



MARCH OF THE LIVING STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE COMMENTS OF WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN SEAN SPICER

As thousands of participants from countries around the globe prepare to travel to Poland to participate on the 2017 International March of the Living and commemorate Yom HaShoah on the grounds of Auschwitz and Birkenau, we find ourselves outraged, angered and ashamed by the totally erroneous and blatantly insulting comments made on 10 April by White House Press Secretary, Sean Spicer.

While we are keenly aware of Mr. Spicer's apology for his misguided comments, we remain deeply concerned that statements of this nature have a lasting impact on the public record and distort public understanding of the truth. We are deeply troubled that a spokesperson for the Administration of the United States of America would make such an ill-informed and incorrect reference to methods of extermination employed by the Third Reich during World War II. There is no place for alternate facts when addressing matters of annihilation and genocide.

We, the survivors, the descendants, the friends, the liberators, educators and students of the Holocaust believe that the statement made by Mr. Spicer fits the broad description of bolstering the foundations of Holocaust denial and it is this that causes us grave concern. In a world already divided by political and ideological differences stemming from bias, distorted and misguided information, we stand with historical fact and the veracity of survivor testimony and would hope that those in positions with a public presence and influence would do the same.

There is no question that heinous and horrific methods were mainstay in the Holocaust and that these methods included the use of chemical warfare. There is no question that these methods were used at the direct order of Adolf Hitler and his henchmen. For Mr. Spicer or anyone else to misrepresent or alter this or any other documented fact relating to the Holocaust gives the unconscionable possibility to deprive both the victim and the survivor the legitimacy and dignity they so rightfully deserve.

The International March of the Living has always taken a stand against the fostering of any and all forms of Holocaust misinformation or denial. We continue to do so today and hope that all educated and informed people will join us in demanding an accurate account of history and in the pursuit of ensuring a better future for all humankind.

International March of the Living

Shmuel Rosenman Phyllis Greenberg Heideman
Chairman President