WE WILL NOT STAND IDLY BY

JCRC-NY Statement on the Shooting of Jacob Blake and Other Acts of Violence Against the Black Community

Today – August 28th – marks the anniversary of the historic 1963 March on Washington and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s iconic “I Have a Dream” address. Yet, 57 years later, we are deeply aware that Dr. King’s dream, “that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed, ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal’” has not been realized.

The sickening shooting this week of Jacob Blake and the heinous killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and many others have vividly exposed the systemic racism in our democracy. This juncture in history demands deed, not mere rhetoric. We must heed the call of this modern day civil rights movement to seek justice so that we, as a nation, may live up to our foundational ideals of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all.

The Torah teaches us in the Book of Genesis that all people are created in the image of G-d. Our faith requires of us to preserve the sanctity of every life and honor the dignity of every individual. In the Book of Leviticus, we are enjoined not to stand idly by when our neighbor’s life is at stake. We must not be complacent in allowing hatred and racism to be or become the norm. As American Jews, we must take action to acknowledge and root out this scourge from our society.

The Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC-NY) stands in partnership with the Black Communities, Jews of Color, and all Communities of Color, as we:

- Dedicate ourselves to listening and learning so that we may act with purpose and compassion.
- Call out systemic racism and prejudice in all its manifestations.
- Commit to partnering with the Black community in ending the economic, educational, healthcare, and criminal justice disparities that have caused such pain and inequity.
- Use our voices and actions to be upstanders, rather than bystanders.
- Act in solidarity with the Black community and Communities of Color as they continue to stand up for their rights.

In that spirit, JCRC-NY commits itself to answer the Biblical call to pursue justice and the imperative of achieving an equitable and inclusive society for all. Indeed, Black lives do matter.

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President

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JCRC-NY serves as the central coordinating and resource body for the Jewish community in the metropolitan New York area in the community relations field and is an active force in New York civic and communal life.