel action brought against his client, Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin Books, by self-proclaimed historian David Irving. Lipstadt, an American professor of Jewish Studies, had accused Mr Irving of being “one of the most dangerous spokespersons for Holocaust Denial.” Rampton successfully defended his client against Irving’s libel allegations.



Rampton specialises in defamation, malicious falsehood, breach of confidence and privacy including related human rights law and contempt of court. He was called to the bar in 1965 and took Silk in 1987. Some of the more celebrated clients that he has successfully represented include McDonalds, Michael Douglas and historian Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin Books.

Sara Parish, Young Norwood Fundraiser, was delighted with the success of the event. She said: “It was fantastic to have such a prestigious speaker at our inaugural Law Breakfast. Richard Rampton QC gave a fascinating talk and touched upon some extremely important issues and we are extremely grateful to him for taking time out of his busy schedule to extend his support to Norwood in this way.”

The Law Breakfast was **sponsored by City law firm Berwin Leighton Paisner**. It raised £6,000 for Norwood.

For more information please contact the Public Relations Manager at Norwood on 020 8420 6900 or email pressoffice@norwood.org.uk

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