



INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY
OF TRIAL LAWYERS

October 30, 2018

THE RULE OF LAW

“The restriction of the arbitrary exercise of power by subordinating it to well-defined and established laws.”

On Saturday, October 27, 2018, the Rule of Law was confronted by the arbitrary exercise of hate and violence that resulted in the senseless murder of gentle people who were only trying to exercise their freedom of religion.

This horrible act occurred in a house of worship located in Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood. Having lived in Pittsburgh for 4 years, I know this neighborhood to be a gentle, serene place. IATL has Fellows/spouses who live in this neighborhood and they knew the victims. [Click here](#) to read a communication forwarded by Dusty Kirk that sets out one of the efforts to meet the needs of this community.

Violence and hate are abhorrent regardless of where, when, how or why they are directed. There is no acceptable recipient. There can never be a justification for the arbitrary exercise of power or prejudice based on political persuasion, religion, race, gender, or ethnicity. Regardless of the victim, outrage and rejection must be unabated.

The First Amendment does not permit anyone to take words of hate and act contrary to well-defined and established laws.

The First Amendment does not license the arbitrary use of power to incite others to cause physical harm to their neighbors with imminent lawless action.

We do not need political decisions and political rhetoric based on fear and hate to replace legal decisions and legal strategy based on the application of the Rule of Law.

We cannot allow the politics of hate to invade our justice system such that we move toward justice based on hate.

This begs the question: What can I do?

When you hear hate - speak against it. If you do not, you enable it.

When you see violence - report it. If you do not, you enable it.

When someone seeks your support for hate - act to protect the Rule of Law. If you do not, you enable its demise.

We owe Saturday's victims our unified voices now that theirs have been silenced.

We owe each other and our profession a duty to do everything in our collective and individual powers to restore civility and decency to this country.

Sincerely,

J. Mark White
IATL President