

Munich Council Upholds Ban on Holocaust 'Stumbling Stones'

RAFAEL HOFFMAN

Munich's city council has refused to lift a ban on so-called "stumbling stones," tiny plaques embedded in sidewalks to commemorate Holocaust victims outside their former homes, which are a common sight elsewhere in Germany.

The opposition Green party and a smaller group on the council had sought to clear the way for the stones carrying Holocaust victims' names to be laid, something that councilors first rejected in 2004.

However, the majority of councilors voted against on Wednesday. Opponents of the stones — who include Jewish leaders in Munich — object to them on the grounds that they allow victims' names to be trampled on.

"Should neo-Nazis be able to wipe their dirt from their combat boots on the stones?" asked Marian Offman, a member of the city council and the board of the Jewish Cultural Center of Munich and Upper Bavaria, during the debate, reported Deutsche Welle.

Charlotte Knobloch, president of

the Cultural Center, said she found it "unbearable" that people would be "stepping all over" the names of murdered Jews, although she said the project was "well meant" and she could understand those who were of a different opinion.

"When my family discovered the stone that was placed in our grandmother's memory by the Jewish museum in Wiesbaden we were very moved by it," said a Lakewood resident who asked not to be named. "For her and millions of others that were murdered in the camps, this is the closest thing that they will ever have to a *matzeivah*. It is obviously not where they are buried, but is at their place of residence, which is meaningful and it is individualized, unlike most memorials."

While he said that he did understand the feelings of objectors, the Lakewood resident responded that "unfortunately, many Jewish cemeteries in Europe are also trampled, neglected, and targeted; does that mean that they shouldn't be established?"

The plaques, called *stolperstein*, are the brainchild of Gunter Demnig,



Aktives Museum Spiegelgasse

Stolperstein, or stumbling stones, embedded in a sidewalk.

a German artist. In the early 1990s, against the backdrop of an increasing number of large Holocaust memorials, he sought a method that would focus on individual victims. The small brass plaques, imbedded in a stone, bears the name, birthdate and fate of the person to whom they are dedicated. Some are dedicated to survivors who were forced to flee, but most end with the date and location of their deaths, usually a Nazi

camp. They are privately sponsored.

The project has attracted controversy. Some cities such as Munich saw the memorial as disrespectful, but they have gradually spread.

According to the Stolpersteine organization, 48,000 have been installed in over 1,000 cities and towns throughout Germany, as well as in 17 other European countries.

(With Reporting from Associated Press)

Gedolei Roshei Yeshivah Issue Kol Korei About Threats to Vilna Cemetery

RAFAEL HOFFMAN

NEW YORK — A *kol korei* petition has been issued by 12 leading American *Roshei Yeshivah* decrying plans for construction on one of Jewry's most sacred sites, the Snipisek Jewish Cemetery in Vilnius.

While local authorities claim that recently announced plans for a convention center will only affect a long-abandoned sports palace built on the spot over 50 years ago, *askanim* fear desecration of the holy site will inevitably occur.

"The *Gedolim* were very upset to hear about and see what is going on in such a *makom kadosh*," Rabbi Lazar Stern of Asra Kadisha told *Hamodia*.

He said that *askanim* are hopeful that the *kol korei* will move American officials to take a stronger stance against planned construction.

"These *Roshei Yeshivah* represent the descendants and legacy of Lithuanian Jewry, and that makes a real impression on the State Department and the Commission for Heritage Abroad," said Rabbi Stern.

He added that Lithuania has been especially responsive to U.S. requests due to a desire for protection from an increasingly aggressive Russia.

The historic and hallowed site,



A memorial in the Snipisek cemetery in Vilna bearing the names of the Vilna Gaon and the Ger Tzedek.

known as Vilna's "old" cemetery, is the resting place of the Chayei Adam, Reb Zalman of Volozhin and many other Lithuanian *Gedolim*, *zichronam livrachah*. Harav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz, *zt"l*, originally of Vilna, related that in his youth the *beis hachaim* contained a section that was closed to any visitors and was known as the burial place of the "*lamed-vav*" *tzaddikim*.

Sadly, none of the original tombstones remain — victims of Nazi occupation and Soviet rule.

The Vilna Gaon and the Ger Tzedek, *zichronam livrachah*, were originally interred there, but their remains were moved in the 1950s, when the communist government

White Officer Indicted in Killing Of Black Ohio Motorist

CINCINNATI (Reuters) — A University of Cincinnati police officer who fatally shot an unarmed black man has been charged with murder after a grand jury investigation, the Hamilton County prosecutor said on Wednesday.

Prosecutor Joseph Deters, speaking bluntly at a news conference to announce the charges, called the July 19 death of Samuel Dubose, 43, "senseless" and totally unnecessary. He said Ray Tensing, the white officer who shot Dubose in the head, never should have been a police officer.

The incident was the latest in a series of fatal police confrontations across the United States that have raised questions about police use of force against minorities.

Police said Tensing, who also was charged with voluntary manslaughter,

surrendered at about 2:00 p.m. EDT. He will be arraigned at 10:00 a.m. EDT on Thursday in the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas and could face the possibility of life in prison if convicted.

Tensing's attorney, Stew Mathews, told the Fox 19 media station in Cincinnati that his client was being "thrown under the bus" by the prosecutor and the school. A body camera video Deters played for reporters showed Tensing running after the slowly rolling car after the stop. Deters said Tensing was not dragged by the car, as the officer had reported. Asked about a second police officer who supported Tensing's report of the incident, Deters said his office was investigating that.

Mathews said there is a second video that will show more of the incident.

began construction of the sports complex on the cemetery's edge.

Asra Kadisha and the Conference of Academicians for the Protection of Jewish Cemeteries have repeatedly expressed protest over the planned project and have been working with the U.S. State Department to block construction.

"We hope that everyone who

could have an influence with the government will use their power to speak out on the issue," said Rabbi Stern. "Unfortunately, protecting *kevarim* is not so high on a lot of people's priorities, but if Lithuania is allowed to desecrate such a historic site, it will set a terrible precedent for many other less known *mekomos mekudoshim* in Europe."

Rabbinic decree and outcry by the leading Rushei Yeshiva shlita regarding the situation of the old Vilnius cemetery (Snipisek) that the authorities plan to renovate and re-open a huge entertainment center, Go-d forbid

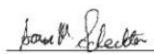
The Month Of Av 2015

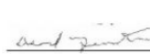
The Snipisek Jewish Cemetery in Vilnius, Lithuania was established in 1487 and houses the remains of tens of thousands of Jews including some of the greatest scholars and sages of the Jewish people. Tragically, the location of the cemetery has made it a target for development and other uses which desecrate it.

As descendants and members of the heir community of Vilna, we have joined together to express our pain and sorrow at the desecration that has taken place in the past, and to protest any use of this sacred site other than for prayer and solemn reflection.

The world's Rabbinic and Talmudic Seminaries and Congregations are the direct heirs of the spirituality and scholarship of the saintly people buried in Snipisek. The legacy that they left to us is a bedrock foundation which continues to guide us. We live today with their teachings as part of our heritage.

We ask Lithuanian Officials to affirm their respect for the dignity of the dead as an integral part of Western Civilization, of which Lithuania is an esteemed member. We call upon them to prevent any further incursions and uses of the Snipisek cemetery which would desecrate it.


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Rabbinical Academy Yeshiva Chaim Berlin


Rabbi David Feinstein
Meshe Tzoref Jerusalem of America


Rabbi Yosef Rosenblum
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Rabbi Aryeh Malkiel Kotler
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Rabbi Chaim Dov Keller
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קול קורא להצלה וזעקת כאב מאת זקני גדולי ראשי הישיבות שליט"א על מצב בית העלמין הישן בוילנא שהשלטונות זוממים לחדש בו אתר הוללות ענקי ומערת פריצים, היל"ת.

בעזרת

חודש מנחם אב תשע"ה לפ"ק

באנו בשורות אלו להביע את חרדתנו, בדבר שמועה לא טובה כי באה על תכנית שלטונות מדינת ליטא ועיריית וילנא לחדש את השימוש בבנייני הספורט ובבנין הבילויים השומם "קאנצרט האל" שהקימו הקאמוניסטים בשטח בית העלמין הקדוש העתיק בוילנא ששימש משך למעלה מארבע מאות שנה כמקום הקבורה היחיד בעיר גדולה לאלפים זו, ובו נטמנו רבים מגדולי ישראל לדורותם, קדושי עליון שרפי מעלה שמימיהם אנו שותים ומפיהם אנו חיים, אשר רבו מלספור ובתוכם הגאון בעל באר הגולה, משפחת הגר"א ותלמידיו הגאונים, רבי זלמלע וואלווינער, הגאון יעקב, החיי אדם, זי"ע.

ולא עוד אלא שהשלטונות הקצו לכך חון רב ועצום לשיפון המבנים הנטושים והרעועים מחמת יושנם, מה שמלמד על תכניות העלולות בוודאות להרחיב ח"ו את מימדי הפגיעה בבית חיים קדוש וקדום זה.

ואיככה נוכל לראות כבלע את הקודש ולהחריש אל מול הפיכת מקום קדוש וגורא אשר כזה למרכז אדיר של הוללות וקלות ראש אשר יש בזה בזיון גורא וחילול הקודש. ופשוט וברור כי כל בית הקברות בכל גבול הישן המקורי בקדושתו הוא עומד. וכבר הרעיש בזה מרן הגר"ע זלה"ה באגרותיו הרבים שהריץ למען הצלת בית החיים דוויילנא והכריע שאין מקום וסמכות להתפשר בזה כלל ועיקר.

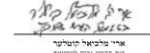
והננו קוראים לכל מי שבידו להשתדל בכל מה דאפשר שיגיע לאוזני רשויות ליטא גורל כאב וזעקת כלל ישראל נוכח תכנית בזיון וחילול המקום הקדוש, כי גדול הכאב מאד, ולדרוש מהם שלא יגעו בבית החיים, ולהשיב כבודו כמקד. ואשרי למי שיתאמץ להצלת ביה"ח הקדוש הזה חמדת ישראל, כמאמר הכתוב: "לקדושים אשר בארץ חמה ואדירי כל חפצי בם". וזכות ישני עפר קדושי ווילנא ימליצו טוב בעד כל המסייעים להצלת מנוחת כבודם, ובמהרה נזכה לתתח"מ ולביאת משיח צדקנו אכ"ר.


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Debris Found Is Possibly From Missing Malaysian Flight



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Police carry a piece of aircraft debris found in the eastern coastal area of the French Indian Ocean island of La Reunion, on Wednesday. Air safety investigators have a "high degree of confidence" that the debris is of a wing component unique to the Boeing 777, the same model as the Malaysia Airlines plane carrying 239 passengers and crew that disappeared without a trace last year.

Yannick Pitou/AFP/Getty Images

Afghan Intelligence: Taliban Leader Mullah Omar Dead

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) – Afghanistan's main intelligence agency said Wednesday that the reclusive Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar has been dead for more than two years.

The one-eyed, secretive head of the Taliban hosted Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaida

in the years leading up to the Sept. 11 attacks and then waged a decade-long insurgency against U.S. troops after the 2001 invasion that ended Taliban rule.

He has not been seen in public since fleeing the invasion over the border into Pakistan.

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Mrs. Esther Pollard Pleads for Privacy

HAMODIA STAFF

YERUSHLAYAYIM – A day after it was announced that Jonathan Pollard would be released from prison on November 20, 2015, Mrs. Esther Pollard broke her silence and delivered a short but very emotional statement to the press on

Wednesday.

The following is transcription of her remarks:

Bezras Hashem, with thanks to G-d Al-mighty, my husband Yonatan – Jonathan – Pollard, is completing this November, 30 very long, hard years of incarceration in the United

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TODAY IN NEW YORK

90°

Low of 74°

A heavy t-storm in the afternoon
Wind: SSW 8-16 MPH



accuweather.com

FRIDAY



89°

SHABBOS



90°

BREAKING



Turkish Attacks On Kurds
Muddle Obama's Islamic State Fight - picture

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