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Rights groups react to store

By SHIRLEE IDEN

Reacting to the recent opening of a Nazi bookstore in Detroit, a number of prominent civil rights and religious leaders have issued a joint statement deploring dissemination of hate literature more than 30 years after the defeat of Nazism.

Drafted by Christian, black and Jewish organizations, the statement called on area school systems to devise curricula to make young people aware of the crimes perpetrated under the Nazi regime.

The Oak Park school district, with a sizable Jewish enrollment, is the only school district in the Detroit area which gives concentrated attention to the Nazi genocidal campaign against European Jews.

Among those signing the statement was John H. Shepherd, a Southfield attorney who is president of the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit.

Other signers were Lawrence Washington, president of the Detroit Chapter of the NAACP; the Christian Communications Council, representing the Protestant community, Charles Benham, executive director of the Detroit Round Table of Christians and Jews; and the Rev. Alex Brunett, director of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs for the Archdiocese of Detroit.

THE STATEMENT noted the deep concern of the organizations at the establishment of the bookstore and especially of the prominent display of swastikas, the Nazi emblem, and "materials which advocate racial superiority of the white race and racial inferiority of Jews and blacks."

"Over 30 years have passed since America and her allies militarily destroyed the most murderous machine man has ever created. However, even today the repercussions of that period (1933-45) known as the Holocaust are still being felt; by the survivors and their families who still bear deep psychological scars; by those who stood by while millions were being murdered and by those who would also have been the victims had the Nazis been able to carry out their diabolical plans."

Referring to the 11 million non-combatant deaths attributed to the Nazi regime, including 6 million Jews, the statement read, "These murders were committed by the most ghastly means ever perpetrated on humanity, on people whose only crimes were their religion, ethnicity or political viewpoint."

"As we have in the past, we continue to deplore the racist materials and theories offered by the Nazi followers of today. They have no place in our community. Therefore, the establishment of a bookstore in our community propounding Nazi beliefs is a cause of concern for all freedom-loving people, regardless of their racial, religious or ethnic background."

"WE CALL on the school systems of metropolitan Detroit to develop curricula which will give our children the background necessary for them to understand the horrors of what the Nazis did to humanity in this century and to learn that lesson for the future," read the statement.

"For if we do not remember the past, we are doomed to repeat it."



Ceramic techniques

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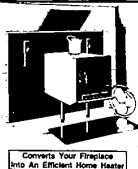
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