

MARC N. BLATTNER

President and CEO

Dear Community,

For whatever reason, I woke up at 2:00 a.m. this morning. Something triggered it. And here I am writing at 3:37 a.m. (maybe just to help me cope).

When I went to bed, the news of the shootings at Brown University was fresh in my mind. My daughter went to Brown. She was distraught, wondering if she knew any of the victims. And, as a parent, one can never imagine the heartache of losing a child at college in this way. (Just as I am sending this email it was reported a suspect is in custody.)

When I woke up, I looked at my phone. There I saw “breaking news” emails from various news sources with the following subject lines:

The New York Times – At Least 10 killed, Including Gunman, in Shootings at Bondi Beach in Sydney

The Wall Street Journal – Nine Killed in Shooting at Sydney’s Bondi Beach

NBC News – Two People in Custody After Reporting of Shootings at Australia’s Bondi Beach

It was not until I saw the *Times of Israel* that it was clear what had happened – *At Least 10 Dead in Sydney Terror Attack Targeting Jewish Community Chanukah Event*

Amazing that none of the United States news outlets mentioned the killing of Jews at a Chanukah event in their subject line.

As you have probably learned and read, about 2,000 people were at a Chanukah Event at Bondi Beach in Sydney, Australia sponsored by the Chabad of Bondi. As of 3:40 a.m., while writing this, at least 12 people are dead, including Rabbi Eli Schlanger (z”l), one of the Chabad emissaries, and one of the alleged shooters.

New South Wales Premier Chris Minns said the attack "was designed to target Sydney's Jewish community on the first day of Chanukah," and police designated it a terrorist incident.

The Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) wrote, "This is not just a terrible day for the Jewish community, for Bondi, and for Sydney but for all of Australia, and for the values we hold dear, that are the bedrock of what for so long has been our inclusive, harmonious society."

Sadly, the AIJAC warned for years that "that verbal abuse becomes graffiti, becomes arson, becomes physical violence, becomes murder."

We continue to call on governments and authorities around the world to end hateful incitement.

Sadly, I am sure more will be known by the time you read this. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families who lost loved ones and we pray that the injured have a full recovery.

Tonight, is the first night of Chanukah. This includes the annual [menorah lighting at Pioneer Courthouse Square](#) from 4:00 - 5:30 p.m. Stand proud with our community (**registration is required** -- [click here](#) -- and there will be security) to show the world that the light of the Jewish people will triumph over darkness.



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Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland



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