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What The Forward Really Said About Gorka – And Why We're Proud We Did

By [Jane Eisner](#)

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[Getty Images](#)

Sebastian Gorka, who left his post as deputy special assistant to the president last week, is using interviews with friendly media outlets to [lambast liberal American Jews](#) and the Forward, claiming that we attacked him solely because of his views on Israel.

The Forward has written a lot about Gorka, but we have never attacked him for his views on Israel. Here's a brief synopsis of what we have reported. (It's presented with thanks to my colleague Dan Friedman, who initially [compiled and published](#) an earlier explanation of the facts and significance of the case against Gorka.)

In our original scoop, back in February, Larry Cohler-Esses and Lili Bayer [found](#) that Gorka had close ties to Hungarian far-right circles and worked with openly racist and anti-Semitic groups and public figures from 2002 to 2007.

Then in March, we [reported](#) that Gorka was a formal member of a Hungarian far-right group that is listed by our own State Department as having been “under the direction of the Nazi Government of Germany” during World War II. Gorka's involvement with the group, known as Vitezi Rend, was confirmed by three different sources.

That story prompted three United States senators [to call for an investigation](#) into Gorka's immigration status. (He did not become an American citizen until 2012.)

The next month, we obtained and [published video](#) of a televised interview showing that Gorka openly supported a violent, anti-Semitic militia that was subsequently banned in Hungary. And then we produced another [story showing](#) that his ties to Vitezi Rend stretched back decades.

The evidence showed that Gorka, President Trump's top anti-terrorism adviser, had documented ties with fascist, anti-Semitic groups just a few years before he assumed a powerful and sensitive position in the White House.

Despite our repeated requests for comment, Gorka never confirmed that he obtained security clearances necessary for the job he held for 207 days; neither did the White House. But his apparent history, along with the continual prevarication, earned him the disapprobation of lawmakers, Jewish communal leaders and other journalists, many of whom also did important investigations into his past.

There are things the Forward didn't say. We never called him an anti-Semite. We never questioned his views on Israel. We never criticized him for his political statements, though they were way outside even mainstream Republicanism. And we never called upon him to resign.

We only sought answers to questions that any citizen has the right to ask.

If the Forward's reporting contributed to Gorka's departure from the White House, then that makes me proud. Not as a journalistic badge of honor, but because someone with so controversial and compromised a history does not deserve the privilege of working for us. By which I mean: for America.

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Jane Eisner, a pioneer in journalism, became editor-in-chief of the Forward in 2008, the first woman to hold the position at the influential Jewish national news organization. Under her leadership, the Forward readership has grown significantly and has won numerous regional and national awards for its original journalism, in print and online.

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