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GREAT BRITAIN'S CHIEF RABBI SAYS THAT JEWS THERE ARE SAFE "SO FAR"

Warns against complacency and emphasizes the need to fight anti-Semitism

Great Britain's Chief Rabbi, **Dr. Jonathan Sacks**, spoke in measured tones about the safety and security of British Jewry in an **exclusive Shalom TV interview** in London.

Speaking with the television network as part of the nation's seventh annual commemoration of the Holocaust (held on the anniversary of the British and Russian liberation of Auschwitz), Rabbi Sacks was asked if British Jewry is safe (given last year's 594 recorded anti-Semitic incidents in the country, representing a 37% increase in violent assaults and a 46% increase in attacks on Jewish communal properties).



GREAT BRITAIN
CHIEF RABBI
DR. JONATHAN SACKS

"So far, yes, but that doesn't mean to say that we can be complacent," said Rabbi Sacks. "We have to stand up and fight anti-Semitism wherever it occurs. Last September, the Houses of Parliament produced a report on anti-Semitism and it does warn the wider public.

"This country remains a tolerant country. Measured levels of anti-Semitism in Britain are lower than they are in the United States. But we are worried about radicals on the fringe of society who are capable of acts of violence. The country suffered from the terrorist attacks of July 7 [2006] so we must stay vigilant."

Shalom TV President and CEO Rabbi Mark S. Golub introduces the special report.

"Today, one would think that a Jewish person could live anywhere in the world--certainly in Western Europe, and most certainly in Great Britain--without fear of discrimination, persecution, or bodily harm," observed Rabbi Golub. "But there is qualification in Rabbi Sacks' response that suggests that Jews' place in western society is frighteningly reminiscent of historical times when the Jew was the victim of serious anti-Semitism."

Speakers at the commemoration included Holocaust survivor Gena Turgel and representatives from human tragedies in Rwanda and Kosovo. The theme of this year's observance, "The Dignity of Difference," was taken from one of Rabbi Sacks books.

"It is about seeing people who are different than us as a blessing, not a curse," explained the chief rabbi. "And young people in schools, in the wider society, understand this very well. We have to educate them to stand up for tolerance and for minorities. And so far, we are doing well.



"We are educating a generation to keep the story going and keep Anglo-Jewry strong. We have built so many Jewish Day Schools in the last fifteen years that the number of Jewish children in full-time Jewish education has gone up 400%. We are also sending a higher proportion of our young people to Israel than any other Diaspora community in the world. "We are an incredibly integrated community; but a community that I hope remains proud to be Jewish," he concluded.

Shalom TV is a cable television network devoted to the panorama of Jewish life. The service is available On Demand from Comcast and Blue Ridge cable companies.

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