

Statement by Governor George W. Bush (in 2000) on Ethnic Cleansing

The Institute for German-American Relations (IGAR) has sent letters to Campaign Manager for Bush 2004, to President George W. Bush and Senator Rick Santorum with respect to restitution to the victims of Ethnic Cleansing 1944-1950, using the 2000 statement by George W. Bush as a basis. *Frank Schmidt*

Below are the words of Governor George W. Bush...

“Just the phrase, ‘Ethnic Cleansing,’ sends a shiver down my spine – it is a disgusting misnomer that tries to put a pretty name on a barbaric tactic. A moral nation can never tolerate the heinous extermination of a people based on their race and heritage. It is truly disturbing that men in the past half-century, in an era that should be the most enlightened time in the world, still engage in this horrific practice.

Among the most extensive cases of cultural extermination was suffered by Germans – some fifty-five years ago. The history of the Holocaust is not one event in the chronology of our century. It is a central event of the modern era. And its lessons shape our lives and our world, even today. First, it teaches moral vigilance. We are called by conscience to set our hearts against all assaults on human dignity. Human evil did not perish in a Berlin bunker. It is the duty of every generation to confront hatred and intolerance, whenever it rears its ugly head.

We know, from bitter experience, that cultural extermination can destroy the moral foundations of an entire nation; that barbarism can appear even in the most outwardly civilized society; and we know that tolerance can not be assumed - it must be taught. This is why historical memory is so important and historical revisionism is so dangerous. When people cloud the memory of the Holocaust and the Ethnic Cleansing from 1944-1950 with needless controversy, they diminish the moral lessons we must draw from it.

Second, the rise of Nazi power in the 1940’s teaches military vigilance. Winston Churchill was right when he argued that aggressive tyranny must be confronted early. President Franklin Roosevelt was right in viewing a Nazi Europe as a threat to America, leaving us “a lone island in a world dominated by force.” The defeat of Hitler was a noble cause and a vital interest. But continued military vigilance is of utmost importance against uncivilized governments to this day. Ethnic Cleansing is a crime against humanity, regardless of who does it to whom.

I support this work of the Institute for German-American Relations as they continue to educate the public on the tragedy that displaced 15 to 17 million innocent German women and children; these most innocent souls who became victims of the worst period of ethnic cleansing in the history of the world, “Ethnic Cleansing 1944-1950.” ❀ ”

