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VOLUME 51, NUMBER 2

February 2025

\$1.00

America Lights up in Yellow

to commemorate
**International Holocaust
Remembrance Day**
January 27, 2025

In 2005 the United Nations declared the day of January 27th to be International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp. This is a day dedicated to the memory of about 11 million victims of the Holocaust.

See story and photos on pages 7-10.

Thank you to the Empire State Building,
for partnering again this year with
Voices for Truth and Humanity to Light
up America Yellow!

Photo courtesy of Consulate General of Israel in NY.



Lighting up the Sky in Yellow for International Holocaust Remembrance Day to Remember the 11 Million Murdered

By **Henry Levy**

The Empire State Building was lit up in yellow on January 27th, visible for miles. So were Niagara Falls, Philadelphia International Airport, the Slifka Center for Jewish Life at Yale University, Atlantic City's Casinos, City Halls in Richmond, Chicago and New York, the Governors' Mansions in Texas and Pennsylvania, and a multitude of other locations in over a dozen states throughout the U.S.

In 2005, the United Nations established January 27th, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp, as a day to remember the atrocities of the Holocaust and the 11 million victims of the Nazis including 6 million Jews and 1 1/2 million children.

Each year, the two-hour ceremony held in the United Nation's General Assembly building features speeches by the UN Secretary General, Holocaust survivors, Ambassadors, and this year a stirring speech by **Isaac Herzog**, President of Israel who lambasted the biased treatment by the UN of the State of Israel, the world's lone Jewish nation, and no others.

Just over three years ago, **Voices for Truth and Humanity** and **The Jewish Post** established the *Light Up Yellow* project on International Holocaust Remembrance Day to call the public's attention to the significance of the day's observance.

The lighting of major landmarks in yellow is more than just acknowledging the memory of those murdered by the Nazis. It is vital that people talk about the Holocaust and understand why it was humanity's darkest time. It is only through education and discussion that the American people can learn the lessons of the past and overcome the propaganda, hate, and bigotry of those who wish to use the Jewish people as scapegoats and targets for their deep-seeded hate and ignorance.

The "*New York Lights up Yellow*" project was launched in 2022, just after the United Nations turned its back on the International Holocaust Remembrance Day program it established by refusing to light up its own New York Headquarters in yellow. Our success began with an agreement by Madison Square Garden to light the building's exterior in yellow, which was a magnificent sight. Then, New York's Governor Hochul agreed to light up a dozen locations throughout the state, including One World Trade Center, Niagara Falls, various bridges and other landmarks. Mayor Adams of New York City followed by including City Hall and all other the Borough Halls. Nassau and Westchester County Executives not only lit up their official executive offices buildings, but held ceremonies as well, highlighting the need for Holocaust education and the necessity to heed the words: "Never Again!"

In our second year, the Empire State Building came onboard to partner with **Voices for Truth and Humanity**, lighting the iconic landmark in yellow for all the world to see. We added numerous locations in Connecticut, as **Governor Lamont** authorized the tallest building in the state to be lit, in addition to Hillel's Slifka Center at Yale University. Last year, our initiative, renamed "America Lights up Yellow", expanded to 8 States.

A group of dedicated partner organizations including the **New York Board of Rabbis, Jewish Community Relations Council, 3rd Generation of Holocaust Survivors, Jewish Federations of North America**, and others have been instrumental in the project's rapid expansion.

States participating with **Voices for Truth and Humanity** in its *America Lights up Yellow* campaign in 2025 included:

New York - Empire State Building, **Governor Kathy Hochul** and **NYC Mayor Eric Adams** lit up major NYS & NYC landmarks including State Capitol, Niagara Falls, One World Trade Center, Grand Central Terminal, NYS Fair, City Hall & Borough Halls, Mario Cuomo, Kosciuszko, FDR Mid-Hudson & Fairport Lift Bridge over Erie Canal, NYS Fairgrounds, Albany Int'l Airport Gateway and many others. Ceremonies at Nassau County Dome lighting at Executive & legislative Office Building, Westchester County Center.

Thanks to Howard Pollack, JCRC-NY, Millie Jasper, Holocaust and Human Rights Education Center and others.

Connecticut - **Governor Ned Lamont** lighting Travelers Tower, The Hartford building, Slifka Center at Yale University, many New Haven locations, Billboard on I-95, and for a detailed list and history visit: <http://www.yellowlight.info>.

Thanks to Doris Zelinsky, Greater New Haven Holocaust Memory, Al Canosa, Mosaic and others.

New Jersey - **Governor Phil Murphy** lit up the State Capitol, Trenton Makes Bridge, Atlantic City Casinos and Stockton University. Thanks to Brianna Doherty, New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education Casino Association of NJ and Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center at Stockton University Roy Tanzman.

Pennsylvania - **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **First Lady Lori Shapiro** lit up the State Capitol, program at the Horowitz-Wasserman Memorial Plaza, Legislature passes Proclamation for IHRD, Subaru of America, Philadelphia Airport. BOMA and much more. Governor Shapiro held a Shabbat Dinner January 24th in honor of 3G Philly, legislators who passed

IHRD Proclamation and Hank & Elaine Levy from Voices. Thanks to Stacy Seltzer, 3G Philly and Rep. Kristen Marcell.

Virginia - **Mayor Danny Avula** lit up Richmond City Hall. Thanks to Sam Richardson, JCRC and Dylan Levy-Lavelle, Voices first Junior Ambassador.

West Virginia - **Governor Pat Morrisey** issued a Proclamation for IHRD. Thanks to Marc Slotnik, West Virginia Commission on Holocaust Education.

Kentucky - Big Four Bridge in Louisville lit up by Mayor Craig Greenberg. Thanks to Trent Spoolstra, Louisville JCRC.

Arkansas - Proclamation by Legislature. Thanks to Annabelle Tuck, former State Supreme Court Justice and Pres. of Temple B'nai Israel, and Marty Sullivan, Director, Administrative Office of the Courts.

Florida - State Capital was lit up, Tampa's original City Hall was lit up and a press conference on IHRD was held in Tallahassee. Thanks to Eli Berne, Jewish Federations of North America and local Florida Legislators.

Texas - **Governor Greg Abbott** lit up the Governor's Mansion and all 6 Federations worked together throughout the state to light up many locations. Thanks to Michelle Golan, Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas and Erica Winsor, Jewish Federation of Greater Houston.

Illinois - **Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson** lit up City Hall, and key buildings of BOMA illuminated the city's skyline. Thanks to Daniel Goldwin, Jewish United Fund of Chicago and Dan Thalheimer, Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center.

Minnesota - Susie Greenberg, Director of Holocaust Education said that the JCRC will be coordinating efforts in Minnesota and the Dakotas.

Wisconsin - Milwaukee's Hoen Bridge will be lit yellow as well as the Milwaukee Art Museum and downtown buildings. Thanks to Samantha Abramson, Milwaukee Jewish Federation and the Holocaust Education & Resource Center and Rabbi Joshua Herman, Hillel.

Oklahoma - Oklahoma History Center presented a program with the Jewish Federation of Oklahoma City. Thanks to Rachel Johnson, Jewish Federation of Oklahoma City.

Our goal is to light up all 50 states and when the White House is lit up Yellow we will have achieved success.

Below are some remarks by leaders participating in this year's "*America Lights up Yellow*" initiative:

Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro said, "We are committed to educating our kids about the horrors of the Holocaust — and the Governor's Residence will be

lit yellow this evening in remembrance. I was sworn into office on three bibles. One was carried by an American soldier from Pennsylvania as he liberated the Nazi death camps and helped defeat fascism."

Texas Governor Greg Abbott: "Today, we remember and pray for the millions of people who were killed during this atrocious period of history. It's a solemn reminder of the intense oppression the Jewish people faced and continue to face. In recognition of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Cecilia and I lit the Governor's Mansion yellow to honor those whose lives were taken. Antisemitism and hate have no place in our state, in our country, or in the world. Texas proudly stands with the Jewish people and with Israel today and every day."

New York Governor Kathy Hochul said, "On Holocaust Remembrance Day, we remember the six million Jews murdered by the Nazi regime. 80 years since the liberation of Auschwitz, we must honor the memories of those taken from us by standing up to antisemitic hate wherever it rears its ugly head."

New York City Mayor Eric Adams said: "On this 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, we stand at a profound moment in history, where remembrance is not just about the past, but about securing our future. As mayor of the city that proudly houses the largest Jewish community outside of Israel, I am deeply moved by the resilience of our Jewish family while remaining ever mindful of the devastating void left by the Holocaust. The yellow lights illuminating our city buildings tonight serve as both a memorial to the 6 million lives lost and a bright reminder of our unwavering solidarity."

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson said, "Today, we honor the lives lost and the survivors who carry the legacy of the Holocaust. In Chicago and beyond, we remember the atrocities, reflect on the importance of tolerance, and commit to never forgetting."

Governor Tony Evers of Wisconsin said, "Today, on the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, we recognize Holocaust Remembrance Day. We must never forget the atrocities of the Holocaust. We must teach future generations, and we must remain steadfast that antisemitism and hate have no place here in Wisconsin."

Governor Patrick Morrisey of West Virginia, recognizing January 27, 2025 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day, asked West Virginians to honor the memory of those who perished, the survivors who carry the scars of their experiences, and the generations who have the responsibility to educate future generations of the horrific events carried out by the Nazi regime, in which six million Jew-

Continued on Page 14



America Lights up in Yellow

to Commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day



New York's Freedom Tower



The Florida Capitol Building



SUNY Albany Campus



Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro's Executive Mansion



Atlantic City Casinos, New Jersey



Slifka Center at Yale University



The Governor's Mansion in Austin, Texas

Wisconsin's Hoen Bridge



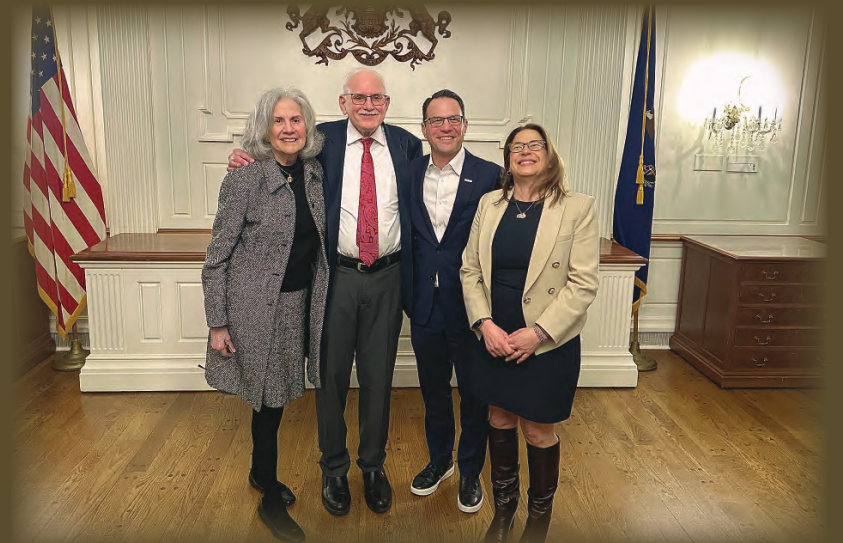
*Richmond Virginia City Hall
photo by Jessica Levy-Lavelle*



Nassau County's Executive and Legislative Building



*Big Four Bridge, Louisville Kentucky
Photo by Trent Spoolstra*



*Elaine & Henry Levy with Pennsylvania Governor
Josh Shapiro and First Lady Lori Shapiro at the
Shabbat Dinner honoring 3G Philly*

ish men, women, and children were systematically murdered.

Governor Andy Beshear of Kentucky said, “On this Holocaust Remembrance Day, we honor the memory of the 6 million Jewish men, women and children lost. Let us join together to reject hate, antisemitism, racism and intolerance. To move our commonwealth forward, we must lead with kindness, respect and love for all.”

Richmond Virginia City Hall issued the following statement: “As we light Richmond’s City Hall in yellow, we join communities worldwide in affirming our commitment to standing against hatred, bigotry, and indifference. Together, we honor the past to build a brighter, more compassionate future.”

Mark Giannantonio, President of the Casino Association of New Jersey said, “Atlantic City’s casinos are so honored to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day on the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The casino industry is proud to light up our properties yellow in honor of the 11 million victims of the Holocaust, including six million Jews and 1.5 million children. We must always remember.”

Rabbi Potasnik, Executive Vice President of the NYBR said, “We are going to hold up the light to the horrors of yesterday. We have a responsibility to hold up the light at

college campuses. We have to remind college leaders that education can make you smart but it doesn’t make you moral. Educated people ran death camps and educated people enacted the Nuremburg Laws so education without morality is not a complete education.” He concluded by citing Elie Wiesel who said when you are born you begin life. Sometimes we have to learn how to begin again. So, we come here today to talk about those who began life and also to remind people that we are able to begin again.

Jack Britvan, the founder of **Voices for Truth and Humanity** said, “Jew hatred spread because of propaganda, lies, and lack of education. Approximately 26 states mandate Holocaust education and for some the mandate means “We think it’s a good idea.” In 1994 New Jersey and New York mandated Holocaust education. NJ established a K-12 curriculum that no other state compares to. 30 years after mandating Holocaust education NY had a paragraph until this past year when our organization, working with Long Island Regent Roger Tilles convinced NYS Governor Hochul and the state legislature to allocate \$500,000 to establish new York’s first Holocaust curriculum to be taught in our public schools.”

To get involved in our lighting and education projects visit www.v4th.org or contact

Hank Levy at henryjlevy@yahoo.com ☆

THE **JEWISH post**

**41 Sagamore Way North
Jericho, NY 11753
516-225-4400**

**Published by
The Jewish Post LLC
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief:
Henry J. Levy
Associate Publisher:
Scott Levy
© The Jewish Post LLC**

**Israel Correspondent:
Kanan Abramson
Society & Diplomatic Editor
Gloria Starr Kins
Staff Writers:
Elaine G. Levy
Claus Mueller
Julia Du
Alan Manheim**

**Photographers:
Flash90, Jerusalem, Israel
Barry Brown, NY
Art Direction & Production
Salvatore Barbasso
<http://www.jewishpost.com>
Email: Jewishpost@yahoo.com**