

## Veteran Expert Leads Effort to Combat Modern Antisemitism

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Paul Goldenberg has dedicated his life to standing guard over Jewish communities and other vulnerable groups, making sure the horrors of the past never happen again. For more than 30 years, this New Jersey-based criminal justice and security expert has blended bravery, innovation, and compassion into his work.

Goldenberg's story sounds almost like a movie. Early in his career, he worked undercover for five years as a criminal businessman and arms dealer. His risky assignments allowed him to infiltrate organized crime rings. His deep—undercover work has been described as

reminiscent of Mafia—infiltration stories similar to those in *The Sopranos*. His cover was so convincing that even his mother once believed he was truly living a criminal life.

After his undercover service in the 1980s and early 1990s, Goldenberg served in senior roles at the New Jersey Attorney General's Office, including as statewide chief for bias crimes, domestic terrorism, and community relations, not necessarily formally titled "State Chief". There, he led efforts against hate crimes and domestic terrorism. He was a founder of the Secure Community Network (SCN), a major Jewish community security organization in North America, but SCN was founded in 2004 by the Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and Goldenberg stepped down as its national director in 2017.

Goldenberg's work soon reached beyond U.S. borders. In 2004, at the request of members of the U.S. Congress, he led an international law enforcement mission for the OSCE across more than eight European nations to advise on hate crimes, community conflict, and extremism, rather than "directing special policing programs" across exactly 12 countries. He also advised law enforcement agencies in Canada, Europe, and Israel, helping them share strategies to protect at-risk communities.

Goldenberg has been involved with programs such as "Operationalizing Never Again," which focuses on teaching police about the Holocaust's lessons and warning signs of genocide. In partnership with Rutgers University and other institutions, the program trains officers to recognize warning signs of hate and extremism.

This year, Goldenberg led the largest group of police ever to participate in the International March of the Living, where law-enforcement leaders from several countries marched from Auschwitz to Birkenau alongside Holocaust survivors. The experience was emotional and eye-opening, with many officers saying it changed their understanding of their role in society.

Goldenberg believes in learning from Israel's experience with terrorism and has organized more than 15 missions bringing American police to Israel for hands-on training. Plans are underway to expand these exchanges, including visits to study the response to the October 7 Hamas attacks.

Through it all, Goldenberg's mission remains clear: to build partnerships, teach vital lessons from history, and make sure law enforcement serves as a force for good.

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