



Alabama Holocaust Commission

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Response to Alabama Congressman Mo Brooks' Quotation of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*

We, the undersigned, strongly condemn Alabama Congressman Mo Brooks' use of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in his speech of March 25, 2019, in which he quoted:

"In the big lie, there is always a certain force of credibility; because the broad masses of a nation are always more easily corrupted in the deeper strata of their emotional nature than conspicuously or voluntarily; and thus in the primitive simplicity of their minds they more readily fall victims to the big lie than the small lie."

Congressman Brooks used the quote to discredit both Democrats and the media. Yet Hitler's concept of the "big lie" was propaganda used to dupe the German people and brand the Jews as traitors to Germany. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler continued his hatred by saying, *"These people know only too well how to use a falsehood for the basest of purposes. From time immemorial, however, the Jews have known better than any others how falsehood and calumny can be exploited. Is not their very existence founded on one great lie, namely, that they are a religious community, where as in reality they are a race? And what a race!"*

The Alabama Holocaust Commission does not make political statements. Our objection to Congressman Brooks' speech is in his use of *Mein Kampf* and Hitler's name to condemn those with whom he disagrees.

Adolf Hitler and the Nazis identified, imprisoned, and murdered those considered political threats to the regime. They initiated a global war that killed tens of millions of people, including the systematic murder of more than six million men, women, and children whose only crime was being Jewish.

The sufferings of those affected by this violence deserve unique remembrance, and the words of those who conducted and orchestrated this genocide in Hitler's name do not deserve to be recognized, much less reiterated in the halls of Congress.

Such facile comparisons, used in order to demean opponents and gain political capital, should be actively avoided. Using such rhetoric not only trivializes our past, as well as the victims of this genocide, but also cheapens our current political discourse and maintains a divisive rhetoric all too common at the present time.

It is the hope of the Alabama Holocaust Commission and all that sign this letter of protest that our political leaders, whatever their party or political persuasion, should refrain from using Hitler, the Nazis, and the tragedy of the Holocaust in an effort to strengthen their public statements. Should such a strategy become the norm, then we as a society have learned nothing from the ills of the past and open the doors to the possibilities of repetition.

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