



Jewish Federation

OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

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AN OPEN STATEMENT TO THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

The Jewish Federation of Central New York strongly condemns the intolerant, inflammatory and morally reprehensible anti-Muslim rhetoric currently running rampant through American political statements.

Religious freedom is a core principle of our country and respect for individuals of all faiths is a central principle in Judaism. We cannot stay silent while anyone attempts to violate these core beliefs. These values are particularly important to Jews as we have recently commemorated the holiday of Chanukah, which celebrates our victory over those who tried to prohibit public acknowledgement and practice of Judaism.

There is no place in America - a nation founded on religious freedom - for discrimination on the basis of religion or any other identifiable characteristic. Today it is Muslims who have been singled out, but in past years it has been gays, Catholics, Jews, Japanese, Irish and other groups that are all a basic part of the fabric of our unique and diverse American society.

While our nation and the world face a very real threat from radical Islamist terror, we must all speak out as a united voice and act together against such horrific acts. Our words and actions must always demonstrate that our nation is rooted in the principles of religious freedom. We must not fall into the trap of blaming and banning an entire religious group for violent acts of terror by radical fringe groups.

We join with the Jewish Federations of North America, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee and others who have made it clear that we stand with those Muslim leaders who have spoken out to unequivocally condemn and reject hateful interpretations of Islam that are wholly incompatible with the issues of religious tolerance, mutual respect and human dignity.

Ruth Stein
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