Fury as Antisemitic Polish MP Extinguishes Candles on Hanukkah Menorah in Parliament Building

by Ben Cohen
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Antisemitic Polish MP Grzegorz Braun is seen moments after extinguishing a Hanukkah menorah in the Polish parliament. Photo: Screenshot

A viscerally antisemitic member of the Polish parliament was expelled from the chamber on Tuesday after he extinguished the candles of a lit Hanukkah menorah with a fire extinguisher.

The incident occurred in a hallway of the Sejm, Poland's legislative assembly, where a menorah was on display celebrating the annual Hanukkah holiday. The MP, Grzegorz Braun of the far right Confederation Party, grabbed a fire extinguisher to spray the menorah, filling the area with smoke. Dozens of people who attended the candle lighting ceremony, including several children, were immediately evacuated by security officers.

Braun was promptly turfed out of the parliament by speaker Szymon Holownia, who promised a formal investigation into the incident. "There will be no tolerance for racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and any other deviations as long as I am the Speaker of the Sejm," he later said.

Braun also launched into an antisemitic rant after attacking the menorah, telling those who berated him that they were the ones who should feel "ashamed to participate in the acts of a Satanic Talmudic cult." He then doubled down with a post on X/Twitter that declared, "There can be no

place for acts of racist, wild, Talmudic worship on the premises of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland!"

One reporter who witnessed the incident was adamant that Braun had planned his act in advance. "I had the impression that from the beginning he knew when he was grabbing the fire extinguisher what he wanted to do. He had it planned in some way," said Sebastian Napieraj, a reporter with broadcaster TVN24. "There was a film crew with him who filmed it all."

An unnamed woman who was also in attendance said she had been physically assaulted by Braun. "I got in his way and he sprayed me with in the face with the fire extinguisher," she told news outlet *Wiadomosci*.

Braun's outrage was widely condemned. Israel's Ambassador in Warsaw, Yaacov Livne, denounced it as "shameful" while US envoy Mark Brzezinski condemned what he called a "vile antisemitic act."

Braun's action occurred as Poland's newly-elected Prime Minister Donald Tusk laid out the legislative program for his centrist administration. Commenting on Braun, Tusk said the act of extinguishing the menorah was a "disgrace" and "unacceptable."

"This cannot be allowed to happen again,' Tusk said.

Rafal Pankowski — executive director of the leading Polish anti-racist association "Never Again" — told *The Algemeiner* that Braun possessed a long record of antisemitic incitement. In June, Braun wrecked a lecture addressed by the leading Holocaust historian Prof. Jan Grabowski at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw, grabbing the microphone and smashing it before turning to the shocked audience to announce that the meeting was over. Separately, in January Braun told a gathering of far right MPs that Polish leaders "were 'no longer just ritually bowing to Jews in New York' but were also following a political correctness model according to which 'no one dare to speak in an unsentimental-idealistic way' about Jews and others for fear of punishment," the Never Again Association reported at the time.

"Grzegorz Braun is the most notorious antisemite in Polish politics today and one of the most active antisemites in Europe," Pankowski said. "As an MP for the far-right Confederation party he is also known for extreme anti-Ukrainian and anti-LGBT statements. His words and actions legitimize and incite violence against minorities. He must be held accountable and he must not be given a platform to continue promoting hatred."

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