

Political Affairs Brief

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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UK Parliamentary Questions

Interfaith Projects

4. **Mr. Parmjit Dhanda (Gloucester) (Lab):** What funds his Department has allocated to interfaith projects in the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [312951]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Mr. Shahid Malik): Between 2004-05 and 2007-08, my Department granted more than £5 million to interfaith projects through the faith communities capacity building fund. In 2008, under the stewardship of my hon. Friend when he was Under-Secretary of State, we published "Face to Face and Side by Side". Developed with faith communities, the document set out for the first time a national strategic framework for promoting interfaith activity, supported by some £7.5 million.

Mr. Dhanda: I welcome my hon. Friend's reply. Does he agree that although the fund for preventing violent extremism has over three years been about £70 million, the overall faith pot has been about £15 million? Some of the best anti-radicalisation projects are also interfaith projects. Does he agree that this might be a good time to move some of that PVE funding and use it for more interfaith projects, which does not stigmatise any community?

Mr. Malik: As ever, my hon. Friend makes a good point. A few months ago, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced that another £7.5 million would be put out there to ensure a multi-faith approach to implementing the Prevent strategy. Projects that are PVE-focused do not have to go down the community cohesion route. It is pretty obvious that they ought to go down the Prevent route.

Mark Pritchard (The Wrekin) (Con): Freedom of religion is one of the pillars of our liberal democracy and society. Does the Minister share my concern about those people—a small minority in the Islamic faith—who condemn as apostates those who leave the Islamic faith, and threaten violence and physical retribution for their doing so?

Mr. Malik: That is the kind of question that does not require a response. Everybody in the House would agree with that 100 per cent. Hatred of any sort ought not to be tolerated, and anything that moves to the physical would be illegal as well.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100126/debtext/100126-0001.htm#10012656000015>

Topical Questions

T9. [312981] **Mark Pritchard (The Wrekin) (Con):** Violent extremism needs to be tackled in all communities, including those who want to curtail freedom of religion, despite the protestations of the Minister for the West Midlands. Does the Secretary of State believe that the Government's current policy on preventing violent extremism is working?

Mr. Denham: Yes. We need to accept that the task of strengthening the ability to resist the ideas of al-Qaeda-type extremists that are targeted at young people is something that we will have to sustain and develop. Looking back over the first two years of the Prevent programme, we are seeing an increasingly rich range of local initiatives up and down the country, all of which have as their outcome the idea that it is less likely that a young person in this country will get drawn into support for that kind of violent extremism. I believe that our programme, which we are developing all the time, is on the right lines. We continue to learn from best practice across the country and to strengthen the programme month by month.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100126/debtext/100126-0004.htm>

Churches: Repairs and Maintenance

Miss McIntosh: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what recent representations he has received on the level of contribution from central Government towards church repairs. [313296]

Sir Stuart Bell: The Archbishops' Council receives regular representations on the growing cost of church and cathedral fabric repairs and General Synod will shortly consider the increasing challenge of realising the huge potential of church buildings while dealing with this financial burden.

The church is grateful for existing grant schemes but requests more state support and I have welcomed the Public Accounts Committee's recommendation that cathedrals should receive direct funding from Government, 21 January 2010, Official Report, column 422. I also share the hon. Lady's view that parish churches, too, need greater support and I suggest that the most immediate aim should be to ensure the extension beyond 2011 of the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100126/text/100126w0001.htm#10012655000015>

NHS: Ministers of Religion

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much was spent by (a) his Department and (b) the NHS on chaplaincy services in each of the last five years; [313181]

(2) how much was spent by (a) his Department and (b) the National Health Service on chaplaincy services in 2008-09. [313294]

Phil Hope: National health service bodies are not required to report their planned or actual spending on chaplaincy and related services to the Department. When planning such services, NHS bodies should take, due account of their legal duties, the composition of the communities they serve, and the needs and circumstances of their patients, service users and local populations.

The Department recognises the important role played by faith organisations in supporting the NHS to deliver multi-faith chaplaincy services and has established a chaplaincy grants programme to fund a range of faith organisations to support healthcare chaplaincy. Over the past five years, the total funding made available has been as follows:

(£)	
2009-10	186,000
2008-09	185,000
2007-08	180,000
2006-07	⁽¹⁾ 180,000
2005-06	⁽¹⁾ 180,000
⁽¹⁾ Approximately	

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100126/text/100126w0017.htm#10012678000061>

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Holocaust

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

David Miliband marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day by paying tribute to those affected by the atrocities on Wednesday 27 January.

The Foreign Secretary said: "Today, the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, we remember the unique atrocities of the Holocaust and the indelible mark it has left on history. It is a day on which to remember the victims, and pay tribute to the survivors, whose stories stand as a spur to our collective resolve that we must never allow such atrocities to happen again.

Tragically, despite the horrors of Auschwitz, the risk of genocide persists. Today we also mourn the victims of violence in Rwanda, Cambodia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of us have a responsibility to continue to fight against discrimination and injustice in all their forms."

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=21636759>

Scotland Office

Secretary of State marks Holocaust Memorial Day

Sixty-five years to the day since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, Jim Murphy said: "Holocaust Memorial Day marks the darkest moments in human history. We have a duty never to forget because our world was changed for ever as six million were lost. Beautiful children, loving parents, frail grandparents, all wiped out; entire families exterminated. We stand up against the catastrophe of the holocaust by remembering it and celebrating the lives of those who murdered just because they were Jews.

"I am so lucky to have become good friends with some elderly holocaust survivors. Theirs are stories of horror of the concentration camps and the hope of a new life in Scotland. As the survivors age, we must make sure a younger generation of Scots learn of the hatred of the holocaust so that it can never be repeated."

Jim Murphy has visited Auschwitz when he organised for 150 Scottish school children to travel there on an education trip and he spent this weekend at a holocaust memorial event in his constituency, which is home to Scotland's biggest Jewish community.

<http://www.scotlandoffice.gov.uk/scotlandoffice/13284.html>

Welsh Assembly

Assembly to mark Holocaust Memorial Day

The National Assembly for Wales will join with people from all over the world to remember those who died in the Holocaust more than 60 years ago. Presiding Officer, Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM, will lead a period of silence ahead of today's (27 January) Plenary Session. "It is only right that all of us take a moment to remember those dreadful events that happened during the middle part of the last century," said Lord Elis-Thomas. "But we also shouldn't forget the 8,000 Muslims slaughtered in Srebrenica or the hundreds of thousands of Rwandan Tutsis who were hacked to death by machetes in the name of ethnic cleansing. These atrocities of course both happened in the last 20 years and in order to stop this from happening again we must remember them."

The Deputy Presiding Officer, Rosemary Butler AM, will also stand side-by-side with people from all walks of life in Cardiff to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. She will lay a wreath, on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales, as part of an official ceremony at City Hall in Cardiff. "Whether it be the death camps of Eastern Europe during the Second World War or the killing fields of Rwanda at the end of the last century, this day serves to remind us all of Man's capacity to heap unspeakable pain and suffering upon his fellow man," says the Deputy Presiding Officer. "That's why this day, of all days, must be etched in all our diaries and on all our calendars."

<http://www.assemblywales.org/newhome/new-news-third-assembly.htm?act=dis&id=163690&ds=1/2010>

Council of Europe

Address by Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
1945 to 2010 is 65 years. Almost a lifetime.

Time is pressing. Many of the witnesses who survived the Shoah are no longer with us. But we must remember their testimonies, and keep alive their memory. Marek Edelman died in October 2009. He was the last surviving leader of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of April 1943. This freedom fighter, who symbolised Jewish resistance, always stressed two fundamental points:

Every victim of the Holocaust is equally worthy to be honoured as a victim. The resistance fighters killed in action and the children who died in their mothers' arms in the gas chamber experienced the same horror and deprivation of their right to life by the Nazi regime. Crimes against humanity did not end after the Nuremberg trials. The combat will never be over. Human rights will always be vulnerable to encroachments. We must never drop our guard. I recall the words of the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr who said that man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary. Vigilance is still needed, now and in the future.

The Council of Europe was established on lessons of injustice. The leaders of Europe brought about a set of unique institutions which rendered recourse to war unacceptable as a political tool. The co-operation, transparency and integration promoted by the Council of Europe are today unique means of securing and promoting human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

Europe has become a place where people can build their lives instead of lose their lives. Today, we commemorate the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 65 years after the Auschwitz-Birkenau camps were liberated by Soviet troops.

It has been said that life can only be understood backwards but must be lived forwards. Europe has moved forward. We look back to understand and to learn. We have learned that we must never forget. Learned that we must always educate, always safeguard individual memories within our collective memory, and always protect and foster our democratic, humanitarian values.

We must never forget the past. We owe this to the victims, and we owe it to ourselves.

http://www.coe.int/t/secretarygeneral/sg/speeches/2010/20100127_holocaust_en.asp

European Network Against Racism

International Holocaust Remembrance Day: Europe must not break the ‘never again’ promise

As the world commemorates the victims of the Holocaust today, on International Holocaust Day, the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) urges Europe not to lose sight of the initial significance of this remembrance work and to tackle increasing racism and xenophobia across Europe, including anti-Semitism, anti-Gypsism, colour racism and Islamophobia.

The Holocaust triggered a wide-ranging reflection on anti-racism in Europe and showed the world what can happen if racism and prejudice are allowed to thrive. It is thus crucial for ENAR to remember the victims of the Holocaust and to ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust continue to have repercussions today, not just for the Jewish community but for all ethnic and religious communities who face racism and discrimination.

In this respect, it is also important to acknowledge that the work on the collective memory of the Holocaust has not yet been completed. Whilst significant steps have been taken to uphold the memory of the extermination of the Jewish people, other communities who were exterminated by the Nazi regime, including the Roma population, have been overlooked in many commemoration events. Research on these ‘forgotten’ communities has only recently begun and needs to be followed through to reflect the widespread legacy of the Holocaust.

ENAR President Mohammed Aziz said: “‘Never again’ was the promise made after the tragedy of the Holocaust, but the current climate in the EU points to increasing manifestations of the racism and discrimination which can become the building blocks of genocide. Increasing hate crimes against Roma, the violation of migrants’ basic human rights, rising Islamophobia - these are just some examples of the forms of racism which need to be addressed in Europe today.”

<http://cms.horus.be/files/99935/MediaArchive/pdfpress/2010-01-27%20holocaust%20day.pdf>

United Nations

Stories of Holocaust survival must be shared and preserved

Top UN officials have stressed the importance of sharing the stories of the men, women and children who survived Nazi death camps as a way to encourage respect for diversity and human rights.

“Holocaust survivors will not be with us forever – but the legacy of their survival must live on,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in a [message](#) to mark the International Day in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust.

“All of them carry a crucial message for all of us,” he stated. “A message about the triumph of the human spirit. A living testament that tyranny, though it may rise, will surely not prevail.

“We must preserve their stories – through memorials... through education... most of all through robust efforts to prevent genocide and other grave crimes,” said the Secretary-General, pledging the full commitment of the UN to this cause. ...

the grotesque nature and scale of the Holocaust is in no way diminished by the passing of time,” stated High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay. She added that a continued focus on the Holocaust helps people to remain alert to the dangers presented by contemporary outbreaks of anti-Semitism and various forms of vilification and discrimination targeting other specific racial, ethnic or social groups. “Remembering the Holocaust, and how it came about, can – and should – help us to intervene much earlier in the escalating pattern of prejudice that can lead eventually to genocide. It is also an essential response to those who claim that the Holocaust never happened,” ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=33591&Cr=genocide&Cr1=>

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Remembering the Holocaust is key to fighting modern-day racism, OSCE Roma adviser says ahead of UN ceremony

Remembering the Holocaust is key to fighting modern day manifestations of racism and intolerance, said the OSCE's senior Roma and Sinti adviser, attending a Holocaust remembrance ceremony at the United Nations headquarters in New York today.

Andrzej Mirga, the head of the Roma and Sinti Contact Point at the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), stressed the need to teach people about the Holocaust, including the long-neglected ordeal of the tens of thousands of Roma and Sinti who perished in Nazi concentration camps. ... Holocaust remembrance and education on tolerance must be complemented by laws protecting the dignity and human rights of all people, as well as by the effective application of law enforcement tools to prevent or punish violent manifestations of racist and extremist ideologies, Mirga added. ...

To read the full press release see

http://www.osce.org/odihr/item_1_42488.html

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Israel

UK Parliamentary Questions

Israel

Lord Dykes: To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Israel about reopening negotiations in the near future leading to a Palestinian state. [HL1257]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead): The UK continues to work for a lasting peace in the Middle East. There is also no reduction in US commitment and we will continue to work closely with it, the Israelis, Palestinians and other partners to find a way into credible negotiations towards a credible peace.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100126w0003.htm#10012667000352>

Palestinians: International Assistance

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effects of the restrictions on access into Gaza of aid and reconstruction materials on the prospects for progress in negotiations on peace in the Middle East; and if he will make a statement. [311403]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The UK remains extremely concerned by the Gaza border restrictions imposed by the Israeli Government and continues to call for those restrictions to be eased further. We, along with our international allies, will continue to work for peace in the Middle East. It is imperative to create hope and a vision of Israel and a viable Palestinian State living as neighbours in peace and security.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100126/text/100126w0029.htm#10012691000031>

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Relevant Legislation ** New or updated

UK Parliament

**** Children, Schools and Families Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/childrenschoolsandfamilies.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/008/amend/pbc0082601a.149.html>

**** Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/constitutionalreformandgovernance.html>

Committee Stage, House of Commons

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100126/debtext/100126-0005.htm#10012661000001>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/004/amend/pbc0042601a.537-543.html>

**** Crime and Security Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/crimeandsecurity.html>

Public Bill Proceedings

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/003/pro003260110p.1-3.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/003/amend/pbc0032601a.23-25.html>

**** Equality Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/equality.html>

Revised fifth list of marshalled amendments to be moved in Committee

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/020/amend/ml020-vr.htm>

**** Flood and Water Management Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/floodandwatermanagement.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/053/amend/pbc0532601a.531-535.html>

Scottish Parliament

End of Life Assistance Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/38-EndLifeAssist/index.htm>

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Other Relevant Information

NHS Health Scotland

Dimensions of Diversity

<http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/11760-Pop%20Div%202010%20FINAL%20web.pdf>

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Consultations

** new or updated

**** closes in 6 days**

Protection of Vulnerable Groups Implementation: Consultation on Significant Draft Secondary Legislation, Guidance and Regulatory Impact Assessment (Scotland only) (closes 2 February 2009)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/children-families/pvglegislation/Consultation09>

Communities and Local Government: Creating a Single Equality Scheme for 2010 – 2013 (closes 28 February 2010)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/987402.pdf>

Proposal to amend the Licensing Act 2003 to simplify the procedures for Licensing Statements; Interim Authority Notices; and Temporary Event Notices (closes 9 February 2010)

http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6498.aspx

**** Death Certification, Burial, and Cremation (Scotland)** (closes 21 April 2010)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300112/0093686.pdf>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charity SCO29438