

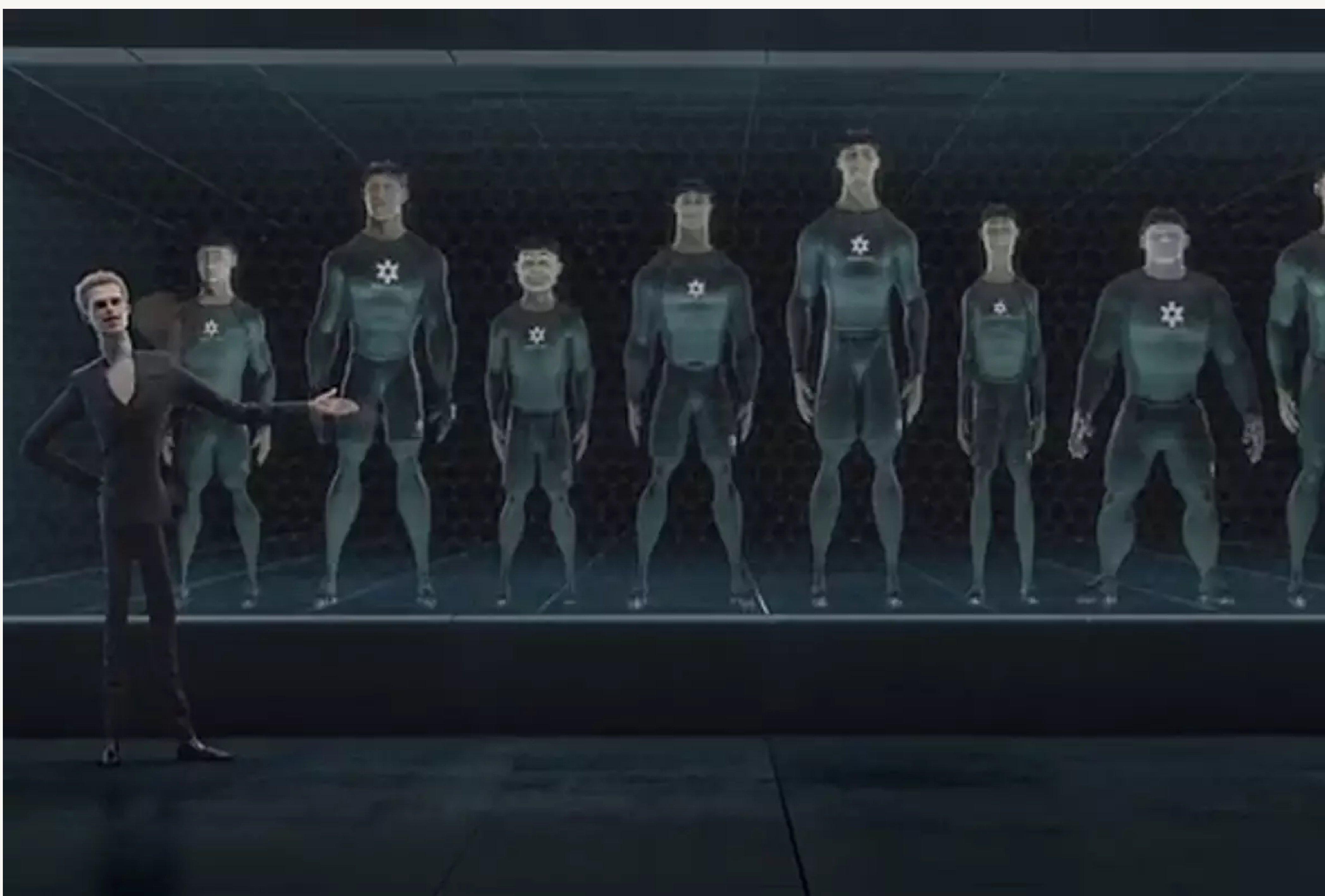
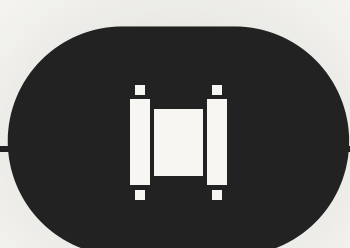
NEWS

# Are Nike’s Soulless Soccer Robots Jewish?

Some see troubling signs in the company’s new World Cup video

BY [LIEL LEIBOVITZ](#)

JUNE 11, 2014



Screengrab from Nike's World Cup video, "The Last Game." (YouTube)

Celebrating the upcoming world cup, Nike released a five-minute animated video earlier this week. Entitled “[The Last Game](#),” it’s a dystopian tale of a future dominated by cloned soccer robots who play so mechanically and flawlessly that they drain all the suspense and the pleasure out of the beautiful game, androids who have black hair and large noses and a symbol on their shirt that looks like a soccer ball or maybe, if you squint at it just right, a star of David.

That, at least, is the opinion of Yaakov Hagoel, the head of the World Zionist Organization’s Department for Countering Antisemitism. “We would love to work with you at Nike to understand what’s the real meaning behind these symbols and solve the problem,” Hagoel wrote in a [letter](#) to the athletics giant’s chairman and co-founder Phil Knight. “We in the Department for Countering Antisemitism take very seriously the complaints we have received, and we will act resolutely to verify the facts in full.”

Adding to the conspiratorial pleasure is a random number—20:42:49—which appears briefly on screen as the robots’ nefarious programmer is fiddling with his futuristic touch-screen command center. Plug that number into Google, and you’ll encounter the words of the prophet Ezekiel, chapter 20, verse 42: “Then you will know that I am the LORD,” it reads, “when I bring you into the land of Israel, the land I had sworn with uplifted hand to give to your fathers.”

So are the soulless droids Jews? Let us know in the comments, and let the paranoid fun begin...



Liel Leibovitz is a senior writer for Tablet Magazine and a host of the [Unorthodox](#) podcast.

#NIKE #SOCCER #WORLD CUP 2014