

**Remarks By Scott Sniffen
Upon Receiving Certificate of Appreciation
from B'nai Israel,
November 11, 2022**

Shabat Schalom. Thank you Eric, Ed, Jeff and everyone who came out on such a rainy night. Thanks as well to the original Southbury Historical Society committee for choosing me to tell this important story. Sorry I can't be there in person, but these are the times we live in.



When they asked me to produce the film for a story I admittedly knew very little about, I was fascinated and intrigued. This little farm town taking a stand while so many others outside the US and in fact within America turned a blind eye or were apathetic to the activities occurring in Europe in the mid to late 1930's.

But what is alarming to me, is 85 years later, there seems to be a rise in anti-Semitism with some groups and individuals openly rallying against the Jewish people and using hate speech, which I thought this country was past or at least buried in the ugly underbelly of society. Well apparently, not. And its hard to believe the Jewish people, some still alive and Holocaust survivors are hearing hateful speech thought to be extinguished out of the mainstream many years ago.

But I say don't give those groups and individuals any oxygen. Don't legitimize their lies and damning words. Instead keep telling stories like this one where a small town took a stand and said no.

When we premiered Home of the Brave 10 years ago, many asked me if I was Jewish. I told them no but with so many inquiries, I got to thinking what it must be like growing us Jewish in the US or in the world for that matter. And these thoughts took me back to my college years when an individual in my dorm disagreed with me about something. I'm sure it was a trivial matter, but the disagreement turned into an argument and all of a sudden, he's shouting Jewish slurs my way clearing thinking I was Jewish. His friends finally dragged him away as the whole thing became an ugly affair. This bothered me a great deal. He basically was blaming me, the Jewish people for something. And that's what I think about when I try to understand what it's like being Jewish in this world.

But the blaming is how it starts.

"Its their fault, that's why we have problems." I thought, where does that come from? Well as we know, its taught at an early age by ignorant family and friends and today by an "off the rails" very dangerous social media. It's just easier to hear what you want to hear

and to point fingers than to take responsibly and educate yourself about the facts.

So, 85 years ago, the people of Southbury listened to facts and reason and took a stand. And I will continue to tell stories based in fact, not lies, hate and bigotry. No oxygen to the haters!

Again, thank you very much for letting me tell this little piece of history and the honor tonight.

Thank you so much,
Scott Sniffen