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1/2

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European Rabbis Condemn Proposed Holocaust Whitewash Legislation in Lithuania

a by Algemeiner Staff



Antisemitic graffiti found on a wall mural commemorating Jewish life in Vilnius, Lithuania. Photo: Facebook.

Europe's leading rabbinical association added its voice on Tuesday to the growing condemnation of legislation tabled in the Lithuanian Parliament that whitewashes the role played by Lithuanian collaborators during the Nazi Holocaust.

"The draft bill proposed by a committee of the Lithuanian Parliament seeks to deny the involvement of Lithuanian citizens in the Holocaust," Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt — president of the Conference of European Rabbis — said in a statement. "This is a direct affront to hundreds of thousands of Lithuanian Jews whose murders were aided and abetted by Lithuanian political and military leaders, as well as local Lithuanian populations."





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The bill will be titled, “The Lithuanian state, which was occupied in 1940-1990, did not participate in the Holocaust,” according to Arunas Gumuliauskas, the legislation’s sponsor. He is a member of Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis’ Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union party.

“The Lithuanian state did not participate in the Holocaust because it was occupied, just as the Lithuanian nation could not participate in the Holocaust because it was enslaved,” Gumuliauskas said last week. “But individual representatives are obviously involved and it is up to the court to decide.”

Countered Rabbi Goldschmidt: “The Lithuanian government must face up to its history, not seek to ignore or deny it. The facts are clear: under Nazi occupation, the provisional Lithuanian government, Lithuanian paramilitary battalions and local Lithuanian populations were complicit in the slaughter of more than 90 percent of approximately 220,000 Jews living in Lithuania.”

Goldschmidt emphasized that the “rewriting of history for political gain can never be tolerated and we urge the Lithuanian Parliament to withdraw this bill with immediate effect.”

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