Jewish Community Centers Receive Fourth Wave of Bomb Threats This Year

February 20, 2017

By Christopher Brennan

The New York Daily News

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/jewish-community-centers-receive-fourth-wave-bomb-threats-article-1.2977667>

Jewish community centers across the country received bomb threats on Monday, the fourth wave of what has become a troubling trend in 2017.

Centers in Chicago, Houston, [St. Paul,](http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2017/02/20/jewish-community-center-in-st-paul-evacuated-after-threat/)[Minn.](http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/)and Buffalo, N.Y., were among 11 centers that were called Monday, though no explosives were found and no one was injured.

The latest hoaxes have brought the total number of threats to 69 at 54 centers in 27 states and one Canadian province since the beginning of the year, according to the JCC Association of North America.

Locations in Manhattan, Long Island and New Jersey were called during three waves of calls in January, which prompted evacuations at some centers.

The continued threats brought a response from the President Trump's administration, which has been criticized for its response to anti-Semitic incidents, on Monday.

"Hatred and hate-motivated violence of any kind have no place in a country founded on the promise of individual freedom," Press Secretary Sean Spicer said in a statement to NBC on Monday.

"America is a nation built on the principle of religious tolerance. We must protect our houses of worship & religious centers. #JCC," Ivanka Trump, who converted to Judaism and has been mentioned in her father's answers to questions about anti-Semitism, posted on Twitter.

Though FBI data shows that anti-Jewish hate incidents have long been the most common bias offenses based on religion, the bomb threats and the appearance of swastikas on parks and buildings have gained more attention given the nationalist views of some Trump supporters.

“I am the least anti-Semitic person that you’ve ever seen in your entire life,” Trump said when asked about the incidents last week, adding that anti-Jewish incidents may have been carried out by his political opponents.

The FBI told the Daily News last month that it and the Department of Justice are investigating possible civil rights violations in the hoax calls, and repeated the same statement Monday

“We will not be cowed by threats intended to disrupt people’s lives or the vital role Jewish community centers play as gathering places, schools, camps, and fitness and recreation centers,” the JCC Association said in a statement.

The Anti-Defamation League said that it is “deeply disturbed” by the hoaxes. The threats are “alarming, disruptive, and must always been taken seriously."