



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0258-2002, **Version:** *

Res. No. 258

Resolution calling upon the government of the United States to strongly condemn and call for an immediate end to the recent barrage of anti-Jewish violence sweeping across Europe and other Western nations.

By Council Member Nelson, the Speaker (Council Member Miller) and Council Members Felder, Katz, Weprin, Gerson, Moskowitz, Fidler, Yassky, Comrie, DeBlasio, Addabbo, Jr., Vallone, Jr., Sears, Liu, Quinn, Clarke, Rivera, Perkins, Seabrook, Brewer, Recchia, Jr., Stewart, McMahon, Avella, Baez, Gennaro, Koppell, Monserrate, Reyna, Sanders, Serrano, Jackson, Gallagher, Lanza; also Council Members Gioia and Vann

Whereas, On March 31, a synagogue in Marseilles, France was burned to the ground, one of the latest symbols of the Jewish faith to fall victim to the flaming hatred of anti-Semitism in Europe; and
Whereas, This is just one of a series of recent hate-inspired attacks as anti-Semitic violence surges throughout Europe, resulting in the greatest number and intensity of anti-Semitic attacks since World War II; and
Whereas, In the nation of France alone, over 360 anti-Semitic incidents have occurred during the last month; and
Whereas, These hostile conditions are reflected in the stunning results of the first round of French presidential elections, in which right-wing extremist Jean-Marie Le Pen, who has deemed the Holocaust "a footnote of history", earned enough votes to come in a strong second, thereby placing him in a runoff election against President Jacques Chirac; and
Whereas, In recent days, arsonists in France have attacked synagogues in Lyon and Strasbourg, while in eastern France, graves in a Jewish cemetery were desecrated and painted with swastikas, more tragic examples that in this anti-Semitic climate nothing is sacred or safe from acts of terrorism and bigotry; and
Whereas, In recent weeks, Belgium has been the site of a half-dozen attacks on Jewish institutions, including the burning of a bookstore and a shooting at a synagogue, while synagogues throughout France, Finland, Canada, and Tunisia have been the targets of firebomb attacks; and
Whereas, These incidents in Europe and elsewhere coincide with the intense and violent conflict between Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East where violent rhetoric from militant Palestinian and other Arab leaders has publicly called for "spilling the blood of Jews"; and
Whereas, From Great Britain to the Ukraine, the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has been used by the perpetrators of these attacks as a subterfuge for anti-Jewish violence, resulting in many of the most socially progressive Western nations becoming the site of barbaric acts of terror and manifestations of hatred; and
Whereas, A pro-Palestinian protest in Calgary, Canada featured thousands of demonstrators chanting "Death to Jews" in Arabic, while in London, a Hasidic Jew was brutalized on a public street; and
Whereas, A school bus filled with Jewish children was bombarded with stones outside Paris, while a Jewish shopkeeper was brutally shot and killed near Toulouse; and
Whereas, European Jews are now living in a constant state of heightened anxiety, afraid to attend religious services or send their children to school, activities which are now fraught with danger in this current atmosphere of hate; and
Whereas, Throughout France and other Western countries, perpetrators include militants from Arab immigrant groups, as well as other resilient strains of anti-Semitism that continue to linger throughout Europe, as illustrated by the recent skinhead attack on a synagogue in Kiev; and
Whereas, As New Yorkers, especially since September 11th, we are ever mindful of the horrific price that is wrought through the proliferation of teachings that promote contempt and intolerance; and
Whereas, The scapegoating and dehumanization which is now occurring in Europe is the same kind that, generations earlier, enabled populations of Europeans to accept the marginalization and near annihilation of the Jewish people; and
Whereas, The governments of Europe should take all steps necessary to protect the safety and well-being of their respective Jewish communities, and make a concerted effort to cultivate an atmosphere of cooperation and reconciliation among the Jewish and non-Jewish residents of Europe; and
Whereas, As a tolerant and compassionate society, the government and the citizens of New York City stand up and express our sympathy to the victims of anti-Semitism while calling for an abrupt end to the horrific bigotry and violence that has touched every European nation in recent months; now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the government of the United States to strongly condemn and call for an immediate end to the recent barrage of anti-Jewish violence sweeping across Europe and other Western nations.

TMQ
LS # 438