Address at the 6th Annual Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony

Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on January 27, 2021
This speech was given at the memorial at the 6th Annual Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony

So we saw the images of the seditionist with a Camp Auschwitz sweat shirt on.

He and others like him are a vibrant reminder that hate lives.

Hate lives—we have seen it vividly and up close with the slow-motion murder of George Floyd and the massacre that took the life of Breonna Taylor.

We have asked the question—how can we move from being bystanders to taking responsibility and making a difference?

We now have a Diversity Equity and Inclusivity Initiative that is long overdue—intended to level the playing field and to foster equal opportunity and treatment under the law.

This is an optimistic, potentially far-reaching approach that can form the basis for a more just university, one that is more deeply representative of the people who are educated here.

**But we must remember** — that words and deeds are two different things.

**We must remember** that on the other side of the hope coin is darkness, gloom.

**We must remember** that two sides of the same coin often bear love on one side and hate on the other.

Indeed, it is clear that hate these days is a major driver of discourse and action—what a shame.

For those who thought that we might be in a post-hate era particularly with the election of the first Black president ever in the US, hate seems to have been accelerating as a driver of emotions and discourse.

Truth matters little, narratives a lot.
The Holocaust is an extreme reminder of the consequences of hate.

That six million perished is an extreme reminder of untold pain and sorrow for so many, across generations for the immemorial.

It is real.

It lives in the hearts and minds of the families of survivors.

We have an obligation to tell the story.

We must do more than our part to make sure that other Holocausts do not occur.

And we must remember that as our own historian Tudor Parfitt tells us, hate and racism, go hand in hand as we have seen.

So, **we use this moment** to remind ourselves of the tragedies that hate drives.

**We use this moment** to recommit to the light and the hope that love and friendship can provide.

**We use this moment** to say never again, even as we realize that the despair that hate drives is right around the corner… just ask the family of Officer Brian Sicknick…. or Baton Rouge police officers gunned down in retribution for the much questioned killing of a subdued black man in their community.

How can we do better?

It is my hope that participation in this gathering is a step in the right direction.

It is my hope that what you hear today will further galvanize you to do right by our fellow human beings…

Hate cannot win out.

It’s not up to others—it’s up to us.

Thank you