REI Condemns U.S. Capitol Insurrection, Systems That Allow White Supremacy to Flourish

January 19, 2021 -- One hundred and fifty six years after the surrender of the Confederate Army, the Confederate battle flag was marched through the Capitol of the United States of America by white supremacists gathered in an attempt to proclaim their supremacy, give voice to their hate, and do the bidding of a leader seeking only personal gain.

The Racial Equity Institute denounces their actions of sedition and insurrection. We denounce Mr. Trump who incited their unlawful attack. We denounce those who supported, encouraged, tolerated, appeased, and enabled Mr. Trump and his racist, xenophobic, authoritarianism. We objure the members of law enforcement who aided and abetted the insurrection, the entering of the U.S. Capitol, and the display of symbols of hate. We repudiate those terrorists who brutally beat and killed Officer Brian Sicknick. Further, we denounce those who ensured he and other police, who attempted to secure the Capitol, were not supported.

No rebuke can end, however, with a megalomaniac leader and his delusional followers seduced into a life of paranoia and violence. We must look at the very structures of our nation and the racism and white supremacy built into them hundreds of years ago. We must look at the collaboration of white people who trade their allegiance to the wealthy for a place in the racial hierarchy above People of Color, whom they do not even know. We must look at the beneficiaries of this system and reexamine the system itself. It is said “democracy dies in darkness.” We ask all those of good will to bring the light of truth, the light of facts, data, and science to our divided nation. We ask those of good will to work for the restoration of our humanity and rebuke the lie that some people are better than others.

Finally, we commit to continuing to spread the truth of our history, the 400 years of “imaginable mistreatment” of POC, and to expose the poverty of white people who suffer the unwanted consequences of a society divided by race. We commit to continuing our work with the ever-growing base of people who share our allegiance to justice and equity and the belief in the capacity of the human heart to act in the interest of the commonweal.