

# THE JEWISH STANDARD

JULY, 2017



*RIBBON-CUTTING OF THE LAUNCH OF THE CANADIAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE (CJE) located at 30 Metcalfe Street in Ottawa. The exhibit marks the contributions of Jews to Canada and is composed of specially created exhibit panels illustrating nine major themes, including Jewish contributions in war and diplomacy, public service, human rights, economic growth, arts, culture and sports. A travelling version of the exhibit is being displayed in other cities across Canada. The Exhibition is open daily 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.. From left to right: Dr. Mark Kristmanson, CEO of the National Capital Commission; Supreme Court Justice Michael J. Moldaver; Ottawa Police Chief Charles Bordeleau; Rabbi Reuven Bulka, Rabbi Emeritus of Machzikei Hadas Synagogue; Mrs. Catherine Bélanger; Tova Lynch, chair of CJE; Linda Kerzner, chair, Jewish Federation of Ottawa; Cantor Daniel Benlolo of Congregation Kehilat Beth Israel,*

# ***Black Lives Matter Has Lost Its Way***

**MICHAEL HAYMAN**  
PUBLISHER AND  
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PUBLISHER  
AND EDITOR  
1937-2000

**ANITA SURMAN**  
Editor  
General News Section

Hannah Jacobs is a sophomore at Boston University. "Growing up", she writes, "Judaism, Zionism and social justice complemented each other to create someone who loves Israel, is a strong Jew and cares deeply about the world around her". Her great grandfather, having lived through the obscenity of racism, boarded a bus to join the followers of Martin Luther King Jr. marching on the streets of Washington. Hannah, anxious to feel as her Black friends feel, and sickened by the repeated shooting of unarmed Black men, attended a demonstration in support of Black Lives Matter. But the vulgar, repugnant anti-Semitic activists who stood by her side at the event, and the subsequent release of the BLM Israel bashing platform, has left her, and other Jewish liberals and progressives facing a painful dilemma. How can they continue to be full partners with those whose platforms are a travesty of political judgement and a disservice to the Blacks they purport to represent?

Black Lives Matter was created in 2012 following the shooting of Trayvon Martin and the acquittal of George Zimmerman. The Movement is "a call to action and a response to the virulent anti-Black racism that permeates our society...It affirms the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, Black-undocumented folks, folks with records, women and all Black lives along the gender spectrum...It is a tactic to (re)build the Black liberation movement."

Somehow, however, Black Lives Matter has concluded, as have groups such as MoveOn, Code Pink and Occupy Wall Street, that full and equal opportunity for all Americans can only be achieved if Israel stops its perpetuation of "genocide" and "apartheid" and presum-

ably is forced to hand over all of the West Bank. How events thousands of kilometers away can contribute to the helplessness felt by American Blacks defies all logic. But if BLM insists on singing "we shall overcome" with activists around the world, why not join those protesting the enslavement of the million Blacks in Mauritania, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan? Why not link arms with the dissidents being tortured in North Korea or the LGBT's being executed in Iran? Shouldn't BLM be building bridges with the muzzled women throughout the Islamic world? And is Syria such an oasis of tranquility that it merits not even a mention in BLM's literature?

We acknowledge that the Jewish-Black "alliance" has been more nuanced than some would acknowledge. Rabbi Joshua Heschel may have marched with Martin Luther King, and half the freedom riders were Jewish. But so, too, was the racist Solomon Blatt, speaker of the South Carolina House. Jews may have been more willing to rent to Blacks in Northern US cities. They were also more likely to be slum landlords, And Louis Farrakhan did, as he repeatedly told progressive Jews, hate "all white people"

We don't know whether the BLM's "genocide" accusation reflects the views of a few misguided zealots or is representative of the movement's general membership. What we do know for certain is that the legitimate aspirations of American Blacks won't be achieved by ending US funding and military aid to Israel. Nor will their grievances be addressed through marches in solidarity with Linda Sarsour or by linking its website to the rubbish being spewed out by the BDS movement.



# THE WORLD IN REVIEW

NEWS OF THE RECENT PAST IS REVIEWED

By NOAH FREEDMAN

## Synagogues Try Something New

With declining synagogue membership becoming an issue, some non-Orthodox synagogues in the United States are trying something new: "voluntary dues." Some 60 Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist synagogues have stopped charging mandatory dues and are telling congregants to

pay what they can afford.

The pay what you can model appeals to those who may be strapped for cash and to those who want to feel that price should not be an object when joining a synagogue. "The process of asking for a dues adjustment becomes all about money," says Adina Frydman, executive director of Synergy, a division of the New York federation that advises synagogues on

strategy, "as opposed to 'you are a member of this congregation and community.'"

The synagogues involved do suggest a "sustaining level" donation, the average amount the synagogue needs from each member to reach its goal but in general less than half the members actually pay dues at the sustaining level. This has created "challenges". More money may be coming in from more people but the average an-

nual membership contribution has fallen.

It is hard to say whether "voluntary dues" is the wave of the future. So far only 57 synagogues, less than 5 percent of the country's Conservative and Reform congregations, have adopted the concept. Still studies suggest that millennials are rejecting the old ways. Jack Wertheimer, a history professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, says that pro-

(Please turn to page 12)



THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM recently hosted the National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, with featured speakers: the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada; the Hon. Rona Ambrose, then Leader of the Opposition and the Hon. Thomas J. Mulcair, Leader of the NDP. The theme of the 2017 National Remembrance Day Ceremony was "Survivors' Testimonies": The Fate of the Individual during the Holocaust". Leslie Vertes a 93 year-old survivor from Hungary gave an address during the Ceremony. Seen above, from left to right, are CSYU Board Members Bruce Kent and Lou Greenbaum, Fran Sonshine, CSYU National Chair, Kyle Goldenberg, Lou Greenbaum's grandchild and 4th Generation Holocaust survivor, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Ester Driham, CSYU National Executive Director.

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# DEFEATING RACISM

BERGSON GROUP STOOD UP FOR  
AMERICAN BLACKS

By RAFAEL MEDOFF

After a year in which Jewish-Black relations were strained by the Movement for Black Lives' denunciation of Israel and other uncomfortable incidents, it's worth recalling a little-known episode that points to the kind of intergroup relations that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. worked so hard to foster.

In the autumn of 1946, the Zionist activists

known as the Bergson Group sponsored a Broadway play called "A Flag is Born," authored by the Academy Award-winning screenwriter and playwright Ben Hecht. Starring young Marlon Brando and Yiddish theater luminaries Paul Muni and Celia Adler, "Flag" depicted the plight of Holocaust survivors in post-war Europe and the fight  
(Please turn to page 7)

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# PROUD TO BE JEWISH

WRITER REGARDS IT AS A PRIVILEGE TO BE JEWISH

by **LEN LESSER**

Earlier this in London Ontario there were two telephone bomb threats against the Jewish Community Center. The London Police department sent along buses to keep the people warm while they searched the building.

The center has always been a safe haven for people embracing many faiths and beliefs where they were made to feel welcome. A sense of peace and tolerance that can be enjoyed by all when there was a need to help those in need of a home in their senior years. We will not be afraid of the threats but

*Len Lesser is an education/career counselor in London, Ontario. The Editor*

rather choose to embrace the brotherhood of mankind where peace and respect for all are the pillars of our beliefs.

The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is a life long quest for justice, and the desire for personal independence; these are the features of my Jewish tradition which makes me want to thank my parents, and grandparents that I have a sense of belonging.

Let me introduce myself. I feel I have been privileged to be born into

this tradition, a tradition that right from the start reminds us that we can rise above the circumstances of our birth, a tradition that, even in the face of death, has never wavered in its commitment to life.

Judaism is a religion and it is a peoplehood and a way of life and it is a civilization and it is a faith and it is a memory; it is a world of thought and of spirit and of action that can not be restrictively defined because it is constantly evolving.

Being born Jewish I have inherited a psychic

scar mentality when I see that there is inequity to man's inhumanity to man. I believe that evil persists when supposedly good people do little when they have the opportunity to right a wrong.

As a Jew living in the diaspora ( Canada) I have always felt I that I was an outsider/different; not being quite acceptable to the polite views of the majority of the people I live with. For the most part those teachers with whom taught secondary school for 30 years were polite but never warm or accepting to

*(Please turn to page 11)*

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# JEWISH BUILDERS HELP A NATION GROW

JEWS ARE A VITAL COMPONENT OF THE BUILDING TRADES

By **MARVIN SELICSON**

A “home of one’s own” is, for most people, the fulfillment of their personal ambition and the symbol of their personal security. How much more important this must be to a group which, over the centuries, has found so little in its environment to give it a sense of security and a feeling of genuine integration.

It might appear to be an anomaly that an ethnic group which was, for centuries, discouraged from owning real property should in our time have become a community of homeowners.

But providing a stimulus for construction by adding to the demand for housing is only one factor in the contribution which

the Jewish community has made to the growth of Canada’s cities and towns. As contractors, developers, engineers and architects Jews throughout the country have played a critical role in the building of high rises, office towers, condominiums and infrastructure projects.

Traditionally the

Construction Industry has not been what might be called a “Jewish” industry. Jews have notably been engaged in the “soft goods” fields - as manufacturers of men’s, women’s and children’s wear, as workers in these same industries and as merchants selling them. The Jewish presence in the

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**DEFEATING RACISM***(Continued from page 4)*

for Jewish independence in British Mandatory Palestine.

The London Evening Standard expressed horror that large audiences were flocking to what it called "the most virulent anti-British play ever staged in the United States." American publications took a different view: Time called the play "colorful theater and biting propaganda," while Life complimented its "wit and wisdom."

After a successful 10-week run on Broadway, "Flag" was scheduled to be performed in various cities around the country, including the National Theater in

Washington, D.C. When the Bergson Group realized the National barred African-Americans, they quickly looked for an alternative venue.

Civil rights activists used a variety of tactics to oppose theater discrimination, from lawsuits to picket lines. In Charlotte, North Carolina, Jewish newspaper editor Harry Golden made headlines with his "Rent-a-Child" scheme, which ridiculed racist theaters by having white children accompany African-American women to the theater; the ladies were admitted on the assumption that

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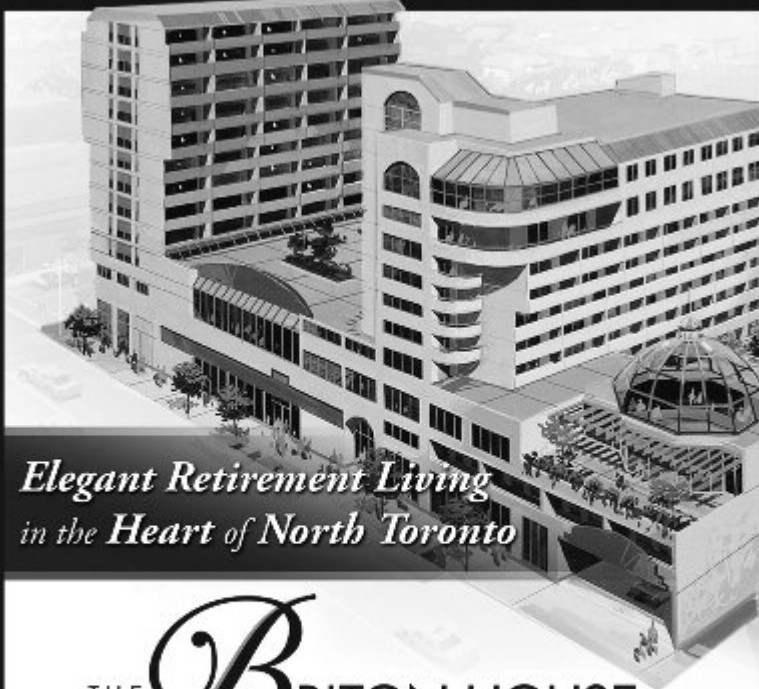
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## **DEFEATING RACISM**

*(Continued from preceding page)*

they were the children's nannies.

"Flag" author Ben Hecht and 32 other playwrights recently had announced they would not permit their works to be performed at theaters that barred African-Americans. The Washington engagement of "Flag" was rescheduled for the Maryland Theater in Baltimore, and a train car was secured to bring 18 U.S. Senators and a number of foreign diplomats to Baltimore for the February 1947 event.

In making the switch from Washington to Baltimore, the Bergson Group struck an important symbolic blow against racial discrimination. But as it turned out, the controversy was not over.

The Maryland Theater didn't bar African-Americans, but it restricted them to the balcony, which bigots nicknamed "n---r heaven." Alerted by local NAACP activists, the Bergson Group fashioned a kind of good cop-bad cop strategy. Just hours before the first curtain, Bergson officials informed the theater management that if they did not rescind the seating discrimination, the NAACP would picket the show with signs declaring, "There is No Difference Between Jim Crow in Maryland and Persecution [of Jews] in Palestine." The Bergsonites also threatened to personally escort several African-Americans to the show as their guests, to be seated in the regular sections.

The pressure succeeded. The Maryland Theater management agreed to recognize the Bergson Group as the "lessee of the theater." That made the theater's ticket agents employees of the Bergson Group and subject to whatever seating policy

the activists chose to adopt. A dozen African-Americans attended the opening night performance on February 12, 1947 and "were seated indiscriminately, without untoward results," the Baltimore Afro-American reported. February 12 is, fittingly, Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

Exuberant NAACP leaders hailed the "tradition-shattering victory" won by the alliance of black and Zionist activists against theater discrimination. The NAACP used that victory as

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potent ammunition in its battles to desegregate other Baltimore theaters in the years to follow.

"I am proud that it was my play which terminated one of the most disgraceful practices of our country's history," a beaming Ben Hecht declared after the opening performance in Baltimore. "For the first time in the history

of the State of Maryland, Negroes were permitted to attend the legitimate theatre without discrimination. I am proud that it was 'A Flag is Born' which they attended without insult. Breaking down this vicious and indecent tradition in Maryland is worthy of the high purpose for which 'Flag' was conceived and written. The incident is forceful testimony to the proposition that to fight discrimination and injustice to one group of human beings affords protection to every other group."

### BUILDING TRADES

(Continued from page 6)

building industry is also a far cry from those tragic days in Jewish history when Jews found it necessary to transmute their wealth into diamonds and jewels so that they might accompany them on their sorrowful odyssey from one country of persecution to another. Jewish participation in the construction industry and in real estate development is a symbol of the confidence Jews have that the past will not be repeated and that their place in Canada is assured. Today Jews have entered the construction industry either as entrepreneurs providing the stimulus for construction or as businessmen whose expanding industrial and commercial interests make necessary the erection of additional premises to accommodate their growing businesses.

And yet perhaps the Jewish community derives its greatest satisfaction from the erection of its communal institutions. The past decades have signalled the coming of age of Jewish communities. New Jewish schools, synagogues and community centers have been built, in order to enable Jewish communities

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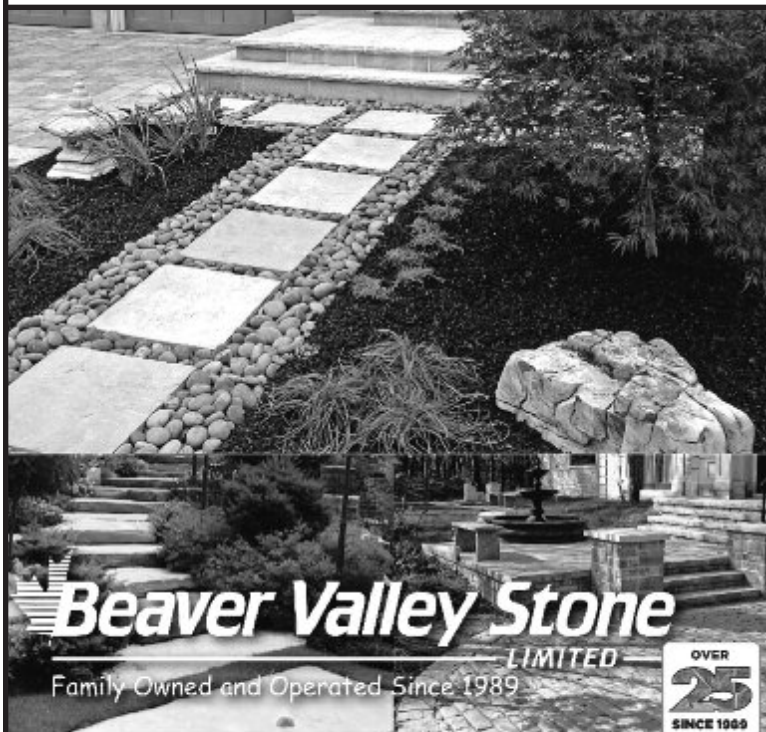
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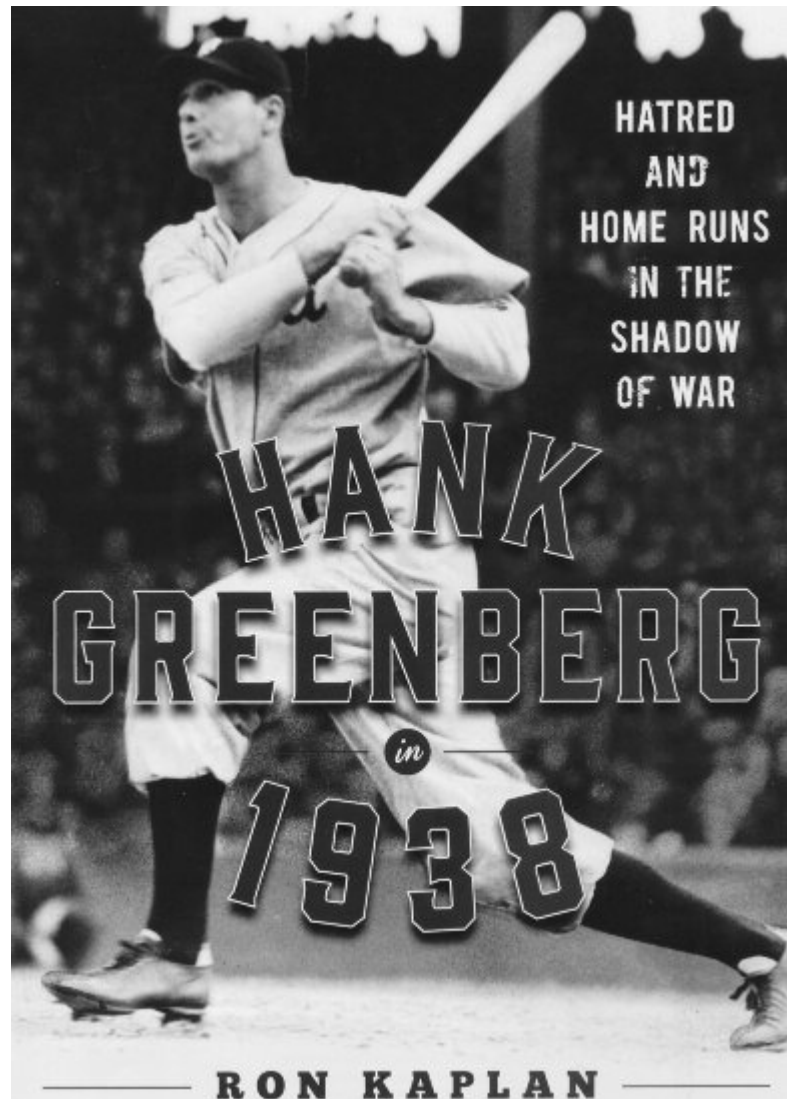


## JEWS IN THE BUILDING TRADES

*(Continued from preceding page)*

to preserve and perpetuate their identities - and these institutions will remain permanent manifestations of

the Jewish community's desire to perpetuate its rich religion, culture and tradition



**HANK GREENBERG IN 1938, HATRED AND Home Runs in the Shadow of War**, is a fascinating account of New York born and Detroit Tigers star Hank Greenberg. In 1937 Greenberg had hit 40 home runs and driven in 184 runs. He had been the victim of anti-Semitic slurs since the day he joined the big leagues in 1930. But Greenberg had chosen to shut out the noise and concentrate on baseball. In 1938, with Adolf Hitler taking direct control of the military, and the early stages of the Holocaust beginning, Greenberg recognized that he was playing baseball not just for himself or his team but for many American Jews as well. "I came to feel that if I, as a Jew, hit a home run", he said, "I was hitting one against Hitler." Hank Greenberg, by award winning journalist and blogger Ron Kaplan, tells the story of the events of 1938, as Greenberg's bat had him on pace to break Babe Ruth's home run record, while events in Europe spiralled out of control.



**PROUD TO BE JEWISH***(Continued from page 5)*

the fact that I was Jewish. I applied to be a principal and was told by the Superintendent of Personal that: "you people make wonderful entrepreneurs but we question your ability to lead." Strange that all of a sudden I became a whole people with a label.

I feel I have been most fortunate to be born into a tradition that cherishes family, community and education; a tradition that boldly puts forth the notion that freedom and responsibility are bound together, a tradition that champions the questioner and does not scorn the doubter; a tradition rich with rogues and rebels and outright revolutionaries who more often than not went on to become the heroes of history. Moses, Christ, Lenin, Disraeli, Einstein, Ben-Gurion to name just a few.

I have been privileged to be born into a tradition that asserts that deeds are more important than creed, an unending search for justice for all.

I thank my good fortune that I was born to a people who, despite being hounded in history, have retained their incurable sense of humour; a people who have never stopped believing that life is so precious that as the Talmud says, "whoever saves a single life, saves an entire universe."

I have given much of my life to my students and family and wish I had many more years to serve this noble calling. But, everything has its natural end and so now, as my time on earth draws to a close, I thank my lucky stars for my good fortune to have had the chance to make this world a little better than I found it.




*SUPREME COURT JUSTICE ROSALIE ABELLA spoke and earned an honorary degree from Brandeis at its Commencement. Abella said over the course of her remarks that Brandeis is a university her father venerated. Her presence as the first Jewish woman to be named to the Canadian Supreme Court had special significance for Brandeis, as the university is named after Louis D. Brandeis, the first Jewish person on the U.S. Supreme Court. Seen above, left to right, are Canadian lawyer and President of Brandeis alumni association Mark Surchin, Abella, and Brandeis President Ron Liebowitz. Photo Credit Mike Lovett)*

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## WORLD IN REVIEW

(Continued from page 3)

grams like birthright get young Jews used to the idea of no cost or low cost Jewish services.

"We're living in a time today," says Wertheimer, "when institutions are held suspect and also seen as rather cold and distant. The whole idea of membership dues reinforces that point."

### The Ousted Tory Senator And Israel

Stephen Greene has served in the Senate as a Conservative since 2008. His loyalty to the party has never been questioned.

But while Greene was in line at the buffet during the party's weekly caucus meeting he was told that the caucus leader wanted to see him. He was then issued an ultimatum.

Greene's "crime" was that he had accepted a dinner invitation from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Trudeau had ex-

tended the invitation to all those Senators who had

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sponsored bills. This did not sit well with the Tory leadership. The Senator, a lifelong Conservative, was told to either turn down the invitation or face ex-

pulsion.

We will not debate the merits of the party's decision. What interests us here is that Bill S-4 implements a tax treaty between Canada and the Israeli and Taiwanese governments. The bill is designed to prevent double taxation for Canadians working in Israel and for Israelis working in Canada.

It passed the Senate unanimously.

### **Orthodox Paramedic Sues NY Hospital**

Hadas Goldfarb claims that she was offered a job as a paramedic at the New York Presbyterian Hospital in 2015 but was terminated during orientation for refusing to comply with the hospital's dress code. The 26-year-old Brooklyn resident is an orthodox Jew and only wears skirts. She maintains that she has never had a problem in her previous jobs as a paramedic.

Following her termination, Goldfarb filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and she has now received notice of the right to sue. The suit alleges that the hospital failed to provide her with reasonable accommodation for her religious observance. Goldfarb is suing for damages, reinstatement and an order forcing the hospital and the city of New York to stop denying requests for accommodation in relation to the pants policy.


Goldfarb has since found a job for an emergency telemedicine company, where her style of dress is not an issue.

Her lawyer, Joseph Aron, is himself an Orthodox Jew and the father of three daughters. He has taken the case in

(Please turn to following page)

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## WORLD IN REVIEW

*(Continued from preceding page)*

part because he does not want one of his young daughters to one day have to face the same dress code restrictions facing his client.

### ***"It's Like Hitler Golfing With Netanyahu"***

We don't know how many of our readers are football fans. Those who are and who follow the NFL may recall that for many years famed country singer Hank Williams was an integral part of ESPN's

Monday night broadcast. His "Are you ready for some football?" song greeted viewers for over 20 years as they settled into their chairs to watch the game of the week.

But in 2011 Williams was removed from the football broadcasts after he called the "golf summit" between President Barack Obama and Republican House speaker John Boehner "one of the biggest political mistakes ever." But it's what Williams added that really got him



*THE SPIRIT OF HOPE BENEFIT – WHICH TOOK place recently at the Metro Convention Centre in Toronto – proved to be a major success, bringing together more than 2,000 guests in support of Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center's (FSWC) mission to combat antisemitism and intolerance. This year's Spirit of Hope keynote speaker was former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom David Cameron, who was in conversation with former Prime Minister of Canada Brian Mulroney. The evening's discussion centered on issues facing Europe and the Middle East, antisemitism, Brexit, and other current international issues. When discussing antisemitism in Canada, Europe and abroad, Cameron explained the importance of educating "a new generation about where prejudice can lead" and supporting the State of Israel. "Attacks on Israel merge into antisemitism," said Cameron, emphasizing the current situation on university campuses where the antisemitic BDS campaign continues to be present. This year, FSWC raised more than \$3.4 million, surpassing the campaign goal*



into hot water. "It would", said Williams, "be like Hitler playing golf with Benjamin Netanyahu."

Well, apparently all is forgiven and Williams and his theme song are returning to the NFL broadcasts.

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