



JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties

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Against the Mainstreaming of Anti-Semitism

San Francisco, CA – The San Francisco-based Jewish Community Relations Council, Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund, and The Jewish Federation and Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay released a joint statement today in response to increasing incidents of anti-Semitism globally:

“Reports of anti-Semitic acts in Europe, the United States and elsewhere in recent weeks have become disturbingly common. Just in the past couple of weeks, since the appalling murder of 17 in Paris in January, which included four Jews targeted in a kosher market, there have been numerous incidents: a security guard was gunned down at a synagogue in Copenhagen, Denmark; in two separate instances in France, Jewish cemeteries were vandalized and desecrated with anti-Semitic slogans and swastikas; a cemetery in the German city of Oldenburg was also splattered with swastikas; a swastika was painted on a Jewish headstone in Dunedin, New Zealand; and, in Madison, Wisconsin, nearly 30 homes and cars were plastered with crude anti-Semitic graffiti.

“The Jewish community is deeply concerned by this rash of anti-Semitism, which is often cloaked as anti-Israel sentiment. Following a recent divestment vote by the student government at the University of California, Davis, a Jewish fraternity was defaced with swastikas and a member of the university’s student senate boasted that ‘ Hamas & Sharia law have taken over UC Davis’ on her Facebook page. Such actions are clearly part of an anti-Semitic shift that has been building for years under the guise of virulent criticism of Israel.

“A pattern of attacks on centers of liberalism, free speech and the Jewish community only began to receive worldwide notice following the deadly Paris attacks. French and Danish leaders have taken a laudable stand in support of their Jewish communities. ‘An attack on Denmark’s Jews is an attack on everyone. The Jewish community is an important part of Denmark. We stand together and continue the everyday life we know,’ Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt said last week at a candlelight vigil for the Copenhagen shooting victims.

“However, all signs indicate that for European Jews ‘the everyday life we know’ is changing. The mainstreaming of anti-Semitic attitudes cannot be allowed to continue. JCRC and the Federations call on members of our community and our interfaith partners and others who support religious pluralism, peace and communal accord to speak out forcefully about this growing and alarming trend – in the pews, in the media, with government representatives, on social media and beyond. We also call upon our public officials to recognize the urgency of taking swift action and making their voices heard if we are to stop this scourge in its tracks. History has shown that whenever one group is attacked, others are inevitably targeted as well. Let us stand together against all forms of hate and racism.”

