



ADL Disturbed At Increasing Use Of Nazi/Holocaust Analogies In Response To Arizona Immigration Law

New York, NY, April 28, 2010 ... The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) today said it is disturbed by the increasing use of analogies to Nazis and the Holocaust in reaction to legislation signed into law by Gov. Jan Brewer of Arizona, which gives police the authority to detain people they suspect are illegal immigrants.

The signing of the Arizona immigration law has released a flood of comparisons of the legislation to Nazi policies. Elected officials, religious leaders, editorial cartoonists, extremists and others have called Arizona a "police state" like Nazi Germany and compared Brewer and other Arizona public officials to Adolf Hitler.

Abraham H. Foxman, ADL National Director, issued the following statement:

We are seeing these offensive and inappropriate Nazi and Holocaust comparisons come to the fore in the public debate once again. We saw it in the health care debate, and now we are seeing it with Arizona. It is disturbing that in speaking out against the bill a number of individuals have taken to using Nazi comparisons, in describing the legislation as being reminiscent of Nazi policies that required Jews and others to carry identity cards, or in comparing the governor and other Arizona officials as being like Hitler.

No matter how odious, bigoted, biased and unconstitutional Arizona's new law may be, let's be clear that there is no comparison between the situation facing immigrants, legal or illegal, in Arizona and what happened in the Holocaust. Let's remember that the Nazi identity cards were part and parcel of a plan to force Jews into ghettos and for their ultimate deportation to extermination camps. Comparisons to the Nazis may be politically expedient and serve an agenda of demonizing those who supported the bill, but in the end they do great damage to the memory of six million Jews and the millions of others and soldiers who fought to defeat Nazism.

We will continue to speak out against Arizona's legislation, and will encourage others to loudly do so, but also while bearing in mind that their criticism should never cross the line into comparisons to Hitler or the Holocaust, which are a terrible disservice to history and memory and ultimately serve to diminish an otherwise important message.

The League cited several high profile comparisons to the Nazis in recent days:

- Colorado Rep. Jared Polis said Arizona was becoming a "police state" and said the legislation was "reminiscent of second class status of Jews in Germany prior to World War II when they had to have their papers with them at all time and were subject to routine inspections."
- In Los Angeles, Archbishop Roger Mahony wrote on his blog, "American people are fair-minded and respectful. I can't imagine Arizonans now reverting to German Nazi and Russian Communist techniques whereby people are required to turn one another in to the authorities on any suspicion of documentation."
- In New Jersey, an editorial cartoon in The Record portrayed Hitler with his infamous moustache rendered in the shape of the state of "Arizona."

Read more online on our web site at

http://www.adl.org/PresRele/HoINa_52/5744_52

The Anti-Defamation League, founded in 1913, is the world's leading organization fighting anti-Semitism through programs and services that counteract hatred, prejudice and bigotry.