

Newsbytes

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“Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him.” Tozer

A Synagogue on the Temple Mount? Activists Say Let the Jews Move In

Jews believe the site - venerated as holy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam alike - is where the Beit Hamikdash used to sit.

BY MAAYAN JAFFE-HOFFMAN MARCH 6, 2019 04:09



According to Asaf Fried, a spokesman for an association of organizations dedicated to Jewish rights on the Temple Mount, more than 50 leaders from across the religious spectrum gathered on Sunday to discuss the situation on the Temple Mount. Participants included Rabbi Yehudah Glick (Likud), Baruch Marzel (Otzma Yehudit) and members of the rabbinate.

Jews believe the site – venerated as holy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam alike – is where the First and Second Temples used to sit.

Riots have continuously erupted on the Temple Mount since last month, when thousands of Palestinians stormed the Golden Gate, which had been closed by a court order since 2003. Jerusalem Police arrested two senior Wakf officials – east Jerusalem Wakf chairman Sheikh Abdel Azim Salhab and deputy director of the Wakf Sheikh Najeh Bkeirat – banning them from entering the Aqsa Mosque compound for 40 days.

In response, the Muslims took over and converted a 1,500-year-old structure located near the Golden Gate (known as Shaar Harachamim in Hebrew) into a mosque. Currently, the Muslims have four other mosques on the mount, said Fried. Jews, on the other hand, “if you try to pray, you will be arrested.”

The activists argue that by opening the Golden Gate and establishing a new mosque, the Muslims have broken the status quo agreement. Israel has made attempts to shutter the gate, but the Muslims have refused, threatening increased violence.

“If the status quo is broken anyway, then Israel needs to break it, too,” said Fried, arguing that Jews should be allowed to pray on the Temple Mount. “We need a place to pray and we want that structure near the Golden Gate.”

Establishing a synagogue is not unprecedented, explained Yaacov Hayman, head of the Yishai Organization for the Establishment of Synagogues on the Temple Mount. He said in Temple times there was always a synagogue near the Temple.

“The Talmud tractate that talks about Yom Kippur clearly states there was a synagogue,” he said.

His organization has mapped the Temple Mount and created renderings for where up to four synagogues could be located on the holy site.

Marzel told The Jerusalem Post that the Temple Mount is “the holiest place for the Jewish people. Our enemies are taking it over, they are breaking the law, destroying archaeology sites and disgracing Judaism and God. We have to fight.”

However, they would like to see the Temple Mount divided like the way that the Cave of the Patriarchs was divided into a synagogue and a mosque in 1967.

This latest call for a synagogue on the Temple Mount is not the first.

In 2017, MK Bezalel Smotrich (Bayit Yehudi) called for the construction of a synagogue on the Temple Mount in the aftermath of the brutal Halamish (also known as Neveh Tzuf) attack, in which a Hamas terrorist infiltrated the West Bank settlement and murdered three people at their Shabbat table.

“I would set up a synagogue on the Temple Mount today, this morning,” Smotrich said then. “If someone thinks that through terrorism, violence, and the massacre of a family that he will push our sovereignty back, then – if I am the prime minister – this morning, I would close the Temple Mount to Arab prayer and establish a synagogue for Jews. And if the terrorism continues, I would close the mount to Arabs and there will be only Jews there.”

A similar demand was made in 2014, when a large group of religious-Zionist rabbis – including Rabbi Dov Lior, Rabbi Eliyahu Zinni and Rabbi Haim Cohen – penned a letter to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu advocating the construction of a synagogue on the Temple Mount. No action was taken.

Furthermore, there have been bills raised in the Knesset calling for equal prayer rights for Jews on the Temple Mount, but they have generally been shut down, as Muslims threaten violence if the status quo is altered.

Fried said he believes that this time the goal can be accomplished because Israel is in an election period and politicians who can effect change will want to appear responsive.

On March 14, the group is arranging a massive Jewish trip to the Temple Mount. He said he expects hundreds of Jews to attend and to pray in their hearts.

Then, in late March, they will run a protest rally from City Hall to outside the Golden Gate.

“We are all angry about what is going on the Temple Mount,” said Fried. “If we will it, we think this time it will be.”

Corbyn, the first openly anti-Semitic leader in post-Hitler Europe

Mr. Corbyn is already the first Western leader who questions Israel's right to exist and its legitimacy.

Giulio Meotti 2.27.19

The writer, an Italian journalist with *Il Foglio*, writes a twice-weekly column for *Arutz Sheva*. He is the author of the book "A New Shoah", that researched the personal stories of Israel's terror victims, published by Encounter and of "J'Accuse: the Vatican Against Israel" published by Mantua Books.. His writing has appeared in publications, such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *Frontpage* and *Commentary*.

"Jeremy Corbyn is at the doors of power. If he gets into 10 Downing Street it will be the first time in post-Hitler Europe that a great nation would be led by a leader who quite clearly has antisemitic tendencies", the French philosopher Alain Finkielkraut just said.

A few weeks ago, British lawyer Anthony Julius said Mr Corbyn's spokesman Seumas Milne believed the main political question was "1947", the year before Israel's foundation, implying the senior aide to the Labour leader was unduly obsessed with the Jewish state. It is in fact more than that Finkielkraut's prediction: Mr. Corbyn is already the first Western leader who questions Israel's right to exist and its legitimacy.

Always in the name of anti-Zionism, Corbyn has developed close ties with Hamas and Hezbollah, which are, it must be remembered, terrorist organizations that continue to fire rockets on the civilian population of Israel and wish to threaten its existence. Corbyn allegedly intervened to prevent the closure of the accounts of the Finsbury Park mosque, a hotbed of fiery Islamist preaching, and he refused to allow Labour to sign the charter defining anti-Semitism and signed by most European governments and government parties, on the grounds

In 2016, Labor MP Naz Shah proposed to transfer Israel to the United States. As for Ken Livingston, former Labour mayor of London, nicknamed "Ken the Red", he declared in 2016 "that Hitler was Zionist ...". that the charter prohibits comparing Israel's behavior to Nazi atrocities.

The entourage of Corbyn is no less sulphurous. In 2016, Labor MP Naz Shah proposed to transfer Israel to the United States. As for Ken Livingston, former Labour mayor of London, nicknamed "Ken the Red", he declared in 2016 "that Hitler was Zionist ...".

A resurgence of old anti-Semitism is now painted in the colors of anti-Zionism and anticapitalism. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the British far left, in opposition to the West, preferred to ally itself with the Islamist movements rather than to be reconciled with Western democracy. Anti-Semitism plays a central role in Corbyn's rise. That is why his supporters do not seem bothered by accusations of anti-Semitism.

The new anti-Semite of our time, personified by Corbyn, proclaims itself "friend of all Muslims", from the inhabitants of the suburbs of the Western cities, the alleged victims of the racism of the malevolent Whites, to the Islamists presented as brave anti-colonial soldiers, such as the Palestinian Arabs who are instrumentalized in a manichean struggle against Israel and the Jews.

This new anti-Semite is not ashamed, he believes himself to be morally justified. He accuses Europe's Jews of being more faithful to Israel than to their own nation; he claims that the existence of Israel as a state represents a racist endeavor that we must dismantle; he demands a higher level of ethical behavior on the part of Israel than on any other nation; he compares the Israeli government to the Nazis; he considers the Palestinian Arab cause, revised and corrected by cultural Marxism, as the spearhead of

anticolonialism. But this horrific indulgence towards anti-Semitism is inseparable from an extraordinary leniency towards Islamic expansionism.

That is why, to return to Finkelkraut's prediction, if Mr. Corbyn gets into 10 Downing Street, that day will be not only mark the end of British Jewry, it will also be the end of the UK as we know it.

Police in Canada Are Tracking People's 'Negative' Behavior In a 'Risk' Database

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The database includes detailed, but “de-identified,” information about people’s lives culled from conversations between police, social services, health workers, and more.

Police, social services, and health workers in Canada are using shared databases to track the behaviour of vulnerable people—including minors and people experiencing homelessness—with little oversight and often without consent.

Documents obtained by *Motherboard* from Ontario’s Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) through an access to information request show that at least two provinces—Ontario and Saskatchewan—maintain a “Risk-driven Tracking Database” that is used to amass highly sensitive information about people’s lives. Information in the database includes whether a person uses drugs, has been the victim of an assault, or lives in a “negative neighborhood.”

The Risk-driven Tracking Database (RTD) is part of a collaborative approach to policing called the Hub model that partners cops, school staff, social workers, health care workers, and the provincial government.

Information about people believed to be “at risk” of becoming criminals or victims of harm is shared between civilian agencies and police and is added to the database when a person is being evaluated for a rapid intervention intended to lower their risk levels. Interventions can range from a door knock and a chat to forced hospitalization or arrest.

Data from the RTD is analyzed to identify trends—for example, a spike in drug use in a particular area—with the goal of producing planning data to deploy resources effectively, and create “community profiles” that could accelerate interventions under the Hub model, according to a 2015 Public Safety Canada report.

Saskatchewan and Ontario officials say data in the RTD (sometimes called the “Hub database” in Saskatchewan) is “de-identified” by removing details such as people’s names and birthdates, though experts *Motherboard* spoke to said that scrubbing data so it may never be used to identify an individual is difficult if not impossible.

A *Motherboard* investigation—which involved combing through MCSCS, police, and city documents—found that in 2017, children aged 12 to 17 were the most prevalent age group added to the database in several Ontario regions, and that some interventions were performed without consent. In some cases, children as young as six years old have been subject to intervention.

How does people’s information get added to the database?

The Hub model seeks to connect police with community members in order to evaluate potentially at-risk people for interventions.

For example, a police officer may be called to respond to someone's disruptive but non-criminal behaviour time and again. Under the Hub model, the officer can bring the person's situation to the Hub—which may include staff from child welfare, addictions, or housing assistance agencies—and ask if other agencies can intervene.

During the ensuing evaluation, information about the person is shared between the participants and entered into the RTD. The person's identity can be known to local law enforcement, social workers, and health workers, but when their information is added to the RTD, details that might identify the person are not supposed to be included. If agencies collectively decide the person is at an "acutely elevated" level of risk, an intervention is deployed. Interventions can occur without consent if Hub practitioners feel a person is at a high risk of harm.

More than 100 Hubs are now operating in cities and towns across Canada and the US, with 37 in Ontario (where Hubs are usually called Situation Tables) contributing to the Risk-driven Tracking Database as of April 2018, according to MCSCS documents. In total, 55 are expected to be contributing by the end of this year.

At least two provinces, Ontario and Saskatchewan, maintain their own versions of the RTD, but Motherboard was unable to confirm if the database is being used in other provinces.

Dr. Chad Nilson, an academic researcher with the University of Saskatchewan and the lead developer of the RTD, did not respond to questions about the database. His professional bio says the RTD is in use "across Canada."

Lisa Longworth, an Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) program analyst who trains police in the Hub model, told Motherboard that the interventions are a "tool" for police that allows them to take action in situations where they previously would have been powerless to intervene.

"We can knock on someone's door and say, 'We're so worried about you, can we come in and chat?'" Longworth told Motherboard in a phone call.

Reviews of Situation Tables in two Ontario cities commissioned by police and community partners show that some interventions have ended in forced hospitalization or arrest. A survey of people's experiences of Hub intervention in Barrie, for example, found that one intervention ended with the individual going to jail. An assessment of the Situation Table in Waterloo noted an instance of a person being subject to involuntary hospitalization following an intervention.

According to MCSCS documents, in 2017 more than 300 RTD-related discussions for kids between the ages of 12 and 17 took place, and 30 for kids aged six to 11. Ontario's annual RTD report for 2017 notes that kids aged 12 to 17 are the "most vulnerable" age group in the database, and the most prevalent in the RTD in several regions.

In response to questions about the high number of minors being evaluated by Situation Table, MCSCS provided a statement by email, saying, "Situation Tables are locally driven and there is no requirement for communities to report to the ministry" about their activities.

Longworth said that Situation Tables "aren't formalized" and are "not perfect," a characterization she says reflects the haphazard way in which the model was rolled out in the province.

"Situation Tables spread in Ontario really quickly," said Longworth. "[MCSCS] has been playing catch-up."

What's in the database?

Hub interventions require cops, educators, doctors, and social workers to share extremely sensitive information about vulnerable people—and add it to the provincial database—in a process fraught with potential for privacy violations.

Data in the RTD may include a person's age group, sex, location, and more than 100 "risk factors" used to describe individual circumstances. Standardized risk factors allow for national comparisons, according to provincial authorities.

According to MCSCS documents, the most common risk factors ascribed to people in the database in 2017 were mental health (including "suspected" mental health issues), criminal involvement, drug use, and "antisocial/negative behaviour," defined as "obnoxious [or] disruptive" behaviour.

Asked about Situation Tables' use of sometimes-vague risk factors to justify intervention, MCSCS reiterated that individuals deemed to be at high risk of harm exhibit "multiple risk factors" and require a collaborative approach to intervention.

"There are concerns about this kind of surveillance that go beyond privacy, [affecting] people's basic rights to liberty and security of the person"

Because some of the information-sharing process before intervention is done verbally, Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) developed additional guidelines for Hubs intended to ensure people's privacy rights are respected—getting individuals' consent to share information whenever possible, for example, and acting in a way that "more positively than negatively" affects them.

But in Ontario, police, health care professionals, and social workers participating in the Hub model are under no obligation to follow IPC's guidelines, though they are still beholden to provincial privacy laws.

"Communities are not required to apply the best practices included in the [IPC] guidance document," stated an MCSCS briefing from an internal meeting held in June 2018.

However, Brian Beamish, Ontario's IPC commissioner, told Motherboard in an email that "Situation Tables that deviate from the IPC's guidance risk breaching [individuals'] privacy."

When asked about the briefing by Motherboard, MCSCS did not comment, but a spokesperson said in an email that the ministry "strongly encourages" Situation Table participants to follow the IPC guidelines.

Brenda McPhail, director of the Privacy, Technology, and Surveillance Project for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA), told Motherboard that MCSCS saying Situation Tables are not required to follow IPC information-sharing guidelines is "shocking."

"There are concerns about this kind of surveillance that go beyond privacy, [affecting] people's basic rights to liberty and security of the person," McPhail told me in a phone call, and suggested that authorities may need to re-examine the use of the Hub model.

In 2014, Saskatchewan's IPC completed an investigation into potential privacy violations related to Hubs in that province. It found "deficiencies" in the model's privacy protections, noting that some Hub databases contained personally identifiable information.

The report also found that people targeted by Hubs were not informed of how to file privacy complaints, and that Hub agencies had scoured Facebook posts as a source of information regarding a person's risk levels on at least two occasions.

The Saskatchewan IPC told Motherboard in 2017 that corrective measures had been taken, such as destroying personally identifiable data and ensuring that Hubs no longer use Facebook data to assess individuals' risk levels, and that the IPC was satisfied with these steps.

One Ontario social worker, who participates in a Situation Table and spoke to Motherboard on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media, expressed worry about the high number of minors being evaluated for intervention, and having their information added to the RTD, because of "how often [interventions] are done without consent."

While the worker has seen some individuals benefit from Situation Table interventions ("usually homeless people with severe addictions"), they believe that consent is vital.

"Without consent, intervention won't be successful," the worker said, noting that "around 50 percent" of the Situation Table interventions they've been involved in were undertaken without the person's consent, and that many non-consensual interventions involved people with addictions.

Though authorities claim that the data is "de-identified," the 100-plus risk factors used in the RTD may nonetheless describe a person's life in intimate detail, noting if they drink alcohol, have trouble finding stable housing, skip school, are unemployed, or associate with "negative peers."

The Russians are Coming...To the Persian Gulf

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is on a trip to Gulf countries this week to bolster ties between Moscow and a variety of countries in the Middle East

BY SETH J. FRANTZMAN MARCH 5, 2019 20:58

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is on a trip to Gulf countries this week to bolster ties between Moscow and a variety of countries in the Middle East. The visit will pave the way for a high-level trip by Russian President Vladimir Putin that comes at an important time for Russia's role in the region.

According to a report at Russia's TASS news agency, Lavrov began his trip discussing bilateral trade and also issues relating to Syria, Yemen, Libya and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The details of discussions about Israel were not revealed in the reports. This comes in the wake of a visit by Netanyahu to Moscow in which he had also discussed Syria with the Russian president.

In Doha, the Russian minister met the Emir and other officials. "Doha sees huge prospects for partnership in agriculture and cyber technology," the report notes. The Qataris are eagerly awaiting Putin's apparent visit in the near future. After Qatar, Lavrov held talks in Saudi Arabia on March 4. Lavrov is also scheduled to visit Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Currently, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are still in a diplomatic row with Qatar and TASS reported that progress was not expected in repairing diplomatic relations, but that there had been "some advances." Saudi Arabia even expressed concern that Lavrov flew from Qatar to Saudi Arabia, preferring that he not fly directly. This is an important indication that the Gulf countries, traditional US allies, now view Russia as a key partner as well, even in discussing relations amongst each other. The Saudi King Salman visited Russia in 2017. Riyadh has invested up to \$2.5 billion in projects in Russia.

Saudi Arabia has held talks with Russia on purchasing its S-400 missile defense system. According to reports, the last round of talks were on February 17. Qatar has also discussed the S-400 with Moscow, according to Al-Jazeera. This is a key inroad Moscow seeks to make into a US ally and its defense market.

Russia has already concluded a deal with Turkey to sell the S-400 to Ankara and the system may be delivered this year. This is a major challenge to NATO and the US since Turkey is supposed to be receiving the F-35 from the US this year as well.

If Russia can also get Riyadh to buy the S-400 – when Riyadh already has Patriot missiles that successfully defend it against ballistic missile threats from Yemen – it will show that the US is declining in influence in the region. In general, the hint that Moscow and the Gulf States discussed Yemen, Libya and Syria show that Russia believes it can work with them on these key areas of instability and conflict. Nonplussed with the US inability to end these conflicts, Russia is positioning itself as the main broker of deconfliction across the region. It already did this with Iran and Turkey in the Astana talks, pushing the Americans aside on Syria issues. If Russia can continue its track record of successes and moving into influential spaces usually dominated by the Americans, it will not be welcome news in Washington. Lavrov's trip appears to pave the way for this Russian play.