

99-Year-Old Nuremberg Prosecutor Calls Trump's Detention of Children a 'Crime Against Humanity'

"What could cause more great suffering than what they did in the name of immigration law?"

By [Andrea Germanos](#)

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The last surviving prosecutor at the Nazi Nuremberg trials just offered harsh criticism for the Trump administration's family separation crisis resulting from its cruel immigration policies, calling it "a crime against humanity."

Ninety-nine year old Ben Ferencz made the comments in a recent lengthy interview with United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, which was posted online Tuesday.

When he learned of the family separations,

"it was very painful for me," Ferencz told Zeid. "I knew the Statue of Liberty. I came under the Statue of Liberty as an immigrant." Ferencz was a baby when his family came to the United States from Romania.

He referenced lines from Emma Lazarus's poem inscribed at the base of the monument, including its ending: "I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

But "the lamp went out when [Trump] said no immigrants allowed unless they meet the rules that we laid down," Ferencz said. "It was outrageous. I was furious that anybody would think that it's permissible to take young children—5, 4, 3 years of age—and take them away from their parents and say the parents go to another country and the children go to another country, and we'll get you together, maybe, at some later date."

Forcing desperate young parents to surrender custody of their weeping children because they were unable to comply with restrictive immigration rules is a disgrace to our great country. Such cruelty should be condemned as a crime against humanity.

— Benjamin Ferencz (@BenFerencz) [June 20, 2018](#)

"It's a crime against humanity. We list crimes against humanity in the Statute

of the International Criminal Court. We [have](#) 'other inhumane acts designed to cause great suffering.' What could cause more great suffering than what they did in the name of immigration law? It's ridiculous. We have to change the law if it's the law," he said.

Watch the fuller interview below:

Ferencz also denounced the ongoing "glorification of war-making." He said, "The capacity to kill human beings has grown faster than our capacity to meet their vital and justified needs," noting, "Nobody wins in war; the only winner is death."

He's still expresses optimism, however, about the state of the world. But he said that hope lies not with diplomats or national leaders. Rather, "the students are with us, and I think the future lies with them." Some young people, he said, "are thoughtful enough to realize they're in great danger."

Ferencz was just 27 years old when he was chief prosecutor at the Einsatzgruppen trial, at which 22 Nazi officials were convicted of murdering more than 1 million people.

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