

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR THE TOWN AND VILLAGE OF NEW PALTZ:**

**“Tolerance of Belief / Good Neighbors”**

WHEREAS recent public statements by political leaders seem to give license to expressions of hatred toward Muslim-Americans<sup>1</sup>;

AND WHEREAS we also see many examples of hatred directed toward Jews<sup>2</sup>, Christians<sup>3</sup> and Sikhs<sup>4</sup>;

AND WHEREAS we see, historically and in the present-day, acts of violence and discrimination directed toward African-Americans, Latinos and all groups seen as “other”;

AND WHEREAS acts of religious and racial bigotry undermine the civic fabric of our country in the eyes of the world;

AND WHEREAS acts of religious and racial bigotry diminish the civic discourse of our country;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/18/us/politics/crimes-against-muslim-americans-and-mosques-rise-sharply.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/anti-semitism-usa/adl-audit-in-2014-anti-semitic-incidents.html#.VorSthUrKhc>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/23/us/dylann-roof-charleston-shooting-suspect-is-expected-to-face-federal-hate-crime-charges.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/d253acd3168c4884b139cdca81665846/sikhs-feel-vulnerable-join-muslims-combat-backlash>

AND WHEREAS the need for peaceful civic discourse, without resort to violence, is the key to maintaining a civil society that addresses the needs of all;

AND WHEREAS the embrace and acceptance of our neighbors, no matter their religious affiliation or their racial heritage, is a cornerstone of the American Way;

AND WHEREAS a tradition of religious freedom and tolerance has been part of the fabric of life in New Paltz since its founding in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century by Huguenots seeking a place to worship without fear<sup>5</sup>;

AND WHEREAS the community of New Paltz acknowledges the truth of Rev. Martin Niemöller's admonition during the Nazi era in Germany:

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.reformedchurchofnewpaltz.org/history>

<sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First\\_they\\_came...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_they_came...)

AND WHEREAS the community of New Paltz embraces the statement of John Stuart Mill that “bad men need nothing more to compass their ends, than that good men should look on and do nothing”<sup>7</sup>;

AND WHEREAS the community of New Paltz is mindful of the warning from Albert Einstein that “the world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing”<sup>8</sup>;

AND WHEREAS the community of New Paltz takes to heart the statement by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that “history will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people”<sup>9</sup>;

THE TOWN [VILLAGE] OF NEW PALTZ RESOLVES AND AFFIRMS

FIRST, that acts of violence against any group based on religion or ethnicity, whether Muslims today or any other group tomorrow, are intolerable and will be considered actions taken against our entire community;

SECOND, that the members of the New Paltz community who are not Muslim offer support and friendship toward their Muslim neighbors;

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<sup>7</sup> [https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/John\\_Stuart\\_Mill](https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/John_Stuart_Mill)

<sup>8</sup> [https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Albert\\_Einstein](https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Albert_Einstein)

<sup>9</sup> [http://christian-quotes.ochristian.com/christian-quotes\\_ochristian.cgi?find=Christian-quotes-by-Martin+Luther+King,+Jr.-on-Apathy](http://christian-quotes.ochristian.com/christian-quotes_ochristian.cgi?find=Christian-quotes-by-Martin+Luther+King,+Jr.-on-Apathy)

THIRD, that New Paltz is a community of tolerance that honors individuals from all walks of life and all beliefs or non-belief, and is a place where neighbors live and work together cooperatively for the benefit of all;

AND FOURTH, that the Town [Village] of New Paltz calls upon other New York State and American communities to join us in public expressions that honor the importance of tolerance, acceptance, diversity and nonviolence.

Respectfully submitted by

- William Weinstein, resident, Town of New Paltz

And the following New Paltz clergy as co-signatories:

- Rabbi Rena Blumenthal
- Fr. Salvatore Cordaro, O.F.M., Cap., Pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church
- Azer Khan, Imam and President, Muslim Students Association
- Rev. Dr. Mark E. Mast, Pastor of Reformed Church of New Paltz
- Bishop Gregory Ortiz, Christ the King Charismatic Episcopal Church, New Paltz.
- Rev. Marnette Saz, member, United Methodist Church of New Paltz and representative to the New Paltz Area Church Council
- Pastor Bette Johnson Sohm, New Paltz United Methodist Church
- Rabbi William Strongin, Jewish Congregation of New Paltz
- Father Andrew Wyns, Christ the King Charismatic Episcopal Church, New Paltz