

British Authorities Urged to Deny Entry to Antisemitic Polish Politicians Planning to Speak at Community Event

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An interfaith organization in the UK is calling on the British government to prevent the entry of two far-right Polish politicians accused of antisemitic and racist incitement.

In a statement on Thursday, Faith Matters highlighted the planned presence of Janusz Korwin-Mikke, a former member of the European parliament, and Konrad Berkowicz, a serving member of the Polish parliament for the far-right Konfederacja party, at a Polish community event scheduled for Sunday in Manchester. Around 700,000 people of Polish descent live in the UK, with up to 30,000 located in the Greater Manchester region.

Faith Matters said it had submitted a dossier to the British Home Office that collected many of Korwin-Mikke's inflammatory statements on social media, including a recent series of tweets suggesting that atrocities committed by Russian troops in Ukrainian cities such as Mariupol and Bucha were in fact the work of Ukrainian forces.

Korwin-Mikke has frequently promoted crudely antisemitic material, with one posting from 2019 showing a man dressed as a Hasidic Jew laughing cynically and the accompanying message "Stupid Goy" alongside the n-word. On previous occasions, he claimed that Adolf Hitler had been unaware of the Holocaust, opined that being a Jew or a Muslim was "worse for me than race mixing," and urged the lowering of the age of consent for children on the grounds that there are "girls who are 12, 13, and completely mature."

In 2020, Korwin-Mikke sparked outrage when he claimed during a TV panel discussion that Jews had benefited from the murderous pogroms against them in Europe, becoming more powerful as a result of the violence. "Jews are now powerful because they had pogroms," he said. "As a result of pogroms, the strongest and the most gifted survived. This is a warning to antisemites: That is why Jews are powerful, because they had pogroms. There are even theories that rabbis deliberately provoke pogroms precisely so that Jews survive, and then there is natural selection."

Konrad Berkowicz, meanwhile, gained notoriety in 2019 when he forcibly placed a kippah on the head of a rival lawmaker during a parliamentary debate on Holocaust restitution while one of his colleagues railed against Polish politicians who allegedly "kneel before the Jews."

The 'Never Again' Association, a Polish anti-racist organization, echoed Faith Matters' call on the British government to prevent Korwin-Mikke and Berkowicz from entering the country.

The group said it was "dismayed by the planned meeting of the Polish far-right leaders in Manchester. We are seriously concerned they are going to promote their hatred and bigotry among the Polish community in the UK."

Polish extremists have been prevented from entering the UK in the past. In Oct. 2021, much to the chagrin of the Polish government, the British authorities denied entry to Rafal Ziemkiewicz, a columnist for the far-right weekly, Do Rzeczy, who has claimed that the Holocaust was a "myth." Upon landing at Heathrow Airport in London, Ziemkiewicz was informed by immigration officials that his views were "at odds with British values and likely to cause offense."

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