

# THE JEWISH STATE

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## Recent campus hatred recalls Kristallnacht horror



(l-r) Laurie Brower, chancellor of the Catholic diocese of Metuchen, and state ADL leaders Roy Tanzman and Bill Davidson marked Kristallnacht.

By Norm Oshrin  
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Wearing clerical collars, kippahs and just plain suits and dresses, a dozen or more clergy huddled around a table at Rutgers Hillel in late afternoon, Monday, Nov. 10.

"Did everyone have a slice yet?" Shai Goldstein, regional director of the hosting Anti-Defamation League, asked them.

In a few moments, finishing their kosher pizza snack, the clerics and Jewish and non-Jewish communal leaders would be sharing something more: on this 65th anniversary of Kristallnacht: *Continued on Page Fourteen*



Photo by Norm Oshrin

Msgr. William Benwell, vicar general of the Diocese of Metuchen, signs "Statement of Agreement Re: Anti-Zionism/Anti-Semitism" at the special 65th anniversary commemoration of Kristallnacht at Rutgers Hillel.

Ecumenism, harmony and brotherhood in honoring the memories of those lost during that time and in the ensuing Holocaust.

On Kristallnacht ("the night of broken glass," Nov. 9-10, 1938), Nazis sent 30,000 Jews to concentration camps and set on fire or destroyed more than 200 synagogues in Germany and Austria.

As he doled out the pizza slices and the assignments for the "Lest We Forget" reading of the memorial program, Goldstein reminded the visitors how the ceremony came, too, in the wake of continuing anti-Israel anti-Semitic rhetoric and activity on the Rutgers campus and elsewhere.

While explaining how the program was not arranged in direct response to the anti-Zionist anti-Semitic events, Goldstein did specifically refer to the recent speech by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

"It underscores the need for this kind of gathering," he said of the speech, specifically referring to one passage to emphasize his point: "The Europeans killed 6 million Jews out of 12 million. But today the Jews rule this world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them."

That, and other such utterings and happenings, Goldstein noted, "underscores that anti-Semitism is not in the distance, but is a current, real event... what has occurred on the world stage is a direct threat to the community."

Including, it was presumed, Rutgers — where pro-Israel Jewish students have been the target of hate rhetoric and even vandalism in the form of swastikas painted on Jewish facilities.

To further emphasize his point, Goldstein distributed copies of Goran Larsson's "Fact or Fraud," addressing contentions shared in "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." It was published at the very start of the 20th century and is viewed worldwide as "one of the most effective tools of anti-Jewish forces... negatively affecting Jewish-Christian relations." A summary of other anti-Semitic statements from individuals and organizations — including the National Alliance — also was given out.

At a little after 5 p.m., these documents in hand, the visitors exited Rutgers Hillel into the cool night to begin the ceremony.

Oblivious to outside noises and passing traffic on College Avenue, one by one, the clerics read their parts from the commemorative pamphlet — beginning with "thoughts and prayers" — not only in remembrance of the Holocaust, but also for those "who made the ultimate sacrifice" in the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. And, on the eve of Veterans' Day, refer-

ences were made to sacrifices made by the armed forces then and now.

Toward the end of the readings, six symbolic candles were lit — one for each for the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

In the accompanying prayer — and reflecting the theme of the evening — it was noted: "As we light these candles, we commit ourselves to responsibility for one another, to build on this earth a world that has no room for hatred, no place for violence. Together, we pray for strength to fulfill this vocation."

Closing the ceremony, Bill Davidson, ADL regional board chair, reminded the gathering how "we must never forget how stereotyping, discrimination and hate ultimately can lead to violence and genocide.

"We thank the interfaith community for coming and speaking out at a time when there is a surge of anti-Semitism. They are here to acknowledge how we must speak up for each other, so that none of us will be the victim of evil simply by virtue of indifference and silence."

His thanks and appreciation was directed at, among others, Lori Brower, chancellor with the Catholic Diocese of Metuchen.

"It's really wonderful the community is coming together in solidarity to take a stand against anti-Semitism and racism," said Brower, who lives in East Brunswick.

"This is a great opportunity for the diocese to become more involved in ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue and programming" — something, she pointed out, that would be intolerable in her mother's generation.

But, she said with a twinge of prideful satisfaction, "we have come to understand the relationship with other churches and to work together."

During the ceremony, too, the visiting clerics were invited to sign a "Statement of Agreement, re: Anti-Zionism/anti-Semitism," which read:

"The Jewish students at Rutgers University have faced a series of anti-Semitic attacks that reflect the global wave of anti-Semitism. We are gathered here together to break that wave of anti-Semitism.

"Criticism of particular Israeli actions or policies in and of itself does not constitute anti-Semitism. Certainly, the sovereign state of Israel can be legitimately criticized just like any other country in the world.

"However, it is undeniable that there are those whose criticisms of Israel or of 'Zionism' is used to mask anti-Semitism. Furthermore, locally, nationally and internationally, we have seen an increase in anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic

attacks. "We the undersigned are committed to confronting all manifestations of anti-Semitism and bigotry. We will not stand silent."

Goldstein explained how ADL intended to publicize this formal support "and get more signatures... (indicating) how members of the interfaith community will stand with the Jewish community."

In lauding the presence at and participation in the ceremony of Rutgers president Richard L. McCormick, Goldstein said: "His active participation underscores his commitment to confront anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry."

Sponsors of the Nov. 10 program were: The New Jersey Council of Churches, the Diocese of Metuchen, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Conference of the United Methodist Church, the Lutheran Office of Governmental Ministry, the First Baptist Church of Woodbridge, Rutgers Hillel and the New Jersey regional office of the ADL.

The FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) also was duly represented at the ceremony — not in a security mode, but to illustrate the need for vigilance against hate.

"We protect everyone's civil rights," explained Louie F. Allen, special agent in charge of New Jersey, based in Newark, as he was getting ready to depart the campus.

Allen explained, too, how, for the last seven or eight years, FBI recruits are required to learn about the Holocaust.

"We send them to take a tour of the Holocaust museum and lectures on the Holocaust," he said. The purpose: "So this thing does not happen again."

He indicated, too, how, in striving to convey the proper message to youth — particularly to youth — instructors come to campuses "and teach courses on how all this came about.

"It's a good thing," he stressed. "We are dealing with a new generation. The majority of our new people are 30 or under. This is a piece of history they need to learn to protect people's civil rights."

This kind of emphasis on youth also was addressed and affirmed earlier in the day thousands of miles away in Vienna during a Kristallnacht memorial program.

According to a report in The Jerusalem Post, the program was marred by Palestinian flag waving protesters, anti-Israel catcalls and a brawl.

Undeterred, Paul Chaim Eisenberg, Vienna's head rabbi, warned: "It's not enough only to look to the past. Today's youth must be fostered in a democratic manner."