

‘How to Recognize a Jew’: Outrage Over Sale of Antisemitic Newspaper at Polish Parliament’s Hotel

By Ben Cohen
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Poland’s parliament faced international embarrassment on Wednesday after one of its lawmakers spotted a newspaper on sale at the parliament’s hotel with the blood-curdling headline, “How to Recognize A Jew.”

Michal Kaminski, one of the parliamentary representatives of the opposition centrist PSL party, said he saw the paper on sale at the kiosk in the hotel on the parliament’s grounds where many members hold meetings and dine on a daily basis. The paper, a nationalist publication called “Tylko Polska,” ran a headline above the paper’s masthead that screamed in large red letters, “Jak Rozpoznać Żyda” (“How to Recognize a Jew”).

The paper then listed various methods of “recognizing” Jews — “Name. Anthropological features. The way of speaking. The look. Features of the character. The methods of action. The methods of disinformation” — before exhorting its readers to “...Fight them — it can no longer be this way!”

Kaminski said it was an “absolute scandal” that such “filthy texts, as if taken from Nazi newspapers” were sold in the Polish Parliament. He said he had demanded an explanation from Parliament Speaker Marek Kuchcinski, a member of the right-wing ruling Law and Justice party.

Andrzej Grzegorzolka, a spokesperson for the Polish Parliament, said on Wednesday afternoon that the distributors who supply the hotel kiosk would be told to remove the offending title. In a statement to the Polish news agency PAP, Grzegorzolka added that any ban on “Tylko Polska” for violating the country’s hate speech laws was the responsibility of “law enforcement agencies, not the Chancellery of the Sejm [the Polish parliament].”

One leading Polish anti-racist NGO said that the prominent display of an openly antisemitic title at the hotel “illustrates the long term presence of antisemitism in Poland.”

The very fact that “Tylko Polska” was being distributed “unfortunately demonstrates the stubborn ignorance or even toleration of antisemitism in the political mainstream,” the Polish “Never Again Association” said in a statement emailed to The Algemeiner on Wednesday.

One American Jewish leader with several decades of experience of dealing with successive Polish governments reacted with dismay to the news.

“How sad for Poland and the Jewish people that antisemitism continues in so many forms and in so many places in today’s Poland,” Abraham Foxman –the national director emeritus of the Anti-Defamation League and the head of an antisemitism study program at the Museum of Jewish Heritage — A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York City– told The Algemeiner. “This time, an antisemitic publication with classic antisemitic tropes is being sold of all places at a kiosk in the Polish Parliament.”

“When will Poland begin in earnest a major educational campaign to educate against antisemitism?” asked Foxman, a Holocaust survivor who as a child was hidden by his Polish Catholic nanny from the Nazis.

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