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Jewish leader slams rabbi who said opposing Chief Rabbi is like resisting Nazis

Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt criticises Charedi leader Aharon Bassous for his comments about Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

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Rabbi Aharon Bassous

A top European rabbi has criticised a controversial Charedi leader from Golders Green who launched an attack on Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis at the weekend.

A tape emerged of an unnamed person relaying passages from rabbi Aharon Bassous's Shabbat address last Saturday.

Rabbi Aharon Bassous was said to have compared his opposition to the chief rabbi to resistance to Nazism.

Bassous allegedly said he "knew people from the Holocaust.

"And one thing they learned from the Holocaust, is that wherever the Nazis told you to do or tried to make you to do, you knew you had to do the opposite.

"The same thing is here, that wherever people like the Chief Rabbi or Dweck tell you or advise you, you have to try to do the opposite.

"Because these people are literally from the sitra achra. And that was his advice."

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The Kabbalistic term, the 'sitra achra', refers to the "side opposite holiness" or the realm of evil.

Bassous also reportedly defended the controversial American rabbi Yosef Mizrachi, who claims children with autism and Down Syndrome are being punished for sins in a past life.

Mizrachi, who has been criticised by the chief rabbi and many others, is due to present at a series of synagogues in London this month.

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In a statement, Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, said: "These unseemly comments are inappropriate. No one will be impressed.

"At such difficult times our community has every right to expect that Rabbinical colleagues would come together in support of each other and of the community, rather than play petty politics.

"There is a community suffering and it is the duty of each and every rabbi to offer support."

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