

Words to think more about

by

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Oftentimes, we hear words and even sometimes use them without really taking the time to fully understand their true meaning and impact. We frequently look at these words as abstract and don't realize how the concepts that these words represent have impacted us.

One such word is genocide. As usual, we should look at the definition before opening a potential "can of worms".

After the so-called "World War II", the United Nations felt it necessary to define what genocide really meant, especially after the Jewish Holocaust committed by Nazi Germany. Interestingly, there are growing numbers of Americans today who either don't believe that it ever happened or they actually celebrate the savagery and blatantly proclaim that even more humans should have been killed. At any rate, on December 9, 1948, the United Nations approved and ratified a "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" It became enforceable on January 12, 1951. I will discuss the first three articles (of a total of 19). They are:

Article I

The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish.

Article II

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- a. Killing members of the group;*
- b. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;*

- c. *Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;*
- d. *Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;*
- e. *Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.*

Article III

The following acts shall be punishable:

- a. *Genocide;*
- b. *Conspiracy to commit genocide;*
- c. *Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;*
- d. *Attempt to commit genocide;*
- e. *Complicity in genocide.*

In your memory, do any of the items listed in the definition sound familiar? For us “old fogeys” in the baby boomer generation, there is plenty to remember. Most of us (especially males) remember the TV shows and movies that featured what we called “cowboys and Indians”. How many of us actually rooted for the cowboys? The Indians were usually depicted as bloodthirsty savages or noble barbarians who could be “saved” with a “white man’s education”. Indeed, in real life, there were federal policies that called for the forceable removal of Native children from their families and placing them in boarding schools where all vestiges of their native culture was forbidden. They had to speak English and not their native languages, dress in Western clothing, cut their hair and suffer all kinds of insults and indignities. That conforms to Article II, section e doesn’t it?

Wait, there’s more. There was a slogan that was very popular that was inherently genocidal that was repeated without hesitation. That slogan was, “The only good Indian is a dead Indian” (Article II, section a and Article III, sections b, c, d, and e).

So, in 1951, a petition was presented to the United Nations by Afrikan American activists that charged the United States with genocide against Afrikan Americans. It was entitled, *We Charge Genocide: The Historic Petition to the United Nations for Relief from a Crime of the United States*

Government Against the Negro People. They cited the many cases of lynchings (photos of which were celebrated by turning them into postcards) and the many race riots of whites killing AUSA like such as the Tulsa Oklahoma Race Riot (called "Black Wall Street"), and the ones in Rosewood, Florida, Hamburg, SC and Wilmington, North Carolina, to name a few. This petition was written by an organization called the Civil Rights Congress and was delivered to United Nations on December 17, 1951 in two places, in New York City and in Paris, France. It was signed by many notable activists, including Paul Robeson, W.E.B. DuBois, and William L. Patterson. This document is available on Amazon for \$1701.91 (do you get the feeling that somebody really doesn't want us to read this document).

There are several organizations that have taken up the mantle of genocide, especially in wake of the frequently unpunished killings of AUSA men and women by police and pseudo-police.

Based on the definitions given, what do you think?

Food for thought.