

Theologian: World War II Was 'Undoubtedly a Just War'

Speaking with Breitbart's Executive Chairman Stephen K. Bannon Friday, ethical expert and theologian Dr. Thomas D. Williams said that from the perspective of America's involvement, World War II undoubtedly satisfied all the conditions to be considered a "just war."

Classical Just War Theory was developed over the centuries by Christian scholars, beginning with Saint Augustine in the Fifth century and passing through Thomas Aquinas and others, to explain when it was morally justifiable for a nation to enter armed conflict.

In the radio interview, Bannon criticized the presence of President Barack Obama in Hiroshima on Memorial Day weekend to honor all the soldiers, including those who were enemies of America at the time, who died during the Second World War. "We are a country without honor," Bannon said.

Williams, a professor of ethics and the author of 15 books, including *Knowing Right from Wrong: A Christian Guide to Conscience*, expressed his full agreement with Bannon's assessment.

"We were simply responding to an unprovoked attack on our people," Williams agreed, who said that Obama's presence in Hiroshima was "shameful."

The President "failed to make a necessary distinction" that America was attacked and defended itself, and therefore, there was no moral equivalency among the parties engaged in combat, he said.

Responding to media reports that the President did not actually apologize, Williams said, "His presence is an apology" that dishonors our dead by acting as if the United States were somehow culpable for the war.

Bannon and Williams also discussed the Just War Theory, which embraces a number of conditions necessary to licitly engage in warfare.

Bannon asked if he doubted that American engagement in the Second World War met the conditions of a just war? Williams replied that there was none whatsoever, and that moreover, there is no serious scholar in the Judeo-Christian tradition "who has ever made that case."

In a later conversation with Breitbart News, Dr. Williams expanded on the conditions of a Just War, stating:

- It must be undertaken by a legitimate authority, such as a government.
- The cause of the war must be just.
- The war must be fought with the intention to establish good or correct evil.
- There must be a reasonable chance of success.
- The war must be the last resort after exploring other options for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

In the case of America's entry into World War II, Williams said that scholars agree that all of these conditions were met.

Whereas the moral legitimacy of America's entry into the war is virtually undisputed, Williams said that there is still debate regarding certain military actions taken during the war itself, such as the Allied bombing of Dresden, which destroyed the city and left as many as 135,000 civilians dead, as well as the bombing of the cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

None of this affects the moral evaluation of the U.S. decision to wage war against the Axis powers, Williams said, which was "completely licit and probably morally incumbent upon the nation."

There is no question that there was "a right and a wrong side in the war," Williams added, and the Allies clearly had justice on their side.