



**BIRMINGHAM
HOLOCAUST
EDUCATION
CENTER**

Keeping the History
and Lessons of the
Holocaust Alive

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Birmingham, AL, -- The Birmingham Holocaust Education Center (BHEC) is deeply grieved and outraged by the murder of George Floyd, and the murders of the many black and brown people who preceded him in death because of racism and violence. Our nation and community are in a great struggle to overcome 400 years of systemic racism and oppression, and the BHEC stands united with our community to speak up against racism, violence, and oppression.

In a nation where we are experiencing and witnessing the catastrophic consequences of our country's failure to listen deeply and to act for justice and equity, the BHEC is committed to teaching, listening, and standing with those who have been treated differently because of their race, religion, creed, or sexual orientation. We have learned the lessons of the Holocaust from our Alabama survivors, and we preserve and share their memories so young people today and future generations will build a more just and accepting community.

We teach that the Holocaust did not begin with Auschwitz; rather, Nazi oppression was able to take root because ordinary Germans did not speak out against the regime's increasing dehumanization and violence against political dissidents, Jews, and other minorities. With each infringement on personal rights and safety, the Nazis were able to increase public tolerance for such measures and move one step closer to what we know today as the Holocaust. *We cannot allow that to happen again in any form to any group of people. We must speak out when any group is targeted and oppressed because of who they are.*

We stand with Birmingham and all who peacefully protest racism and injustice. We support the efforts of many to teach, to heal, and to engage with one another in acts of hope and justice. We are here. We are listening. We are a resource and are committed to promoting moral and ethical responses to prejudice, hatred, and indifference for the benefit of all humanity.

In the words of Holocaust survivor and teacher, Elie Wiesel: "We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented...When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy...Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must – at that moment – become the center of the universe."

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**Birmingham Holocaust Education Center is located at 2100 Highland Ave. S. Birmingham, AL 35205.
*The second floor of Temple Emanu-El***