



Statement on the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Shooting

The Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education and the Jewish Community Relations Council of The Jewish Federation of Cincinnati are saddened and disturbed by yesterday's events at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of Stephen Tyrone Johns, the guard murdered by white supremacist, anti-semitic and Holocaust denier James Von Brunn. We extend our sincere sympathy to the victim and his family in the aftermath of this inexplicable event. It is deeply troubling that the museum, an institution which stands for the ideals of freedom, liberty and justice, was the site of today's tragic shooting. Our thoughts are also with our colleagues at the USHMM at this moment.

It is saddening that this type of hatred continues to exist in our society. As a city, state and nation, we must confront intolerance before it leads to tragedy. The hateful act committed today illustrates the ongoing need for tolerance and education. The Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education continues its steadfast commitment to teaching about the Holocaust and its lessons. As people committed to living together in unity and embracing differences, we must remain vigilant and stand up to the emergence of hatred and violence.

Richard E. Friedman, President, CHHE

Arna Fisher, President, JCRC

Sarah L. Weiss, Executive Director, CHHE

Brian Jaffee, Director, JCRC

The following organizations have endorsed this joint statement

Bridges for a Just Community

The Islamic Center of Greater Cincinnati

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

The Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education remembers, informs, and transforms by educating current and future generations about the Holocaust, its victims and its lessons in order to foster tolerance, inclusion, social justice, and civic responsibility.

The mission of the Jewish Community Relations Council is to protect Jewish security recognizing that Jewish security depends on a just society for all. The JCRC is an address for information about Jewish communal concerns - including the security and viability of the State of Israel, anti-semitism, as well as threats and/or unjust actions directed against the rights of individuals, as guaranteed by the Constitution.

Statement from Bridges for a Just Community Board Chair, Dr. Mitchel Livingston

Another tragic act of hate! This time, occurring at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., where an 88-year old, anti-semite and white supremacist shot and killed an African American security guard. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the friends and family of the victim Stephen Tyrone Johns as well as our concerns for the welfare of the intended targets of this “hate crime” – all Jews and all African Americans.

Ironically, that very evening the Museum was to have unveiled a new play by playwright Janet Langhart Cohen, titled “Anne and Emmett,” a story based upon an imaginary conversation between Anne Frank, a Jew, and Emmett Till, an African American - both victims of hate crimes.

This incident underscores the unquestioned relevance of these museums of conscience. To further inoculate ourselves from such extremism and to respond constructively to this recent tragedy, let’s connect or re-connect with two such museums in our own community: The Center for Holocaust & Humanity Education and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

(Dr. Livingston is a board member of The Center for Holocaust & Humanity Education and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.)