

Today, 80 years ago: Count Stauffenberg Sets an Example of Resistance | A Reminder for our Time!

by Jochen Ressel



Today, on the anniversary of the failed assassination attempt on Adolf Hitler by Count Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg on July 20, 1944, we remember the brave men and women who were prepared to risk their lives to overthrow the Nazi regime. This historic day marks one of the most significant acts of German resistance in the Second World War and offers us the opportunity to reflect on courage, sacrifice, and the moral duty to act.

The Story of the Assassination Attempt

Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg, a high-ranking officer in the German army, the Wehrmacht, was deeply shocked by the atrocities committed by the National Socialist regime. After witnessing the massacres on the Eastern Front and seeing the systematic extermination of Jews and other minorities with his own eyes, he decided to take action. Together with a group of officers and civilian resistance fighters, he planned "Operation Valkyrie," which aimed to kill Hitler and take control of the German Reich.

On July 20, 1944, Stauffenberg planted a bomb in a briefcase during a meeting at the Wolf's Lair headquarters. The explosion killed four people, but due to a chain of circumstances, Hitler survived with only slight injuries. The subsequent attempt to take command of Berlin failed due to communication problems and a lack of support. Stauffenberg and his co-conspirators were arrested and executed the same night.

Significance and Legacy

Even today, 80 years later, Stauffenberg's assassination attempt remains a symbol of German resistance to National Socialism. It shows that there were people at all times who were prepared to risk their lives to overthrow a criminal regime. Even though the coup failed, the courage of the conspirators and their willingness to die for their convictions is an eternal reminder of the importance of resistance against tyranny and injustice.

Reflections on Courage and Morality as Required Today

At a time when authoritarian movements are once again gaining influence worldwide, the example of Stauffenberg and his comrades-in-arms remains of timeless relevance. It challenges us to reflect on our own moral obligations and to recognize that the fight for justice and humanity never ends. The story of resistance also reminds us that in every age there must be people who have the courage to stand up against injustice, even when the chances of success are slim. Their sacrifice was not in vain, for it served to defend the values of freedom and human dignity that are now considered fundamental to our civilization.

Today's anniversary of the assassination attempt on Hitler by Count von Stauffenberg is therefore an opportunity to commemorate these heroes of the resistance. Their courage and determination are a shining example to all who fight against oppression and injustice. May their legacy encourage us to strive for these high moral standards in our own lives and to always stand up for the values of humanity.

The Austro-British Society will continue to do its part to promote dialogue and understanding between nations in an effort to ensure that such dark chapters of history need never be written again.

The ABS is looking forward to receiving your views and comments!

About the author



Jochen Ressel is the Secretary-General of the Austro-British Society. He worked several years for a UK company and its HQ in London. Professionally, he holds the position as Head of Communications and Fundraising of the Sovereign Order of Malta - Grand Priory of Austria and oversees the communication-related issues of the Embassy of the Order of Malta to the Republic of Austria. He works on a voluntary basis for the Austrian MALTESER Relief Corps and participates in various social, medical, and disaster relief services. As part of his work for this globally active relief organization, and for the Order of Malta in general as the oldest lay order recognized by the Vatican, he is also concerned with issues of human dignity and the ethics of helping.

The views expressed in this article are entirely his and reflect in no way the opinions of the ABS.