

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 Question

Children, Schools and Families Bill

Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Children, Schools and Families Bill will place a requirement on Catholic, Jewish, Anglican and Muslim voluntary aided schools to provide children with details of abortion clinics and abortion referral agencies. [HL2447]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Children, Schools and Families (Baroness Morgan of Drefelin): It will not. Schools will have to teach their pupils where and how to obtain health information. They will also be encouraged to teach their pupils how to access information about contraception and sexual health as part of their delivery of SRE, but whether and how they do that will be at their discretion.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100311w0002.htm#10031145000637>

Department for Children, Schools and Families

Measures to be strengthened to prevent the promotion of racism by teachers in schools (*England only*)

The Government has accepted in full an independent review's call for an annual review on whether teachers belonging to racist organisations should be banned.

The review also calls for measures to be strengthened to prevent the promotion of racism by teachers in schools but finds that measures currently in place to protect pupils from racist teachers are sufficient.

In addition, the review says annual reporting of racist incidents should be monitored for compliance by local authorities and Ofsted should always report when schools are inadequate on equal opportunities and community cohesion.

Maurice Smith CB was asked to look into whether there was a need to ban teachers who were members of legitimate organisations which may promote racism - similar to bans in place in the police force and prison service. His full and detailed review of the arguments for and against strengthening the current measures to protect against the promotion of racism in schools found that:

- over the last seven years, only four members of the teaching profession, and two governors have been publicly identified as being members of racist organisations and only nine incidents of teachers making racist remarks or holding racist materials have

been subject to disciplinary sanction by the General Teaching Council for England;
- measures in place in maintained schools have less impact in independent schools which, by their very nature, have greater freedoms and are more lightly regulated.
The Secretary of State has accepted the recommendations in full and has asked Maurice Smith to conduct an additional review looking at safeguards in place in independent schools and see if measures can be improved. ...

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2010_0064

A review of the measures to prevent the promotion of racism by teachers and the wider workforce in schools

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/mauricesmithreview/downloads/FinalversionMSReviewReport11310.pdf>

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Israel

UK Parliamentary Questions

Palestinians: International Assistance

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will take steps to seek to ensure safe passage of the Free Gaza flotilla through international waters. [321677]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Vessels in international waters enjoy the right of freedom of navigation. However, the Government strongly advise against any travel to Gaza at this time. Humanitarian aid workers and other essential specialist staff needing to travel to Gaza should co-ordinate their entry to Gaza with the major international humanitarian organisations already on the ground. The Government also regularly lobby the Israeli Government to increase the flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

If, despite this advice, 'Free Gaza' decide to travel to Gaza, they do so at their own risk. They should review their security arrangements and seek professional security advice on whether they are adequate. They should register with our consular office in Gaza. The level of consular assistance the FCO can provide is extremely limited.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100311/text/100311w0007.htm#10031146000074>

Palestine

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Jerusalem Centre for Photography in Jenin, the Zakat Hospital in Tulkarem, the Prosthesis Factory in Qalqilia, the Islamic Relief for Care of Orphans in Tubas and Salfeit, the Nafha Society for Defence of Prisoners and Human Rights in Naablus, the School for Deaf Children in Ramullah, the Christian Wafa Charity Society in Bethlehem, or the Al-Aqsa School for Orphans in Hebron have previously received British or European Union funding. [HL2179]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead): We have no record of any of these organisations receiving government funding. The EU Commission has confirmed that it has not funded these organisations.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100311w0005.htm>

European Parliament

Hamas urged to release kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit

... Parliament calls on Hamas to release immediately the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, who was kidnapped on Israeli soil on 25 June 2006.

Since being taken hostage, Sergeant Shalit - a French and Israeli citizen - has been held incommunicado in Gaza and deprived of basic rights under the Geneva Conventions. Hamas has claimed responsibility for his continuing detention and has declared that he is being held in accordance with the Third 1949 Geneva Convention.

MEPs demand the "immediate release" of Sergeant Shalit. They also call upon Hamas to grant Sergeant Shalit rights and privileges pursuant to the Geneva Convention. Deploring "the continued disregard for Sergeant Shalit's basic human rights and the fact that his family and the Israeli and French authorities have been prevented from obtaining information regarding his well-being", the resolution urges Hamas "to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit Sergeant Shalit without delay, and to permit him to communicate with his family" in accordance with the Convention.

More broadly, the resolution stresses the importance of progress towards a two-state solution and the relaunching of proximity negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and says that "mutual trust-building measures by all sides, including a significant release of Palestinian prisoners, may help to create a constructive atmosphere leading to the release of Sergeant Shalit".

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/015-70352-067-03-11-902-20100310IPR70351-08-03-2010-2010-false/default_en.htm

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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>

Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill

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

Crime and Security Bill

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

**** Equality Bill**

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

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/039/amend/am039-b.htm>

**** Flood and Water Management Bill**

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

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/028/amend/am028-c.htm>

Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 (Amendment) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/prosecutionoffencesact1985amendment.html>

Scottish Parliament

End of Life Assistance Bill

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

Draft Census Order

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2010/draft/pdf/sdsi_9780111007907_en.pdf

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Consultations

** new or updated

** closes in 3 days

Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Order 2010

(closes 15 March 2010)

http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6605.aspx

2011 Census Statistical Outputs (England and Wales) (closes 26 March 2010)

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011-census/consultations/open-consultations/2011-output-consultation---main-statistical-outputs/index.html>

Equality Bill: Draft Codes of Conduct (closes 2 April 2010)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legislative-framework/equality-bill/equality-bill-codes-of-practice-consultation/#1>

Equality Bill: Draft Guidance (closes 16 April 2010)

<http://ehrc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>

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

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

Call for Evidence on the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill (12 May 2010)

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/endLifeAsstBill/currentInquiries.htm>

Humanitarian Assistance Strategic Guidance (closes 14 May)

http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/consultations/HA_strategic_guide_draft.pdf

2011 Census Statistical Outputs (Scotland) (closes 14 May 2010)

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/census/censushm2011/preparations/consultation-and-research/formal-consultations/spring-10-consultation.html>

** Reform of the coroner system

 (closes 1 July 2010)

Includes questions as to when it may be appropriate to carry out a non-invasive post-mortem examination, for example by means of MRI scan.

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/reform-coroner-system.htm>

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