



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Scarsdale 10583: Community Rallies Against Hate

JOANNE WALLENSTEIN January 28, 2024



The Scarsdale community launched a strong and swift response to an anti-Semitic incident that occurred on Thursday January 24, organizing a large rally just twelve hours after graffiti was sprayed on store windows in the Golden Horseshoe Shopping Center.

An estimated 500 people came out to stand in front of the Scoop Shop where the words "Genocide Supporters," had been painted -- along with the window of Cheryl's Closet a few doors down. Signs saying "We Stand With Israel" were posted in both store windows. The rally was called for 4 pm but by 3:45 pm traffic was jammed on Palmer Avenue and Wilmot

Roads and all nearby parking lots filled up, preventing even more from participating.

Waving Israeli flags or even draped in the flag itself, the gatherers heard speeches from County Executive George Latimer, State Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, State Senator Shelley, Scarsdale Mayor Justin Arest, Minister Mark McLean, and Rabbi Menachem Creditor. The crowd condemned the crime chanting "Hate Has No Home Here."

They lined up to purchase ice cream in a show of support for the Scoop Shop, whose owner Adam Deutsch vowed, "We're not going anywhere. We stand with Israel and we're proud."

Local leaders made the following statements about the graffiti, which is being called a hate crime.

**Rabbi Jeffrey Brown** and **Cantor Chanin Becker** from Scarsdale Synagogue said, "We are also moved to respond forcefully to the hateful messages that were scrawled on these local businesses. These messages were particularly disturbing because they fundamentally delegitimize the project of the Jewish State. We solemnly affirm the right of the Jewish People to maintain a homeland of our own that is safe and secure from militant terrorists hellbent on committing acts of atrocity against innocent civilians.

But we were also struck by the intellectual disingenuousness behind the graffiti's messaging (which read "Genocide Supporters").

We fundamentally disagree that affirming Israel's right to defend itself from terrorism is equivalent to favoring the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza or elsewhere.

From our vantage point, it is entirely possible to be a Zionist who affirms Israel's right to secure its borders and defend itself, and to yearn for the day (and may it come speedily!)

when Israelis and Palestinians will be able to live side by side, co-existing in peace. Our greatest hope is that the suffering of all human innocents might cease.

Even as we regularly disagree with, and openly challenge, the leadership of the Israeli government (just as we do with our own American government), we are proud to call ourselves Zionists. We think it is remarkable for Jews to be alive in an historical moment in which the dreams of our ancestors were fulfilled 75 years ago. The State of Israel, the homeland of the Jewish People, exists as a bulwark to protect our people against the senseless hate that we know (all too well, this week) still exists in the world just a few decades after the Holocaust.

But let us be clear: we take no pleasure from the suffering or deaths of Palestinian innocents. We do not desire the genocide of Palestinians. We only wish for the safety and security of the Jewish State, and for the possibility of a shared co-existence in peace with dignity for all.

It is one of the horrific ironies of October 7 that so many of those killed or taken hostage were lifelong peace activists. Their sacrifices were not in vain. We are undeterred from the path to peace. When this chapter of Israel's history is over, when the 136 remaining hostages are returned (speedily we pray), and when Israel's borders are secure once again, we will continue this sacred work together. And in doing so, we will prove to this week's vandals that their actions were foolishly misinformed. Because peace for the Palestinians will never be brought about by wanton destruction of property, or horrific acts of terror. It will come from courageous political leadership and grassroots relationship-building that reminds us all that the things we have in common are far more significant than the things that drive us apart."

The **City of New Rochelle** wrote, ""We are deeply saddened and disturbed by the recent acts of antisemitism targeting two of our city's storefronts. New Rochelle is built on the values of diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect. Hate crimes like the vandalization of Cheryl's Closet

and Scoop Shop have no place in our community and we vehemently condemn this behavior. We stand by our Jewish citizens and will not tolerate these types of attacks. Upon the discovery and reporting of these incidents by the New Rochelle Police Department, we have swiftly taken action. The City of New Rochelle and its police department is working in collaboration with law enforcement agencies, including the Westchester County District Attorney and the Scarsdale Police Department. Our commitment to supporting their efforts in investigating this incident remains steadfast. Property security inspections for local business and synagogues have been conducted and are underway. We plan to monitor the situation closely and inform all residents of any updates.”

**Congressman Jamaal Bowman** issued an email which said, “This morning, my team and I received reports of graffiti at the Golden Horseshoe shopping center in Scarsdale on a Jewish-owned store and we will continue to monitor the situation. While we await more information, we have sent a team member to the store to look at the area. Let me be clear: I strongly condemn antisemitic actions that target Jewish Americans because of their religion or conflate the actions of the Israeli government with our Jewish neighbors. Throughout history, vandalism has been used to target and harass Jewish communities, and the use of vandalism today against Jewish-owned shops here in our district is unacceptable. There is no place for vandalism or violence anywhere in our communities.

As we witness horrific tragedies unfold and see a rise in hatred across the world, it is more important than ever to remember that Jewish Americans are not responsible for the actions of the Israeli government, just as Arab Americans are not responsible for the actions of Hamas. Our communities must come together in times of pain and grief to protect each other’s safety as we engage in hard conversations grounded in truth. Stoking divisions and hatred only prevents us from working towards our collective liberation. Instead, we must center our actions and conversations in truth, empathy, and our shared humanity as we

work to protect human rights around the world and promote peace.”

And **NYS Assemblywoman Amy Paulin** wrote, “This morning, antisemitic graffiti was found on the storefronts of two Jewish-owned businesses in the Golden Horseshoe Shopping Center in New Rochelle. This hateful act of antisemitism is reprehensible and will not be tolerated.

Our community is still reeling from the Oct. 7 terrorist attack, and still suffering from the knowledge that more than 100 hostages are still being held captive. That struggle has been compounded by an incessant rise in antisemitism everywhere, in our institutions of higher learning, at children’s sport games, and at what we see today, acts of vandalism.

Make no mistake - antisemitic acts such as these are a threat to Jews everywhere. If history is any kind of guide, this will not end here. The Nazis did not stop with the Jews, they also persecuted persons with disabilities, those they considered racially different from themselves, homosexuals, Jehovah Witnesses, and many others. Racists know no boundaries. In short, they seek to destroy the diversity that makes communities like ours great.

That being said, we cannot be intimidated by this hateful vandalism. We must all stand up against it, and make sure that these acts never become normalized. Antipathy is also our enemy. This must be a call for everyone to support each other and stand against all acts of antisemitism and all acts of hate.

I’m calling for an immediate and active investigation including a thorough review of the video in the area. We cannot, and I will never, ever, waiver on standing up to antisemitic acts in our community.”

Read the article here: <https://scarsdale10583.com/arts-a-entertainment-601/10669-community-rallies-against-hate>