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December 16, 2011

The Honorable Allen B. West
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Representative West:

We were deeply dismayed by your remark comparing the Democratic Party's attempts to articulate views to the American people through the media to the efforts of the Nazi propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels.

Such outrageous Holocaust analogies have no place in our political dialogue. They are offensive, they trivialize real historical events, and they diminish the memory of the six million Jews and millions of others who perished in the Holocaust. As I hope you know, Goebbels was an avowed anti-Semite whose efforts to demonize the Jewish people in the minds of ordinary Germans helped put into motion Hitler's Final Solution. Inappropriate analogies to the actions of the Nazis are offensive to Holocaust survivors, their families, and to those Americans who valiantly fought against the Nazi menace in World War II.

Unfortunately, this was not the first time you have invoked the Holocaust to criticize those with whom you do not agree politically. We wrote you a letter then, but our concerns went unheeded and unanswered.

I hope you will reconsider your words and apologize. It is high time to excise analogies to Nazi and Hitler from the political vocabulary. It doesn't serve us as Americans, and cheapens our political discourse.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abraham H. Foxman".

Abraham H. Foxman
National Director

AHF:ars