

MEDIA RELEASE

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FACEBOOK'S DOUBLE STANDARD ON HATE SPEECH

Today the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect calls on Facebook to cease its double standard on hate speech and remove Holocaust Denial pages from its social media platform.

Allowing Holocaust deniers to spread false information, hate and anti-Semitism is immoral, hurtful and insulting to the millions of survivors, those who perished and their families.

The Holocaust happened. This cannot be disputed. Period.

When these pages spread lies and untruths, it is veiled hatred and anti-semitism designed to cast doubt on facts. Facebook, in hosting these pages makes it a willing participant in Holocaust denial.

For this reason the Anne Frank Center has partnered with the Holocaust Learning and Education Fund, Inc (HLEF) and the Association of Holocaust Organizations to launch a petition calling for Facebook to take action. With 125,000 signatures and counting, the Anne Frank Center is asking the social media giant to recognize its role and responsibility.

Yes, social media gives us an opportunity for discussion, but there's a difference between discussion and the debate of irrefutable facts. Additionally, there is a responsibility for not causing harm. Denying the Holocaust- or providing a platform for such denial- causes harm.

If Facebook can remove the abhorrent, violent hate speech of Alex Jones, then it has the power to remove these sites. In Facebook's statement on banning Alex Jones from its platform, Mark Zuckerberg wrote:

'We believe in giving people a voice, but we also want everyone using Facebook to feel safe. It's why we have Community Standards and remove anything that violates them, including hate speech that attacks or dehumanizes others.'

Holocaust denial dehumanizes people. It makes thousands feel unsafe. It violates the very standards Facebook lays out for its users. Yet these pages remain.

Facebook's double standard on hate speech is on full display in their form letter response to those who have complained about their policy:

*"We take down any post that celebrates, defends, or attempts to justify the Holocaust. The same goes for any content that mocks Holocaust victims, accuses victims of lying about the atrocities, spews hate, or advocates for violence against Jewish people in any way. **As you can imagine, posts and articles that deny***

the Holocaust often violate one or more of these standards and are removed from Facebook. But we do not remove lies or content that is inaccurate — whether it's denying the Holocaust, the Armenian massacre or the fact that the Syrian government has killed hundreds of thousands of its own people. This is because we believe that people should be able to say things on Facebook that are wrong or untrue, even when they are offensive.'

Facebook is trying to have it both ways.

It has to choose whether it is on the right side of history, or is in the business of being complicit in spreading hate. It cannot sit on the fence.

Facebook's platform should be promoting the many Holocaust education organizations that teach about the perils of intolerance, discrimination and injustice, not groups that cause harm.

It must shut these hate groups down immediately.

<https://www.change.org/p/mark-zuckerberg-remove-holocaust-denial-pages-from-facebook>