

The 'G Word': Why the White House Won't Use It

With Christians facing persecution and death at the hands of ISIS, pressure is mounting on the Obama administration to act before this week's deadline to declare those actions genocide.

But much like the White House's refusal to use the phrase "radical Islamic terrorism," the use of the "G word" may not come. At Monday's White House press briefing, Press Secretary Josh Earnest again refused to even use the term in explaining why the administration still hasn't made a declaration.

"My understanding is that the use of that word involves a very specific legal determination that has, at this point, not been reached," he said. "But we have been quite candid and direct about how ISIL's tactics are worthy of the kind of international, robust response that the international community is leading. Those tactics include a willingness to target religious minorities, including Christians."

The term genocide is, in fact, a legal term under international law, which requires several findings of fact before a declaration can be made. These findings must be applied to the International Genocide Convention, which defines genocide as any of the following:

- Killing members of specific group
- Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the specific group
- Deliberately inflicting on the specific group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the specific group
- Forcibly transferring children of the specific group to

another group

Evidence supporting each of those conditions is abundant, which begs the question of why the administration remains reticent to make the declaration. Congress certainly made its voice heard on the issue Monday night when the House of Representatives voted unanimously to declare:

“The atrocities committed against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities targeted specifically for religious reasons are, and are hereby declared to be ‘crimes against humanity’ and ‘genocide.’

“Each of the Contracting Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris on Dec. 9, 1948, and other international agreements forbidding war crimes and crimes against humanity, particularly the governments of countries and their nationals who are in any way supporting these crimes, are reminded of their legal obligations under the Convention and these international agreements.

“Every government and multinational body should call the atrocities being committed in the name of religion by their rightful names: ‘crimes against humanity,’ ‘war crimes’ and ‘genocide.’”

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) said people were dying and “the world didn’t notice.” He added that evil does exist in the world, and ignoring it or refusing to call it by its name does not make it go away.

“[ISIS] is murdering Christians,” he said. “They are targeting people who share my faith—the faith of many people in this House—people who believe in Jesus Christ. And because of that belief, they are being marked for execution. [ISIS] is murdering and enslaving religious and ethnic minorities everywhere they gain power, and we know it.”