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# THE JERUSALEM POST

## TOP EUROPEAN RABBI ABOUT FAR-RIGHT: ENEMY OF MY ENEMY ISN'T MY FRIEND

Goldschmidt said that fear of "Islamic radical terrorism" should not lead Jews in Europe to vote for or engage with far-right parties, specifying in particular

BY JEREMY SHARON / MAY 15, 2019 18:09

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Supporters of the Anti-immigration party Alternative for Germany (AfD) hold German flags during a protest in Berlin, Germany May 27, 2018. (photo credit: REUTERS/HANNIBAL HANSCHKE)





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**P**resident of the Conference of European Rabbis Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt has insisted that European Jews and Israel should distance themselves from populist and far-right parties ahead of upcoming elections in general and in particular ahead of EU parliamentary elections at the end of May.

Goldschmidt said that fear of "Islamic radical terrorism" should not lead Jews in Europe to vote for or engage with far-right parties, noting that some of these parties include "hardcore antisemites."

"Saying 'the enemy of the enemy is my friend because we don't like Muslims therefore we'll support them [the far-right]'; this doesn't always make sense," said Goldschmidt.

He pointed specifically to the National Rally in France, formerly known as the National Front, Austria's Freedom Party whose leader Heinz-Christian Strache has called for a ban on religious slaughter, and the AfD in Germany, as parties not suitable for Jewish support.

The Freedom Party in Austria boasts a Jewish MP, while a small number of Jews in Germany formed the "Jews in the AfD" caucus last year.

In February 2018, then Likud MK Yehudah Glick met with Strache

"There are some Jews who are inclined to vote for the far-right, but when God gave out intelligence not every one was standing in line to get it," quipped the rabbi.

"I have a problem with people who walk around with big yarmulkes who have grandparents who were holocaust survivors and who are ready to sit down and kiss and hug people who are very proud of their Holocaust and World War II heritage," he said.

Goldschmidt declined however to comment on the rise of Israel's far right parties and the recent political alliance formed between Bayit Yehudi and the far-right Otzma Yehudit party, a union which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself strongly lobbied for.

Asked if it was appropriate for Israeli Jews to vote for such parties, the rabbi said that he did not want to get involved in Israeli politics.





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Reflecting on rising antisemitism in Europe, Goldschmidt said that he and many European rabbis were concerned about the growth of far-right hate in particular.

"The fact that you have brown shirts marching again in the streets of Germany, with other Nazis [marching] in other cities in Europe and an empowered far-right is significant sign for times to come," said Goldschmidt.

"Jews are worried about antisemitism in Europe. We don't like what's going on."

<https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Enemy-of-my-enemy-isnt-my-friend-says-top-European-rabbi-of-far-Right-589775>

