THE QUESTION OF COUNTERING WHITE SUPREMACISM AROUND THE GLOBE

Introduction

White supremacy or white supremacism is a racist belief based upon the belief that white people are superior in many ways to other skin-colors and ethnicities. Today the white supremacism is mostly seen as a political or socioeconomic system where white people enjoy a structural advantage or privilege over other ethnic groups, on both a collective and individual level. All around the world white supremacist recruitment are primarily conducted at a grassroots level. However, the widespread access to the internet has led to a huge increase in websites in favor of white supremacy. The Internet provides a venue to openly express white supremacist ideas at little social costs because people who post the information are able to remain anonymous.

History

United States of America

White supremacy was dominant in the United States both before and after the American Civil War, and it persisted for decades after the war ended in 1865. In the south, which was experiencing enormous economic growth, this included the holding of African Americans in chattel slavery, with four million of them denied freedom. The outbreak of the Civil War saw the desire to uphold white supremacy being cited as a cause for state secession and the formation of the Confederate States of America. In some parts of the United States, many people who were considered non-white were disenfranchised, barred from government office, and prevented from holding most government jobs well into the second half of the 20th century.

Great Britain

White supremacy was dominant in Great Britain during the imperialism in 1870-1914.

However, a resurgence came in the late 19th century with the Scramble for Africa and major additions in Asia and the Middle East.

The British spirit of imperialism was expressed by the pseudo-sciences of Social Darwinism and theories of race formed an ideological underpinning during this time. Social Darwinism includes the belief that the white man is superior to any other race or gender for that sake. This theory was at that time as well as today supported by the scientific justification “survival of the fittest.” Which means the white race must be superior since they are the more civilized and educated people at that time.

Germany

Nazism is one of the earliest and most striking ideologies of white supremacy. Nazism promoted the idea of a superior Germanic people or Aryan race in Germany during the early 20th century. Notions of white supremacy and Aryan racial superiority were combined in the 19th century, with white supremacists maintaining the belief that white people were members of an Aryan "master race" which was superior to other races, particularly the Jews, who were described as the "Semitic race", Slavs, and Gypsies, which they associated with "cultural sterility". Today Germany like many other European countries are experiencing a tendency of the people leaning towards more right-winged parties and organizations which are sharing beliefs with the Nazi ideology and promoting white supremacy.

Key issue

In 2002 Tore W. Tvedt, founder of the hate group Vigrid and a Norwegian citizen was sentenced to time in prison for posting racist and anti-Semitic propaganda on a website. The Anti-Racism Center in Oslo filed a police complaint against Tvedt. On Vigrid’s website, Tvedt puts forward an ideology that mixes neo-Nazism, racism, and religion. The charges were six counts of violating Norway’s anti-racism law and one count each of a weapons violation and interfering with police. Activists welcomed this as the first conviction for racism on the Internet in Norway. Following Tvedt’s release from prison, his Vigrid website is once again online. In contrast to the Norwegian response, many Americans seem to view white supremacy online as speech obviously protected under the First Amendment.

This problematic clearly shows the dilemma of trying to hinder white supremacy online but still make sure humans rights as free speech are not compromised.

Bibliography

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