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## LEADING EUROPEAN AND HUNGARIAN RABBIS CONDEMN NEO-NAZI MARCHES IN BUDAPEST

Former defense minister Avigdor Liberman condemns Hungarian police 'for not lifting a finger' against neo-Nazi demonstration.

BY JEREMY SHARON / FEBRUARY 12, 2019 13:55

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One of the neo-Nazi marches in Budapest, Hungary. (photo credit: JEWISH FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY AND AGAINST ANTISEMITISM)

**J**ewish leaders in Hungary have spoken out against the failure of the government and police to stop the neo-Nazi marches which took place last Saturday in the capital of Budapest, drawing an estimated 2,800 far-right extremists bearing swastikas and other fascist symbols.






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Former defense minister Avigdor Liberman criticized the Hungarian police for failing to stop the marches, while Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, described the "indifference" of the Hungarian authorities as "shocking."

The marches, labeled the "Day of Honor," commemorated the defeat of the German army and the armed forces of the fascist Hungarian Arrow Cross regime at the hands of the Soviet Red Army in February 1945, with participants honoring the memory of the Nazi and fascist forces which died in battle.



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Speaking to The Jerusalem Post, Rabbi Zoltan Radnoti, chairman of the rabbinical council of the Mazsihisz Jewish Federation in Hungary, said that such marches are extremely frightening for the Jewish community.

"It very much pains us that neither the authorities nor the police did anything to stop this march," said Radnoti.





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"Jews do not want to see people dressed in Nazi uniforms," he continued, saying that there were various legal tools the police could have used to prevent the march. "The government and police must stop these marches. It is not fitting for Budapest, for Hungary, or for a government which says it wants to protect the Jewish Hungarian community, and which says it has zero-tolerance for antisemitism, but allows these marches."

Officials in the Mazsihisz Federation itself, an umbrella organization for the Neolog denomination – somewhat akin to Conservative Judaism – stated that the march was unacceptable, adding that it was "a step down that the Hungarian authorities" permit such demonstrations.

"For the Hungarian Jewish community and for the vast majority of Hungarian citizens, it is frightening that Budapest was a place again for neo-Nazi commemoration and march[es]," the organization stated on Monday. "A neo-Nazi demonstration that flames hatred, equipped with SS-skulls [and] marches in formation is unacceptable, whether it is [taking] place at the Városmajor [Park] or at the Buda Castle's Kapisztrán Square."

According to the JFDA German antisemitism watchdog group, there were some 2,800 participants in two marches that took place on Saturday.

Three hundred mostly Hungarian far-right activists took part in a march organized by the Blood and Honor neo-Nazi group at the Szell Kalman Square and then laid wreaths at a war memorial in the adjacent park.

At the end of a speech by German neo-Nazi activist Matthias Deyda, he referred to Adolf Hitler as the "most famous and greatest German statesman of history," and cited a quote from the Nazi leader about what would happen if "Our old enemy and adversary tries again to attack us."

According to JFDA, there were also numerous far-right and neo-Nazi participants from other European countries from the German Die Rechte Party, the Swedish Nordic Resistance Movement, "Club 28 Serbia" and the Ukrainian C14 organization, as well as right-wing extremists from Italy and Russia.

Later in the afternoon, some 2,500 far-right activists gathered at Kapisztrán Square in Budapest Castle and marched to a small town outside of the capital.

In a statement on Tuesday, Liberman referred to "a wave of antisemitism" around the world, and pointed to events "in Budapest, capital of Hungary, where neo-Nazi demonstrations take place in which hundreds of people participate and the police don't lift a finger."

<https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Antisemitism/Leading-European-and-Hungarian-rabbis-condemn-neo-Nazi-marches-in-Budapest-580426>

