

# Political Affairs Digest

*A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community*

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Oral Answers

#### Anti-Semitism and Holocaust Denial

23. **Iain Stewart (Conservative)**: What steps his Department is taking to tackle anti-Semitism and holocaust denial. [903436]

**The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Sajid Javid)**: Anti-Semitism and holocaust denial are completely unacceptable in a civilized society, and this Government have taken a strong lead in tackling both. We have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of anti-Semitism, and we are planning a striking new national memorial beside Parliament.

**Iain Stewart**: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust is as important as ever, given the worrying levels of organised hatred and intimidation both at home and abroad?

**Sajid Javid**: I agree wholeheartedly, and I am very pleased to praise the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust. I was also pleased to announce in Speaker's House last week that we are giving £144,000 of support jointly to the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Union of Jewish Students to tackle anti-Semitism, prejudice and intolerance on our university campuses.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-22/debates/5A413939-9FFB-4FB3-BF12-573D81835DDC/Anti-SemitismAndHolocaustDenial>

#### Topical Questions: Housing, Communities, and Local Government

*col 19* **The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Sajid Javid)**: ... Something that resonates especially strongly this week is Holocaust Memorial Day, which is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to rooting out hatred and anti-Semitism wherever it exists. ...

*col 24* **Ranil Jayawardena (Conservative)**: With Holocaust Memorial Day this week, does my right hon. Friend agree that on both sides of the House we really need to face up to anti-Semitism wherever we see it and whatever form it takes?

**Sajid Javid**: Holocaust Memorial Day is a reminder to us all of the horrors of what mankind can do—of what we can do to each other—if no one speaks up. It is incumbent on all parties in this House to face up to anti-Semitism. I noted just a few days ago the Jewish Labour Movement was appealing to the Labour party

leadership to throw out people who allegedly practise anti-Semitism. The Labour party talks about combating hate crime, but it has to show people that it really means it.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-22/debates/DCB3E0C2-2AD6-45DE-A425-A4ECBF9CD8B1/TopicalQuestions>

## House of Commons Written Answer

### Hate Crime

**Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op)** [122385] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of hate crimes that have been reported to police in each of the last five years.

**Victoria Atkins:** The Home Office collects information on the number of hate crimes recorded by the police, by monitored strand. The latest statistics are published in the 'Hate crime, England and Wales, 2016 to 2017' statistical bulletin, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2016-to-2017>

This Government is committed to tackling hate crime. The UK has a strong legislative framework to tackle hate crime. We are working across Government with police, (including National Community Tensions Team), the Crown Prosecution Service and community partners to send out a clear message that hate crime will not be tolerated and we will vigorously pursue and prosecute those who commit these crimes.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-12/122385/>

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## Holocaust

### House of Commons Oral Answers

*See the "Home Affairs" section above for oral answers relating to Holocaust Denial.*

### Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, and The Foreign Office

#### **Britain honours its Holocaust heroes**

At an event at the Foreign Office hosted with the Israeli embassy, the Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, Communities Secretary Sajid Javid, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis and Israeli Ambassador Mark Regev, will gather to honour heroic men and women with the British Hero of the Holocaust Medal.

The award, whose previous recipients include Sir Nicholas Winton, recognises those Britons who undertook extraordinary acts of courage and self-sacrifice, in order to help Jewish people and others.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said: The moral conviction and bravery of the British Heroes of the Holocaust should fill us with pride.

These exceptional individuals saved hundreds of lives and went above and beyond the call of duty in the most difficult circumstances to do the right thing.

As a government we are committed to ensuring that society learns the lessons of the

Holocaust so that bigotry and prejudice are given no place to take root.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said: Nazi oppression was defeated not only through military force but also through quiet acts of courage and compassion.

These eight individuals are true British heroes and a source of national pride for us all, fully deserving of our lasting respect and lifelong gratitude. Their willingness to stand up to hate with often little regard to their own personal safety is an inspiration to us all.

### **Award Recipients**

The eight recipients of the award are:

1. British Diplomats John Carvell and Sir Thomas Preston who issued almost 1500 Jews with certificates to enable them to escape to Palestine. Margaret Reid who worked in the Passport Control Office of the Berlin Embassy and issued visas that allowed thousands of Jews to emigrate. She often bent the rules for issuing visas, a practice that was deliberately overlooked by the British Consul-General Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, another recipient of the award;
2. Academic Doreen Warriner and Trevor Chadwick who worked closely with the 'British Schindler' Sir Nicholas Winton in Prague to organise the evacuation of hundreds of Jewish children from the then Czechoslovakia to Britain.
3. Dorothea Weber (née LeBrocq) who sheltered her Jewish friend Hedwig Bercu during the German occupation of the Channel Islands at great personal risk. She was aided by a German soldier, Kurt Ruummele, whom she married after the war and;
4. Otto Schiff who helped to create the Jewish Refugees Committee which arranged to bring Jews out of Germany and Austria to Britain during the war, as well as supporting them financially once here.

This Government is determined that the genocide of six million Jews will never be forgotten. That is why it will be building a spectacular and poignant Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, right next to Parliament, reminding all of us of the depths to which humanity can sink, and the importance of robustly opposing all forms of bigotry. Holocaust Memorial Day 2018 will take place on Saturday 27 January with thousands of activities and events taking place across the country at community centres, schools, libraries, museums, arts venues, prisons and places of worship.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/britain-honours-its-holocaust-heroes>

## **Welsh Assembly Oral Answers**

### **Business Statement and Announcement**

*col 138* **Darren Millar (Conservative):** ... I had the privilege of attending a Holocaust memorial event in Llandudno over the weekend and listened to Dr Martin Stern, a Holocaust survivor. He shared a very powerful and moving story and gave an account of his experiences during the Holocaust and those of his family. Obviously, Holocaust survivors are becoming fewer and fewer in number. I'm particularly interested, Cabinet Secretary, in what work the Welsh Government is doing to expose as many young people as possible to those first-hand accounts from Holocaust survivors while we still have people who are able to share first-hand stories. I know that the Welsh Government's done some good work on this in the past in terms of supporting young people to visit places like Auschwitz and to take part in Holocaust memorial events, but there's nothing like meeting a Holocaust survivor and hearing their first-hand account to actually transform people's thinking on the Holocaust and to tackle the growing problem that we have across the world with Holocaust denial.

*col 140* **Julie James (Leader of the House):** ... I completely agree with the Member that there's nothing like the first-hand account, but actually sometimes, in my own constituency for example, the daughter of one of the Holocaust survivors—who has herself given on many occasions powerful testimony but who

has subsequently sadly passed on—is a very powerful advocate, if you like, for what her mother went through and has clearly been brought up in that knowledge. So, there are ways of passing the knowledge on. But I completely agree with you that it's essential that we make sure that everybody understands what happened and why it happened and how we must make sure that it never happens again. ...

<http://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/4898?lang=en-GB#C53621>

## Church of Scotland

### **Moderator pays tribute to Jane Haining at Yad Vashem**

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has paid tribute to a missionary who gave her life to help protect Jewish schoolgirls during the Second World War. Right Rev Dr Derek Browning honoured the memory of Jane Haining at Yad Vashem, the sacred Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem where she is the only Scot to be named Righteous Among the Nations. ...

The delegation visited Aida refugee camp ... Dr Browning said: “We stood at one of the many walls in Israel/Palestine that runs through properties.

“I was left wondering who was being kept in and who was being kept out since the different sides in this ongoing conflict are in some form of prison.

“I have talked intentionally about the need to build longer tables and not higher walls throughout my year as Moderator.”

Dr Browning and his colleagues met with Rabbi Michael Melchior, President of MOSAICA (The Middle East Religious Peace Initiative) who is also the Chief Rabbi of Norway.

The Moderator said: “His vision stems from a biblical belief that everything we do in our lives should come from recognising God’s image and holiness in all and that holiness and peace are the tasks we should pursue in the faithful life.

“No understanding of life and its problems can be found without faith issues being included.” ...

Dr Browning said: “We think of refugees as people who are forced from their homes and having to travel great distances. “In Israel/Palestine, a refugee may be only a few miles from their home, in the next village or town.

“In the situation in Israel Palestine there are many voices in what is a complex political, economic, social and theological challenge.

“How can we in Scotland hear the many voices, all wishing to speak their own truth, and how can we discern it?

“We talk of one narrative but there are many stories of hurt on many sides.

“The complexities are self-evident, the hurts are palpable and the humanity is overwhelming.” ...

**To read the full press release see**

[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/news/2017/moderator\\_pays\\_tribute\\_to\\_jane\\_haining\\_at\\_yad\\_vashem](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/2017/moderator_pays_tribute_to_jane_haining_at_yad_vashem)

## United Nations

### **‘We Are All at Risk’ When Humanity’s Values Are Abandoned, Secretary-General Says in Message for International Day Commemorating Holocaust Victims**

... Today, we remember the 6 million Jewish men, women and children who perished in the Holocaust. Countless others also lost their lives as cruelty convulsed the world.

Yet, decades since the Second World War, we see the persistence of anti-Semitism and an increase in other forms of prejudice. Neo-Nazis and white supremacy groups are among the main purveyors of extreme hatred. And too often, vile views are moving from the margins to the mainstream of societies and politics.

We must stand together against the normalization of hate. Whenever and wherever humanity's values are abandoned, we are all at risk. All of us have a responsibility to quickly, clearly and decisively resist racism and violence. Through education and understanding, we can build a future of dignity, human rights and peaceful coexistence for all.

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sgsm18866.doc.htm>

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## Israel

### Church of Scotland

**See the “Holocaust section” above for a press release about the Church of Scotland Moderator’s visit to Israel.**

### United Nations

#### **UN agency for Palestine refugee launches global funding push after US aid cuts**

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) launched on Monday a global fundraising campaign to sustain resources for its education, health and other assistance programmes.

The campaign follows the announcement by the United States to withhold more than half its funding commitment to the UN agency.

“I wish to confirm to all Palestine refugees that UNRWA schools [...] will remain open [and] health care, and other services will be provided. It is a huge challenge, but it is absolutely imperative,” Pierre Krähenbühl, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, said in Gaza, [launching](#) the campaign, ‘#DignityIsPriceless’.

The UN agency said the reduction in US funding could have a significant impact on the daily lives of millions of vulnerable Palestine refugees across Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza, and the West Bank including East Jerusalem.

It added that basic education for 525,000 boys and girls at over 700 UNRWA schools; emergency food and cash assistance to 1.7 million Palestine refugees; access to primary health care for 3 million refugees, including pre-natal care; and dignity and human security for 5.3 million refugees, have been endangered as result of the limited funding.

The UNRWA chief underscored that the agency’s mandate is “firmly protected” in a UN General Assembly resolution and called on “all people of good will, all institutions, members of the Palestinian diaspora, private companies, and foundations” to extend their support to the campaign.

<https://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58456#.WmdWS5OFgqI>

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## Foreign Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### **Hezbollah**

**Helen Jones (Labour) [123046]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the nature of the links between the political and military wings of Hezbollah; and if she will make a statement.

**Ben Wallace:** The military and political activities of Hizballah are distinct, though links exist between the senior leaders of the political and military wings. The UK proscribed Hizballah's External Security Organisation in March 2001 and in 2008 the proscription was extended to Hizballah's military apparatus.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123046/>

### Hezbollah

**Helen Jones (Labour)** [123048] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what representations she has received on proscribing Hezbollah; and if she will make a statement.

**Ben Wallace:** Hizballah's External Security Organisation was proscribed in March 2001 and in 2008 the proscription was extended to Hizballah's military apparatus including the Jihad Council. I have received representations from Parliamentarians, civil society organisations and members of the public amongst others on whether to extend the proscription of Hizballah to cover the whole organisation.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123048/>

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **Draft Animal Welfare (Sentencing and Recognition of Sentience) Bill**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/666576/draft-animal-welfare-bill-171212.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666576/draft-animal-welfare-bill-171212.pdf)

#### **\*\* European Union (Withdrawal) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/europeanunionwithdrawal.html>

EVEL (English Votes for English Laws) Memorandum

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0005/EU-Withdrawal-bill-EVEL-memorandum-committee-and-report-stage.pdf>

#### **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

#### **Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/organdonationdeemedconsent.html>

### Scottish Parliament

#### **Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Repeal) (Scotland) Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/105269.aspx>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 8 days**

**Draft Animal Welfare (Sentencing and Recognition of Sentience) Bill** (closing date 31 January 2018)

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-health-and-welfare/consultation-on-the-animal-welfare-bill/>

**Introducing 'opt-out' consent for organ and tissue donation in England** (closing date 6 March 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/introducing-opt-out-consent-for-organ-and-tissue-donation-in-england>

**Promoting Organ Donation and Transplantation in Northern Ireland** (closing date 9 March 2018)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/promoting-organ-donation-and-transplantation-northern-ireland>

**Electoral Reform (Scotland)** (closing date 12 March 2018)

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00529431.pdf>

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