

*Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice David Wecht makes this statement in his **personal** capacity. This statement is not made on behalf of any other person, nor on behalf of the Supreme Court or any other institution.*

The people of Pennsylvania elected me. They put their faith in me, and I reciprocate. I have faith in Pennsylvanians, and they deserve to know the following.

In 1998, my wife and I were married at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Congregation, on whose Board of Trustees I served. Twenty years later, in the very same sanctuary where our wedding occurred, the worst massacre of Jews in American history was perpetrated. That terror came from the right. Jew-hatred has always festered on the fringe of that sector.

In the years that have followed, that same hatred has grown on the left. Increasingly, it has moved from the fringe to the mainstream. It is the duty of all good people to fight this virus, and to do so before it is too late .

My jurisprudence and adjudication have always been independent, and they always will be. Now, my voting registration reflects that independence as well.

From 1998 to 2001, years that preceded my judicial career, I served as Vice-Chair of the Pennsylvania Democratic Party. In the quarter century that has passed since then, the Democratic Party has changed. Nazi tattoos, jihadist chants, intimidation and attacks at synagogues, and other hateful anti-Jewish invective and actions are minimized, ignored, and even coddled. Acquiescence to Jew-hatred is now disturbingly common among activists, leaders and even many elected officials in the Democratic Party.

I can no longer abide this. So, I won't. I am no longer registered within any political party.

As a jurist, I always have, and always will, vindicate the legal rights that haters and extremists of all stripes enjoy in our country and in our Commonwealth . This is the land of freedom to which my mother and my father's parents immigrated, seeking refuge and opportunity . They found it, and my mother and father were both proud to wear the uniform and serve in the armed forces of the United States. I have dedicated most of my adult life to public service in this nation and Commonwealth, and most of that to rendering impartial justice in the judicial branch.

In Pennsylvania, and in the United States of America, we enjoy robust rights and liberties, bequeathed to us by our great Founders. These freedoms have helped to make this the greatest civilization that the world has ever seen. There have been other great civilizations in the past, and almost all of them have deteriorated and declined when Jew-hatred grew and metastasized.

We all should awaken now to what is happening. I am confined to a judicial role, and in that role, I maintain independence at all times and in all respects. My voting registration now reflects my independence as well. As Shakespeare's Polonius told his Laertes: "This above all: to thine own self be true."

It is my hope that Pennsylvanians, and Americans, of all viewpoints and backgrounds will oppose and resist the scourge of Jew-hatred before it undermines what our ancestors have built here.