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Haredi rabbi slams 'impudent' Bennett for Conservative visit

Popular lecturer says as Diaspora Affairs Minister Naftali Bennett should oppose, not condone, Conservative movement.

By Ido Ben-Porat

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Naftali Bennett

Yonatan Sindel/Flash 90

Jewish Home chairman Naftali Bennett came in for more criticism on Wednesday, over his recent decision to make a very publicized visit to the Solomon Shechter Conservative movement school in New York.

The popular haredi lecturer Rabbi Mordechai Neugroschel, co-founder of "Judaism from a Different Angle," spoke to Kol Chai radio on Wednesday and added his condemnation of the move.

Bennett previously was criticized by Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi David Lau, who warned the visit acts to grant recognition to the movement that increases the dangers of assimilation. The Education Minister responded by saying there is an "emergency situation" of assimilation for Jews in the diaspora, and that Israeli leaders need to bring all Jews closer regardless of affiliation.

Conservative Judaism does not adhere to halakha (Jewish law) and to a large degree rejects the divine nature of the Torah, leaving open individual reinterpretation.

Rabbi Neugroschel slammed Bennett's defense of his visit, saying, "his definition is pompous, false, arrogant and prideful."

"As Diaspora Affairs Minister he isn't responsible for even one Jew of world Jewry, he is responsible for the relations of the state of Israel with world Jewry," said the incensed rabbi, calling Bennett, "impudent and boastful."

"In fact, precisely because he sees himself as responsible for the relations of the state of Israel with world Jewry, he needs to come and say this: 'these movements destroy world Jewry; these movements spread teachings of assimilation; their false rabbis hold marriage ceremonies for non-Jews and Jews, some of them together with priests; they convert (non-Jews) by telepathy and make a farce of Judaism, they make a joke out of anything Jewish that moves.'"

Rabbi Neugroschel said that "if Bennett views himself as responsible for them, he needs to say, 'Mr. Chief Rabbi (Lau), let's join hands and say these are false movements, destructive movements, who are 'your destroyers and those who made waste of you,' and we must fulfill the line 'shall go forth from you,' so that they leave us,'" in a reference to Isaiah 49:17.

"This is what should be said by a minister who views himself as the inheritor of a party that occasionally before elections dares to spread pictures of rabbis who call to vote for it."

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"Anyone whose intelligence is greater than that of the average mouse understands what I'm saying," concluded the rabbi.

For his part, Bennett has defended the move as simply an effort to reach out to American Jews - the vast majority of whom are non-Orthodox - without legitimizing or otherwise passing comment on their views, religious or otherwise.

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**Yosef Shomron**  
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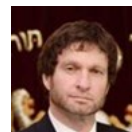
Absolutely reach out to assimilated Jews in the Galut; but do so in neutral venues (JCCs, Federations, Jewish senior citizen homes, universities etc) as befitting your role as head of a religious Zionist party. A religious Jew and certainly one who is the head of a religious Zionist party can not give legitimacy to heretical movements of Jews.

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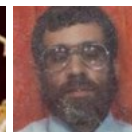


**Maria Harduvel Barroso**

I need help understanding this criticism, if Jewish families send their kids to a conservative Jewish school, rather than a public school, aren't they "less" likely to assimilate than the ones in a public school? I know it's not a yeshiva, but it seems to be relatively better than a public school, where assimilation is



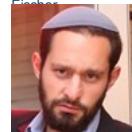
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relatively better than a public school, where assimilation is guaranteed. I'm just trying to get inside the mind of a Jew for the moment.

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**Yosef Shomron** ·  
University of Georgia

Maria: the hope is that if the orthodox world uniformly condemns and avoids heretical movements with a loud and clear voice then assimilated Jews will be more likely to send their children to a Torah true school (orthodox) - one that follows Jewish tradition. It's not true that the reform and conservative religions prevent their adherents from assimilating and intermarrying; in fact, they frequently join in interfaith ceremonies and conduct intermarriages; ostensibly putting a "Jewish" seal of approval on those activities that dilute our distinctiveness. If we say a little (but wrong) Judaism is better than nothing then we've legitimized such a path and paved the way for more Jews to follow.

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**Eliezer Roeh Ohr** ·  
BS"D

That may be so, Maria, but when you are representing the Jewish State of Israel, you must be much more discerning than the relative superiority of a Conservative "Jewish" institution and an authentic Torah observant one. It's the same thing as saying that Obama is better than a dictatorship. Relatively speaking, that might appear correct, but they both damage the foundations of the American Values that were imprinted by the Framers of the Constitution on American Values!

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**Maria Harduvel Barroso**

Eliezer Roeh Ohr thanks for the clarification, most of my friends are reformed so a conservative school sounds good. I work with a conservative jewish Doctor who is very devout and would never want his family assimilating. I understand your point though.

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**Eliezer Roeh Ohr** ·  
BS"D

"For his part, Bennett has defended the move as simply an effort to reach out to American Jews - the vast majority of whom are non-Orthodox - without legitimizing or otherwise passing comment on their views, religious or otherwise." As they say in real estate: LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!!!! The forum that was selected to "reach out" to Diaspora Jews was TOTALLY INAPPROPRIATE! I'm sure that as "smart" as Naftali Bennett is, he could have arranged for a BETTER LOCATION from which to "reach out"!!!!

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**Doc Bill**

That outright hatred of Jewish people can be articulated by so-called "rabbis" who ought to know better, is nothing less than "sinat chinam" which was why the Second Temple was destroyed.

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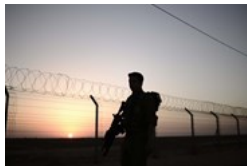


Jonathan Pollard



**In 2035, Edward Snowden will be president**

At least that's what Russia's RT TV station thinks - or hopes - in a clip celebrating its 10-year anniversary.



**Explosive thrown at IDF forces patrolling Gaza border**

None injured in attack on Golani Brigade soldiers at border; Israeli forces respond with mortar fire.



**Aliyah to reach 'record high' in 2015 - 30,000**

More Jews immigrated to Israel from France than any other country, with Ukraine as a close second.



Easy peasy pancakes

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