

# Yom HaShoah

— 2020 —



Dear friends,

2020 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of the survivors and the end of the darkest chapter of our history. As the camps were liberated, the full force of the unprecedented tragedy of the Shoah became clear; one-third of the Jewish people had been murdered. The Jewish world that once was, with its many centuries of history in Europe was forever changed. Survivors sought refuge and a safe haven—a place to begin life anew, often on their own, having lost their families to the inferno.

It took some time for Canada to open its doors and to no longer consider Jews as an “undesirable” immigration category. Eventually, some 40,000 survivors were resettled in towns and cities across the country. They reshaped the Jewish community of Canada, inspiring us with their resilience, their courage, and their innumerable contributions.

As we move forward in time, three-quarters of a century after the Liberation, with fewer and fewer witnesses among us, antisemitism is unfortunately once again on the rise. We have an increasing responsibility to safeguard the historical record, to combat distortion and denial, and to ensure that the torch of remembrance is passed from generation to generation.

Today, we are saddened that we are unable to mark this year’s Yom Hashoah with the gatherings we had planned. In Winnipeg, this would have included many public events honouring our survivor community and their families, and commemorating the unprecedented loss and tragedy. With each passing year, we note the dwindling number of survivors at these events. And yet, we also witness their enduring legacy—the second, third, and fourth generations—embodying hope for the present and the future.



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