

## Ko's Holocaust 'publicity' remark sparks criticism

Written by Taipei Times

Friday, 01 March 2019 07:08 -

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Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je is pictured at the Western Wall in Jerusalem's Old City on Monday.

**Photo: CNA, courtesy of Taipei City Government**

Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je (柯文哲) has found himself at the center of another controversy after saying that the murder of 6 million Jews by Nazi Germany was the “greatest publicity” for Jews internationally.

He made the remark on Wednesday while speaking to reporters at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport after returning from an official four-day visit to Israel, where he visited Yad Vashem — Israel's official Holocaust memorial.

He had been invited by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attend the 33rd International Mayors' Conference there.

Before embarking on a one-day bicycle journey from Taipei to Kaohsiung yesterday, Ko was asked by reporters if he believed he had misspoken.

“How were [the comments] misspoken?” he replied.

Israelis take the Holocaust very seriously, he said.

“I asked myself: ‘Why is Israel so united?’ It is because historically, there was a period of much

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pain," Ko said, referring to Adolf Hitler's 12-year reign over Germany from 1933 to 1945.

"I later discovered that Israelis treat this incident as an important [opportunity for] international education or international publicity," he said.

"That is also an important reason why Israelis worldwide are so united [in their] cooperation," he added.

Taiwan Radical Wings' Taipei office yesterday criticized Ko for the comments.

In 1947, from Feb. 28 through the end of March, many people in Taiwan were killed by the then-Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) regime, the office said on Facebook.

Seventy-two years later, politicians "as cold-blooded [and] ignorant as [Ko]," as well as ones who are "unremorseful" and "insist on opposing transitional justice" still exist in Taiwan, it said.

Even today, the entire truth about the 228 Incident is unknown and none of the perpetrators have been investigated, it added.

The 228 Incident refers to protesters being shot by security personnel of the then-KMT regime at the Governor-General's Office in Taipei (now the Executive Yuan building) on Feb. 28, 1947.

That escalated into widespread anti-government protests, which were suppressed in a brutal crackdown, followed by the imposition of martial law, a period now known as the White Terror.

Taiwan Radical Wings said that it mourns the martyrs who were innocently sacrificed.

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Source: [Taipei Times - 2019/03/01](#)