



# Don't abuse the word 'holocaust'

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Re: The Pygmy Holocaust, Geoffrey Clarfield, Jan. 20.

Many thanks to anthropologist Geoffrey Clarfield for alerting Canadians to the horrific situation facing the pygmy population of Africa. However, I must take exception to the use of the word "holocaust" to describe the ongoing abuse of the pygmies. It is safe to say that in contemporary usage, the term Holocaust refers specifically to the genocidal attempts by the Nazis to exterminate the Jews; using it in the title of this article diminishes the term and its meaning, and is unfair to the more than 10 million Jews, Roma, homosexuals and others who were slaughtered in the Holocaust.

Furthermore, it does not help build understanding of the unique set of circumstances under which the pygmies of Africa are struggling to survive.

Avi Benlolo, president and CEO, Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, Toronto.