

# Political Affairs Digest

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

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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### House of Lords Debate

#### Religious Intolerance and Prejudice

*col 497* **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth (Conservative):** That this House takes note of the challenges posed by religious intolerance and prejudice in the United Kingdom. ...

... arely a month ago, my noble friend Lord Popat—who is not in his place at present—raised a question about what is being done to reassure Jewish communities about anti-Semitism in the United Kingdom. In that debate, we heard many powerful speeches from across this House that brought to light the palpable fear felt by Jewish communities. The message from this Chamber was clear: all Jewish people in the UK today are valued, they are welcome, and they will be protected whatever it takes. ...

*col 498* A deep discussion of religious intolerance and persecution in our country is needed in the light of the increase in religiously motivated hatred. I regularly speak to and receive messages from people of all faiths. They tell me of their anxiety at being subjected to hatred in a country they call home and of which they are proud, at the hate directed towards them and at the persecution directed at other groups. ...

I want to make absolutely clear, as I have stated many times before: any abuse directed at someone because of their religion, race, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender, is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The Government will do whatever it takes to unite our country around these values and to confront those who would deny our fellow countrymen and women these freedoms. ...

*col 499* We are utterly committed to challenging and condemning religious intolerance and persecution in all forms. ... We now have a strong legal framework in place. There are criminal penalties for offences such as incitement to racial, religious or sexual orientation hatred, and racially or religiously aggravated offences such as intentionally causing harassment, alarm or distress. We have increased sentences for offences motivated by prejudice, hostility, or prejudice based on a person's real or perceived race, religion, transgender identity, sexual orientation or disability.

Our work with the cross-government working groups to tackle anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia also continues at pace. ...

We have asked the Law Commission to review the coverage and approach of current hate crime legislative provision. We must be clear: when someone has perpetrated a hate crime, they will be held accountable for it. ...

Sadly, security remains a key concern. The Government have already provided over £2.4

million to increase security provisions for vulnerable places of worship, and in the refresh we have committed further resource for this purpose, to be released next year. ...

*col 500* Our message must be that there is no place for hate in our society, and that is equally true of online hate. ...

... we cannot tackle today's problems without learning from the horrors of the past. In that spirit we are supporting the creation of a national memorial to the Holocaust here at home. Leading British architect Sir David Adjaye has been appointed to design the memorial and learning centre. The ambition is create a world-class memorial in an iconic location, making a bold statement about the importance Britain places on preserving the dreadful memory of the Holocaust. The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, a charity set up by the Government, runs events and programming for Holocaust Memorial Day both locally and nationally, with government funding. ...

In 2017, over 11,000 activities took place around the country to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. It is a real tribute to our communities, and the incredible contribution that people of faith make to their local communities is something I have been honoured to witness first hand. ...

*col 501* Indeed, engagement between faith communities is growing. It is one of our strongest defences against intolerance and persecution. ...

I once again call on everyone, whether they are a member of a faith community or not, to visit their local synagogue, mosque, gurdwara, church and temple. Let them know that you stand with them in good times and difficult times. When people from different backgrounds have the opportunity to mix socially and get to know one another, it breaks down the walls on which intolerance creeps and grows. Enter with an open mind and an open heart to hear about their traditions, and their hopes, and share yours with them. I encourage our places of worship to keep their doors open, reaching out to your local neighbourhoods with everything that they have to offer. ...

It is when we feel the most challenged, and the most afraid, that these encounters are at their most valuable. We must all challenge anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, discrimination against Sikhs, against Hindus—against any racial group—wherever it exists. I am proud of my country, a rich and diverse country which confronts religious hatred and bigotry and must always do so. ... That is the British tradition. ...

*col 502* **Lord Hain (Labour):** ... We have grown used to pogroms against minorities at various stages in our history as a country: against Jews intermittently and sometimes continuously over the millennia; against the Irish in the nineteenth century; against Jews again in the 1930s; against black and Asian Britons from the late 1950s until today; and against Muslims in the first two decades of this century. But what is entirely novel today is a toxic convergence of attacks on Jewish, black and Muslim British citizens all at the same time. I am not aware of any period in our history when this has occurred before. It is deadly serious, with many of our citizens living in fear or terror simply because of their religion, race or skin colour. ...

Let us touch on the sheer scale of the problem, turning first to attacks on Jews and synagogues. The number of anti-Semitic incidents in Britain reached the highest level on record last year, including a 34% increase in the number of violent assaults, according to the Community Security Trust. It stated that in 2017 there were nine incidents involving the, "desecrations of, or anti-Semitic damage to, synagogues", in the UK. In the previous year, there were 11 such incidents. The most recent CST report for the period from January to June 2018 states:

"There were 43 incidents of damage and desecration of Jewish property recorded by CST in the first six months of 2018 ... All involved some element of anti-Semitic targeting, language or imagery in order to be recorded as anti-Semitic by CST".

There have been other attacks on Jewish citizens, including on fellow parliamentarians; notably, Luciana Berger MP has been subject to abuse, intimidation and attacks of the vilest kind, not just by fascists, but, I am ashamed to say by a tiny hard-left sect comprising members of the Labour Party backed up by the far left outside. One shouted

“traitor” at me when I attended the “Stand Up to Anti-Semitism” rally in Parliament Square in the summer. These people seem to imagine they are promoting Palestinian rights by such attacks; as a robust supporter of justice for the Palestinians since the early 1970s, I can tell them flatly that they are damaging, not enhancing, that vital cause—a message that my party leader might heed as well. ...

*col 503* The latest report of the organisation Tell MAMA—Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks—recorded a total of 1,330 reports of Islamophobic attacks in the United Kingdom in 2017, representing a 30% rise when compared to the previous reporting period. ...

Turning to racist activity, in 2017-18, 94,098 hate crime offences were recorded by the police in England and Wales, an increase of 17% on the previous year. Of these, the great bulk—71,251, or 76%—were race hate crimes and 8,336, or 9%, were religious hate crimes. ...

A mosque and a Sikh gurdwara in Leeds were attacked in the early hours of a Tuesday morning in early June in what police treated as hate crimes. ... Councillor Gohar Almas, a local Labour councillor was reported as saying: “Somebody tried to set the mosque and the gurdwara alight. The mosque is bang opposite a primary school. What kind of message is this sending to the children?”

*col 504* One person at the gurdwara spoke of a “sentiment of fear” among people following the attacks ...

The timing was significant ... because these attacks followed Tommy Robinson’s supporters demonstrating in Leeds after he was jailed for breaching a court order. Various fascists had organised protests to defend his so-called free speech. However, as local councillor Gohar Almas said, allowing Nazis free speech is dangerous. He said that the only thing that should not be tolerated is intolerance; spreading hate speech, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and homophobia should not be tolerated. ...

The point I wish to stress is this: violent attacks against our Muslim, Jewish and black citizens flow from far-right mobilisations and far-right activism as night follows day. There is an umbilical link between activity by racist, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic extremists and these sorts of vile attacks. ...

*col 506* **The Archbishop of Canterbury:** ... The rising tide of anti-Semitism, with which I am deeply familiar through work with the Chief Rabbi, and Islamophobia, which we in the Church are deeply familiar with through working with Muslim leaders across the country, are just two illustrations of the narrowing of those who feel truly at home in the UK today. ...

Today’s multifaith society means that we live in a context of diverse religious practice. For some, this is welcome and enriching ... while others find it strange and threatening. ...

I also wonder that, for all our rich Christian heritage in this country, as seen in our laws, practices and many of our values, the breadth of view which we tolerate has become less and less wide. ... There is a long history of Christians disagreeing with each other ... even where I disagree, I want to uphold the right of these people to say things that are neither fashionable nor conventional today. ...

*col 507* Certainly, as a Christian ... I have what some people would call absolute views. But almost every day I meet people who do not share those views. I thank God for those encounters, and for the people themselves, who deepen and enrich my understanding. ... What it means in practice is accepting that the other has as valuable a place as me and is fully part of the national fabric. This may be what is behind the trouble that the noble Lord, Lord Hain, explained so carefully: the sense that the people who are attacked, diminished and marginalised are, in some way, not considered to be fully British. Anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, anti-Hindu, anti-Sikh or other attacks have as a presupposition that only “my sort of person” is welcome here. Those who attack them require not just integration but assimilation, so that no difference is seen, but clearly that is impossible and the prospect of it is diminishing. Most religious belief demands a loyalty beyond country or group — a loyalty to ultimate truth. It says there are absolutes, and we should rejoice at them and listen to the narrative. ...

*col 508* **Lord Mackay of Clashfern (Conservative):** ... Anti-Semitism is a very destructive principle held in the mind, and it would be a great blessing to be able to take it out of people's minds. That is the challenge in which the churches, faith groups and those who have no faith at all but who believe that they are able to influence others should be engaged. Any form of victimisation of a person on account of his or her faith is completely wrong and ought to be pursued with as much strength as civil society and the state can manage. ...

*col 509* Reducing the possibility of children being raised in families with a profound religious faith is a very subtle way of trying to reduce tolerance. I do not understand why that is part of tolerance. ...

*col 510* **Lord Kestenbaum (Labour):** ... I distinctly remember listening to my grandmother's recollections of our terrified family hiding under the bed on Kristallnacht on 9 November 1938, almost exactly 80 years ago—the night my family saw every synagogue in Germany, including their own, the renowned Breuer Synagogue, burn to the ground, and the night that discrimination against Jews became the persecution of Jews. We all know what happened next.

As Europe was poised to exterminate its Jews, thereby committing the greatest crime in all history, my family fled for their lives and, after a circuitous route, arrived in Britain. It was here that as children we Jews learned that the blessing of this country is that it does not expect you to make a choice between loyalty to one's faith and loyalty to the national interest, while both are pursued with dignity. We also learned one more thing: that when a society turns on its Jews—indeed, on any faith group—it is always a sign of wider ill health, as shown so graphically in yesterday's report. ...

... the Jewish community of Great Britain, my community, is witnessing something so improbable and shocking that it defies belief—that is, the emergence of anti-Semitism out of the shadows and from the margins into the political mainstream. For we always knew that, although anti-Semitism has been a constant lurking menace, it can be contained as long as it is never sheltered under the umbrella of political legitimacy. Although this has never been a political fault-line between parties, we have watched with horror as membership of the Labour Party has been infiltrated by those who hate Jews. Its leadership has approached concerns over anti-Semitism in its ranks first with silence, then with denial, then with indignation and, finally, with what felt like grudging, half-hearted attention—to the point at which Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Mirvis, said that the Jewish community and its concerns had been treated with “unprecedented contempt”. ...

... how does it feel to be a Jew in Britain today? My answer, unimaginably, is that we Jews in Britain, for the first time in centuries, feel anxious, uncertain and fearful. ... We see daily the online perverted depictions of Jews—perversions which too often go ignored or unchecked. We see the resurfacing of all the old anti-Semitic tropes—the same obscenities too grotesque to mention—but this time from a place that none of us in this House, on both sides ever, thought possible; it comes from those who call themselves members of the Labour Party. This has left Jews uneasy, unsettled and fearful, not least because the social media revolution has given voice to the most extreme and the most vicious, allowing that hatred to be magnified, multiplied and, too often, unsanctioned. ...

*col 511* But there is one final outrage: a unique phenomenon, which we have never seen in this country, where it is the victim who stands accused rather than the perpetrator. It is too often said that these Jews are exaggerating, fabricating and are in hock to some extreme right-wing press. In those very accusations rest the most potent, toxic and dangerous five words in the English vocabulary: “The Jews are to blame”. Consider the unprecedented act last summer of 68 rabbis right across the community, in good faith and in sorrow, writing a letter to the Labour Party begging it to adopt the conventional definition of anti-Semitism. The online frenzy in response to that called for those rabbis' political allegiances to be scrutinised in search of some kind of conspiracy. ...

When the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury goes out of his way to

meet Chief Rabbi Mirvis at his home on the eve of Jewish new year to express his concerns personally and sincerely, that matters. It felt as if the Archbishop had visited every Jewish home in the country, and that mattered. ...

*col 512* ... we—the people of all faiths and none, and those of all parties and of none—must stand against prejudice, for we are all at risk; we are at risk of our common humanity, of our religious freedoms and, above all, of the society that we know we must build together. ...

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench):** ... Despite everything, the British Jewish community knows very well that the UK is one of the best countries ever in which to be Jewish. At the same time, we know that anti-Semitism is not confined in its effects to this community; if unchecked, it signals a threat to democratic values and opens the door to general extremism. ... What sort of society is this when substantial numbers of Jews—one of the longest-established ethnic minorities—have discussed leaving the country if Jeremy Corbyn were to become Prime Minister? Not only here, but across Europe—especially in Hungary, Poland, Germany, France, Belgium and Sweden—anti-Semitic attacks are on the rise again. Thousands of Jews are emigrating—a massive failure for the European project.

On the far right in Europe, anti-Semitism reflects the past, deeming Jews to be inferior and enemies of the state. On the far left, Jews are associated with power, capitalism and colonialism and are, therefore, enemies of the people. Islamists have religious objections to Jews. This is all historical and religious perversion. ...

For the last few decades, since the communist dream was shattered, the left has been looking for a global cause on which to fixate and found it in Israel. There has been a struggle in the Labour Party ranks for the freedom to depart from the international definition of anti-Semitism in just one respect: the right to call Israel a racist endeavour. If that is the case, and if double standards are outlawed in the IHRA definition, as they should be in political discourse, why are there no marches, no exclusions and no intimidation of students in relation to, say, Pakistan, whose creation as a Muslim state involved the displacement of around 10 million people and the deaths of 1 million? Israeli Apartheid Week, which is in breach of the public sector equality duty placed on universities, continues. Would those universities tolerate, say, a “Pakistan honour killing week”?

*col 513* Of course they would not, because of the effect on students of Pakistani origin. What mass disapproval and protests are there in relation to, Syria, where at least 4,000 Palestinians have died, the occupation of Northern Cyprus, creating a Muslim enclave, again with accompanying deprivation and refugees, or the suppression of the Kurds? Singling out Israel as a racist endeavour in this context is a pretext for undermining the entire state, putting another 6 million people in danger of their lives and attacking the Zionist success and safe haven that is dear to the overwhelming majority of Jews here and worldwide; in other words, it is anti-Semitism. ...

Many students encounter campaigning and debates about Israel and Palestine for the first time at university. The tensions—indeed, violence—surrounding pro-Israel activities on campus has given students a binary and ill-informed view of the Jews and history. Campaigning about Israel’s politics is perfectly legitimate, but free speech does not include hate speech. Universities have a statutory duty to promote harmony between different groups on campus and an academic duty to secure civilised and well-informed debate about all issues. They do not have a licence under law to allow discrimination and harassment. ...

Universities across the UK are pitting Jewish and Muslim students on campus against each other by discriminating against Israeli speakers. Sometimes it is the university administration itself that imposes excessive restrictions and bureaucracy on Israeli speakers while waving anti-Israel speakers through the process with no obstacles. In other cases it is the student union that is culpable of wrongfully promoting Palestinian society events or campaigns, contrary to its charitable status, and neglecting Israeli

society's equal right to student union resources. ...

*col 514* What is to be done? I do not think a Holocaust memorial could do it. The rise of anti-Semitism has gone hand in hand with an increase in the number of Holocaust memorials and learning centres. They do not seem to have the desired effect, especially when placed somewhere where the neighbours, with some justification, are opposed to it. ...

Combating anti-Semitism must start with an acknowledgement that it exists. Educators need to learn and teach about anti-Semitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories. Holocaust education must culminate in the realisation that the virus that led to it has not been killed off, even today. ...

University authorities need training in the topic of anti-Semitism. It is insufficient to deal with diversity issues and non-harassment but to omit this. ...

*col 515* Schoolteachers need more training to deliver a proper Holocaust education in schools, as well as in how to tackle discussions with pupils about the Middle East conflict and prejudice. Indeed, guidance would help other professionals who may find themselves involved—the clergy, social workers, journalists and those charged with rehabilitating prisoners who have been found guilty of hate crimes. ...

*col 516* **Baroness Warsi (Conservative):** ... In 2010, when the coalition Government formed, it shocked me that no formal structure had existed under the last Labour Government to discuss, monitor or challenge Islamophobia. We had no definition, no policy, and no statistics. ...

In 2011, I made a keynote speech in which I spoke about Islamophobia having passed the dinner-table test. It was criticised by large sections of the media ...

*col 517* The anti-Semitism row within the Labour Party has had many facets. It has festered as a sore damaging politics and politicians and it has left a British Jewish community fearful about its space in Britain. We have heard that today. What concerned me most, however, was the way in which many British Jews were not able to determine their destiny. Their concerns about what they experienced—how bigotry felt to them—were simply dismissed. The prevarication about adopting the IHRA definition was the most visible manifestation of that. A community being able to determine its own destiny and set its own standards on how it feels protected must be a given.

However, for British Muslim communities this is not a right we afford them. ... Officialdom, not community, determines who is and is not an acceptable Muslim voice. ... The community, some 3 million-plus strong, is diverse ethnically, theologically and politically. It cannot possibly be represented by a single organisation. No community can. It is why, despite being a community of less than 300,000, the British Jewish community in its Jewish Leadership Council ensures that a wide range of organisations and issues—from the Community Security Trust to the Board of Deputies; from social to political, and domestic to international issues—forms part of the dialogue and engagement with government. ... British Muslims, however, do not have such a privilege. They have much to admire and to learn from the British Jewish community. The JLC, I felt, could be replicated: it was, in the form of the Muslim Leadership Council. It included a wide range of organisations, but the Government refused to engage with it. ...

*col 518* Racism, bigotry and intolerance can come in two forms. I grew up when it was overt: being chased by racists after school and being called the P-word were part and parcel of my growing up. ... But what has concerned me more and more is covert racism, covert discrimination, “respectable” racism—at the dinner table, in the media rooms and among the think tanks and commentators—the dehumanising of a community, the decontextualising of religious texts and lack of collective accountability for the actions of the few. ...

It is not a Muslim problem; it is our problem. ...

*col 519* When I was growing up, there were two conversations that my parents would have. My dad would dream of having a home in the north of Punjab — in the way that many people might dream of having a house in the south of Spain. He felt that he would

“go back home” one day to that beautiful house. My mum on the other hand, being a cynical woman, said, “We don’t need to have a dream of this great house. We need to have the necessity of this house, because the day we have to leave and go back home, we will need a home”. ... Today, in my late 40s, in 2018, it shocks me that I dream my dad’s dream and worry my mum’s worry. ...

**Lord Beith (Liberal Democrat):** ... We think of ourselves today as a free people. Those of us who grew up in the immediate aftermath of World War 2 perhaps naively assumed that, once humankind had seen the horror of the death camps, which were the result of racial and religious intolerance, religious intolerance would be in retreat. After the Holocaust, surely people would see where intolerance would lead. If we assumed that, we were wrong. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance, and vigilant we must now be because intolerance, as several speakers have pointed out, lurks not only on our streets but even in public life, in the form of anti-Semitism, attacks on Muslims, attacks on other religious minorities and challenges to the basic rights of Christians in what, at least historically, is a Christian country. ...

*col 520* ... anti-Semitism is making many in the Jewish community feel more insecure than has been the case for very many years. The Community Security Trust records around 100 anti-Semitic incidents every month—that has gone on since 2016. ...

Christians in our society have also found themselves victims of abuse and hate crimes, and under threat in their employment, in their children’s education or in their business life, particularly if they hold to rigorous principles which they see as the teaching of the Bible, some of which will not be shared by all other Christians. ...

... I see a real danger to free speech and religious tolerance in the misguided attempts to create so-called safe spaces in student unions and university premises. ... The “safe space” doctrine threatens religious discussion and the expression of religious views and destroys the beneficial educational experience of hearing and debating diverse views, which is what life at a university is supposed to embrace.

*col 521* Secondly, we need to be clear that Christianity— and the existence of an established church in England and a national church in Scotland in the form of the Church of Scotland—poses no threat to religious diversity and tolerance. ...

*col 522* **Lord Gadhia (Non-affiliated):** ... In Britain, Hindus provide a role model for how a community can integrate successfully and embrace British values, while retaining its cultural heritage and identity. ...

As somebody who lives in north London and has grown up side by side and in harmony with the Jewish community, who respects and admires its achievements and shares many of the same intrinsic values, it is deeply distressing to witness its anguish at current events—so powerfully articulated by my noble friend Lord Kestenbaum. It is fair to say that British Indians often look to Jewish organisations such as the Board of Deputies, the Jewish Leadership Council or the Community Security Trust as role models for unity of purpose and effective participation in national life. If the British Jewish community is going through such an ordeal, we all need to take heed. ...

*col 523* Secondly, Islamophobia is as unacceptable as anti-Semitism or any other form of religious intolerance. ... It must be the case that elements of Islamophobia have their roots in ignorance about Islam, which better integration could address. The experience of British Hindus demonstrates that it is possible to integrate and still preserve your traditions, values and identity. A diverse society does not mean a divided society. ...

My third point is an issue of significant concern to large sections of the Hindu community: so-called caste legislation. This refers to the attempt to make caste a separately defined aspect of race discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. The concern from Hindus is not about standing up to discrimination—discrimination is totally unacceptable in any form—but about creating caste consciousness where it does not exist and unleashing unintended consequences, when the overwhelming majority of British Hindus have no truck with any historic notions of caste. This is especially true for the current generation, which is blissfully ignorant of it even as an issue. Proceeding with dormant legislation

would be totally disproportionate to the evidence of such cases and would serve to stigmatise Hindus. ...

Caste legislation is to Hindus what the anti-Semitism definition is to Jews. It has totemic significance. ...

**col 525 Lord Pickles (Conservative):** ... The rise in the hate crime figures ... is truly frightening: more than 94,000 incidents, the bulk being of either race crime or religious hatred. They are both shocking and shaming, not just to the Government but to the two Houses of Parliament and British society as a whole. ...

Thinking of those statistics, imagine the pain of a friend, all their friends and family, and the 94,000 people who feel the hurt that persecution causes, and consider the corrosive effect it has on society. The noble Lord, Lord Hain, who is no longer in his place, talked about it being an intolerant time. I have been involved in politics for 50 years, and in fighting racists and anti-Semites for just as long. I have never before experienced more intolerance in politics and society. There is a coarseness in politics. ...

**col 526** I think we are beholden, as politicians—as leaders of society—to speak clearly and robustly against anti-Semitism and any form of prejudice, but to do so in moderate and liberal language. Whether we are politicians or distinguished columnists, we have a duty to ensure that in defending liberal values, we do not speak in illiberal terms. ...

In my maiden speech in this House I talked about the influence of my grandfather Smith, who served in the Royal Navy, and my grandfather Pickles, who served on the Somme. Nobody doubts that those two gentlemen served their time in the War: there is no industry saying that the First World War did not happen, or the Somme did not happen, but there is a whole industry of Holocaust denial, and we remember that the final stage of a genocide is denial.

About a year ago I visited Treblinka, one of the terrible death camps, which was only in existence for about a year and killed almost a million people. Nobody was separated for work; everyone was killed. I took a photograph of the monument, which is quite a moving one, and posted it on Twitter, as we politicians tend to do. Within minutes I received a reply that said, “No-one died at Treblinka, it was a transit camp. There was no death there, and any deaths related to influenza”. ...

**col 527** A number of organisations, including the Holocaust Education Trust, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and the Anne Frank Trust, are doing so much to educate and explain. There has, however, been a growth in casual anti-Semitism. The CST recently found that while hard anti-Semitism was down in single figures, casual anti-Semitism was around 30%. ...

I will now mention the new monument. I raise it here because it relates to anti-Semitism. Most people object to it because they do not want it in that particular place: they are worried about the trees, the grass, the mess—all kinds of things. That is perfectly legitimate. As part of the modern planning process for something like that you have exhibitions and people in to explain what has happened. I will give a sample of what people said: “Just put it near the War Museum, they have space for it. Or better still, somewhere south of the river, where it is more suitable for the people who live around there. Or in north London, where the Jews live”. One said: “Why do I need to be reminded of the bloody Holocaust? I just want to walk my dog in the park; I don’t want to be reminded of the bloody effing Holocaust”. And another said: “You should get all these people who are against Jews and we will see all the bloody Muslims come and protest”. I suppose that is an equal opportunity bigot.

During the exhibition, we heard people say, “Why should we be building a memorial for Jewish people next to the British Parliament”? They then went on to list British subjects, saying that Jewish people were foreigners. One man said that he liked the design and thought we had worked very hard on it, but that it was in the wrong place. He went on to ask, “Why a memorial for them? Why not the Sikhs or the Hindus? Is it because they have so much power and influence in Parliament?”.

These things were said by people at the exhibition to government officials without any

worry. I may have read out just a selection, but that was 25% of the people who commented at the exhibition, which is roughly similar to the CST figure of 30%. ...

*col 528* At a time when parts of Europe are seeking to rewrite history, it is important for us to set a clear example that we will look at our history with an unblinking eye. The real reason it will go there is because it will stand right next to Parliament and remind people, as they leave the monument and look towards Victoria Tower, that this place is a bastion against tyranny. As we look out at the memorial, it will remind both Houses of Parliament that the legislature has a power to protect or to oppress. We will remember that a compliant legislature introduced the Nuremberg laws. It is my sincere hope that we will build a monument of which we will all be proud; we will build a learning centre that will be a beacon to the world. ...

*col 532* **Lord Paton (Conservative):** ...I think we must be very wary of thinking that the situation here is terrible, that there are terrible problems facing the Jews and terrible problems facing the Muslims—which I abhor. ... We also have to be careful not to endlessly extend the margins of victimhood in this era of identity politics. ... There is a danger that we may well, by seeking to be tolerant, become intolerant.

*col 533* I think it is terrible that certain groups in this country do not feel safe and want to leave this country. That said, we have to be robust and not push the frontiers of victimhood too far. My noble friend Lady Warsi talked about casual dinner party conversations: I am now very fearful of the dinner party police perhaps recording what I say and what I think ...

it is clear to me that Christians of all branches in the United Kingdom need to keep on their sense-of-humour armour about the attacks that Christianity sometimes gets, particularly from jokers and stand-up comics. The mass media rather stopped that sort of comic remark about Jews or Muslims, and certainly about Hindus—I have never heard a good joke against or for a Hindu in that respect. ...

What we cannot do is shrug off increasing intolerance towards us. Here, the us I am talking about is the Roman Catholic Church, not any other Christian church in this country. I am entirely talking about intolerance, although I think that a certain amount of intolerance at the moment in our direction is deserved. ...

*col 534* In the UK Church, we have been listening to the outpouring of well-meant, holy apologies, sometimes expressed in somewhat clericalist language, for what has happened to children in this country at the hands of Roman Catholic priests. There have been lots of calls for prayer and fasting—all good stuff—but, of stable-clearing action and prevention plans there has not been very much. No wonder that we Roman Catholics in this country have lost a bit of respect. ...

*col 535* **Lord Triesman (Labour):** ... Ten, maybe even five, years ago I could not have imagined that we would be having this debate, nor felt that it was necessary. ... somehow, we have arrived at a point in this country where these things are manifest and serious. ... It is true from these statistics that some communities in particular have found themselves in the crosshairs of this—the Muslim community, and the Jewish community of which I am part. ...

*col 536* The issues that we have begun to explore today have led the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Cressida Dick ... to indicate the level of work and attention that her force will give to them. I welcome that enormously. Equally, however, I do not wholly buy into the certain amount of complacency shown by the Government when they say this is simply down to increased effectiveness in keeping records. There are very real problems which go beyond police recording; indeed, the Minister made the same point himself, and I am glad that he did. Everybody knows that a great many victims feel that they have to shrug these things off and somehow carry on without reporting anything to anybody. They either see that there is little prospect of action or believe that it has become such a normal part of their lives that they do not report it. ...

Inaction has allowed anti-Semitism to fester in the Labour Party, and the serried ranks of bigots, who are waiting for action to be taken, see that it somehow never matures. In

these cases leadership rarely says the right things, and it appears that in my party it does not do the right things. Above all, for me it is what you do rather than what you say that tells people who you are and what your values are. A Labour MP who can walk around a difficult and tough constituency in the north-west without any kind of police escort or protection cannot walk through the Labour Party conference without police protection. That is a fundamental, visible example of a significant problem. ...

col 537 ... it is not always about Israel and Palestine—in fact, that is unusual. The thing which apparently I do, and which people know about me without ever asking my view, is that I use whatever authority I have to prop up my friends the Rothschilds and George Soros to make sure that the secret network which makes so much money for that part of the community is intact. One could have heard it in the 1930s of course, and we are hearing it again now. ...

I do not think people's fears are fanciful. My late father used to keep a packed suitcase—a bit like the parents of the noble Baroness, Lady Warsi—because he thought things would probably go wrong in this country. I always thought that was crazy but I am now beginning to see things which appear to be going very wrong. Any number of my friends and relatives are beginning to plan their departures to various places ... I could not have imagined that this would happen in my lifetime. ...

col 539 **Lord Morrow (DUP):** ... over recent years, police forces have been required to disaggregate hate crime data by faith. This should allow for a better understanding of the trends of hate crime perpetrated against different religious groups and ensure a more targeted approach in addressing such crimes. However, an article published in the *Spectator* in March 2017 casts considerable doubt on whether that is actually happening. The article reports on freedom of information requests by Hardeep Singh. Col col 540 The results reveal some striking problems in the recording of hate crime incidents. While in 2016 there were 1,227 recorded Islamophobic incidents, in 57 of these recorded cases the victim had never been contacted. In 86 cases the religion of the victim was unknown. Information on another 85 cases was recorded as blank. The article further indicated that the cases of 19 Hindus, 11 atheists, 39 Christians, four Sikhs, two Greek Orthodox, two Jews and two Roman Catholics were recorded as Islamophobic, rather than as hate crime targeting the relevant religions. ...

Attacks on Christian places of worship appear to be on the increase. ...

In coming to terms with the significance of these attacks, it is important to consider not only their effect on places of worship—that is, the damage to the building and religious items—but the adverse effects on people who attend places of worship. A significant number of attacks on Christian places of worship might have a detrimental and chilling effect on people going to such places. If these criminal activities are not adequately investigated and prosecuted, it is likely that this impunity will encourage further attacks. ...

col 542 **Lord Desai (Labour):** ... we can overcome intolerance but it takes a lot of effort on the part of everybody—it is not just the Government's job. It is also the job of social organisations and of volunteers. ...

Of course, the social media exaggerate all of this. What people used to say in private meetings or in the pub is now broadcast all over the world because they can use Twitter. Everyone knows, and of course they can remain anonymous in their abuse, which gives it more power. We need to find out what the social and political roots of intolerance are and why it has moved on from racial prejudice to religious prejudice. This phenomenon is unusual and I agree with speakers who have said that for the first time, many Jewish families are asking whether they feel they can go on living in this country. ...

col 543 One of the strangest facts is that the Abrahamic faiths have hated each other for longer than anyone can remember. The roots of anti-Semitism are in the Christian tradition. Everyone now talks about the Judaeo-Christian faith, but we know that they did not do so until after 1945. Today there is a battle between Judaism and Islam. I remember that after the 9/11 crisis Tony Blair said that we are all children of Abraham. I

said, “Include me out. ...” There is a tradition of religious hatred within the Abrahamic trinity and we also need to find out why that has been the case for a long time. ...

**Lord Suri (Conservative):** ... Hatred of Muslims is nothing new, but under the new leadership of UKIP, there appears to be a renewed attempt to push it into the mainstream. Tommy Robinson has repeatedly called for actual violence against Muslims, but when he is invited on to news programmes he is not challenged hard enough on his past statements. Giving racists a platform on respectable channels legitimises their points of view and helps them spread their hatred through the internet. ...

*col 544* ... Across the hard left, anti-Semitism also seems to be making a comeback. Labour’s summer of denying the full International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism gave succour to extremists who would use the actions of the Israeli state to attack and demonise British Jews who have no part in the conflict in the Middle East. Sadly, the leader of the Opposition in the other place has a long history of these statements. Repeatedly, he has blamed Israel for events that are not directly attributable to it, and has long associated with those who have made anti-Semitic comments. His comment that some British Zionists did not understand English irony despite, “having lived in this country for a very long time, probably all their lives”, was worrying and ought to be condemned by all right-thinking people. There is nothing wrong with criticism of Israel’s actions, and a robust debate is part of a healthy civic society; but the tone and actions of the Labour leadership have created a climate of fear for British Jews. ...

*col 545* **Lord Singh of Wimbledon (Crossbench):** ... I read the Government’s half-time review of their hate crime strategy and find it disappointing in that it completely fails to address the underlying causes of hate crime—for much of this evening, we have done the same—and, while repeatedly addressing the concerns of the Abrahamic faiths, virtually ignores the equally real suffering of other faiths. ...

There are no comparative statistics on hate crimes suffered by different religions to justify partiality. Figures presented to justify additional resources for the Jewish and Islamic faiths come from those communities. ...

Many of the hate crimes described as Islamophobic are directed against Sikhs out of ignorance or mistaken identity. ...

I do not in any way begrudge the protection that Jews and Muslims receive against hate crime. The Jewish community has suffered grievously from anti-Semitism, and Muslims are suffering hate crime today. ... All I ask is that the Government are a little more even-handed to non-Abrahamic faiths in both policies and resourcing. ...

*col 546* It is equally important that we look openly and honestly at prejudice embedded in religion. ...

This bigotry of belief is widespread and is often found in religious texts. ...

Today, despite all the lip service paid to interfaith understanding, there is virtually no dialogue between faiths to explore and understand their different religious teachings, with each remaining smug in its beliefs. I have been a member of the government-funded Inter Faith Network of the UK since it was founded in 1987 and am a member of other bodies committed to religious dialogue. Meetings rarely go beyond pious statements and academic discussions on safe peripheral concerns, with members going back to their congregations to stress the exclusivity and superiority of their teachings. ...

*col 547* **Lord Cormack (Conservative):** ... I go into [Lincoln] cathedral and ... see the most moving thing of all ... the shrine of Little St Hugh. Until the last century the story was told of how Hugh, a little gentile boy, wandered into the Jewish quarter of Lincoln. ... The little boy did not re-emerge, and the story was told that he had been set upon and murdered by the Jewish community. Many of them perished because of that. This was an early example of anti-Semitism, and within a few decades the Jews had been expelled from England by Edward I. They did not return until the time of Oliver Cromwell ...

*col 548* That early example of anti-Semitism should bring us all up sharp. Only about 30 years ago the Chief Rabbi, I think—it was certainly a very senior rabbi—came to Lincoln

and, in a very moving ceremony, a plaque was put up that ended with the word “Shalom”, indicating that this was a deed of which we should all be ashamed. You cannot apologise for what other people did centuries ago, but you can deeply regret it and feel ashamed of it. ...

**col 551 Lord Griffiths of Burry Port (Labour):** ... How can it be otherwise: a country such as ours, which has had a long imperial past, subjugating so many parts of the world to our rule and keeping the “race problem” at bay because it was all overseas, and yet germinating the seeds of attitudes towards those whom we governed? How could it be that embedded deep in our psyches is anything other than something that can flourish as a racial question of one kind or another? How can it be that I, as a Christian, can be part of a faith that, during the 2,000 years of its history, has significantly and continuously persecuted, stigmatised, marginalised or ghettoised the Jews? How could it be that I should be surprised to find within myself something that could become hateful and odious? The indigenous population has to understand that it may be germinating the problem, rather than focusing on minority groups as if, in some way, they are the problem. ...

**col 558 Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** ... I accept that political action is needed in all parties on behalf of all individuals, and we all have a responsibility to step up to the plate. It sticks in my craw that my fellow countrymen and women fear the tap on the shoulder and have a packed suitcase ready. Many across different faiths worry that they are not welcome in their own country—a country they were not born to but have lived in and a country they love. This is frankly outrageous and not acceptable. As politicians—whether it is Boris Johnson, Jeremy Corbyn or anybody else—we have a responsibility to provide leadership across the country, because such a situation is fundamentally wrong and totally contrary to what makes this country great, and we must not tolerate it. Indeed, we will not tolerate it. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-10-17/debates/FC5A8FC0-FAFF-435B-B9E5-C5DBFB16465D/ReligiousIntoleranceAndPrejudice>

## House of Commons Oral Answer

### Prime Minister's Questions

**Q3 Alex Norris (Labour Co-op):** Yesterday, Nottingham Citizens published a report on hate crime in our schools, which it highlighted as a growing issue. I was particularly struck by the lack of awareness among the children who were surveyed of what actually constitutes a hate crime. We have failed those children by not yet properly arming them with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to thrive in this challenging world. Will the Prime Minister meet me, and a delegation of young people from my city, to discuss how to change that? [907107]

**The Prime Minister:** The hon. Gentleman has raised a very important issue about hate crime, and we have been taking a number of steps over recent years. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has published an updated action plan, and I suggest that the hon. Gentleman and those young people meet the Home Secretary to discuss how that action plan can help to address the issues raised.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-10-17/debates/6A796B16-4B20-4822-B244-9FD46D22DEFD/Engagements#contribution-A627848C-E073-445E-8FCE-B0B362BC90D6>

## Welsh Government

**Welsh Government confirms it has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism including all eleven examples**

**Carwyn Jones, First Minister:** On 16 May 2017, I announced that the Welsh Government had adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition. I think it is important to confirm that, in adopting the IHRA definition, we included the eleven examples from the outset, in full and without qualification. I also want to provide an update on the actions we have taken in the past year to demonstrate the Welsh Government's commitment to tackling antisemitism. ...

I want to make it absolutely clear that antisemitism in any form will not be tolerated.

The IHRA definition, including the eleven examples, will help all organisations and bodies in Wales to understand and recognise contemporary antisemitism. This will help to ensure that fewer perpetrators get away with being antisemitic. The four police forces in Wales are already using the definition.

To further embed the use of the definition within Welsh Government and to encourage its adoption and use by key partners, we have:

- arranged training about anti-Semitism for Welsh Government officials, principally for those working in roles relating to equality and community cohesion. This training was delivered by an experienced equality trainer with long personal involvement with the Jewish community in Cardiff. The training, which has also been offered to external stakeholders, included a focus on the IHRA definition of antisemitism;
- arranged for a Holocaust survivor with strong Welsh connections, to give a talk to Welsh Government officials on 25th September 2018. This arises from the work in Wales of the Holocaust Education Trust, which is supported by the Welsh Government;
- ensured that our work in tackling hate crime includes a clear focus on antisemitism. This work is co-ordinated by our Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board which had a full discussion on antisemitic hate crime in April 2017, including a presentation from the Community Security Trust, a charity which provides advice and protection for Jewish communities in the UK. The Board noted Welsh Government's decision to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism and encouraged partners to include messages against antisemitism, both during Hate Crime Week and in their year-round communications. For example, the Welsh Government used Twitter to draw attention to the IHRA definition during Equalities Week 2017;
- worked with Victim Support Cymru, who manage the All Wales Hate Crimes and Incidents Reporting Centre, which is funded by the Welsh Government, to ensure that their recording system is able to flag antisemitic hate crimes and incidents.
- The Welsh Government is committed to encouraging victims of antisemitism to report it. We are working hard with our partners to protect and support victims of antisemitic abuse and violence and hold perpetrators to account.

The Welsh Government is determined to ensure that Wales continues to be a friendly and tolerant place to live, study and work; a country where antisemitism has no place.

<https://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2018/wgconfirmsadoptionihradefantism/?lang=en>

## Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

**More faith and belief groups to join the National Service of Remembrance**

Seven more faith and belief groups are to be permanently represented during the

National Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph from this year ...

Jains, Zoroastrians and Copts are among those faiths and beliefs that will now take part in this country's greatest service to remember and honour the heroes of our past – making the National Service of Remembrance more reflective of modern Britain.

The addition of several smaller faith communities like Mormons, Baha'is and Spiritualists, will reflect the significant but little-known contribution made by minority ethnic communities to Britain's war efforts.

It also sends a strong signal throughout Britain and the world that this country values the contribution of its diverse communities. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-faith-and-belief-groups-to-join-the-national-service-of-remembrance>

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## Holocaust

### House of Commons Library

**Briefing Paper: The Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects)(Amendment) Bill 2017-19**

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8409/CBP-8409.pdf>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Oral Answer

#### Prime Minister's Questions

**Q6. Alistair Carmichael (Liberal Democrat):** The Bedouin community of Khan al-Ahmar in the occupied Palestinian territories faces imminent demolition and is currently being swamped with sewage from the nearby settlement of Kfar Adumim. Just this morning Israeli forces have tasered and pepper-sprayed activists there. Will the Prime Minister make it clear to the Prime Minister of Israel that this is occupied territory, that these are refugees—protected people whose forcible removal would constitute, as the United Nations has stated, a war crime? [907110]

**The Prime Minister:** My right hon. Friend the Minister for the Middle East met the Israeli ambassador on 11 October. He made clear the UK's deep concerns about Israel's planned demolition of the village of Khan al-Ahmar. Its demolition would be a major blow to the prospect of a two-state solution with Jerusalem as a shared capital, and I once again call on the Israeli Government not to go ahead with its plan to demolish the village, including its school, and displace its residents.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-10-17/debates/6A796B16-4B20-4822-B244-9FD46D22DEFD/Engagements#contribution-8E7C5614-B652-45D0-812F-5B5ED0FDE4D4>

## United Nations

**West Bank: 'imminent' demolition of Palestinian village could be 'war crime' – ICC Prosecutor**

The Prosecutor mandated to oversee the Occupied Palestinian Territory for the

International Criminal Court (ICC) [stated](#) on Wednesday that her office is keeping “a close eye” on the planned demolition of a Palestinian village in the West Bank by Israeli authorities, warning that, according to international law, it could constitute a “war crime”. “I have been following with concern the planned eviction of the Bedouin community of Khan al-Ahmar, in the West Bank,” said Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda, noting that “evacuation by force now appears imminent” and could result in “further escalation and violence”.

Approximately 190 herders, half of whom are children, live in Khan al-Ahmar, a village located in the outskirts of East Jerusalem. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the village is one of dozens affected by an Israeli settlement reorganization plan that would create a continuous built-up area from East Jerusalem to Jericho.

“The problem if it happens in all of these [villages], is that then the contiguity and the possibility of a two-State solution will be challenged because the West Bank will be cut in half,” Jamie McGoldrick, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator explained to UN News ...

“It bears recalling, as a general matter,” said the ICC Prosecutor, “that extensive destruction of property without military necessity and population transfers in an occupied territory constitute war crimes under the Rome Statute.”

According to OCHA’s latest [Protection of Civilians report](#), over 300 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in 2018 alone.

Ms. Bensouda reminded all parties that the situation remains under preliminary examination by her Office, mandated with conducting independent and impartial preliminary examinations, investigations and prosecutions of the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and aggression.

“I continue to keep a close eye on the developments on the ground and will not hesitate to take any appropriate action, within the confines of the independent and impartial exercise of my mandate under the Rome Statute, with full respect for the principle of complementarity,” she stated.

The complementarity principle on which the ICC is based entails that the ICC can only investigate and prosecute core international crimes when national jurisdictions are unable or unwilling to do so genuinely.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/10/1023381>

### **State of Palestine to Gain Enhanced Rights, Privileges in General Assembly Work, Sessions When It Assumes 2019 Group of 77 Chairmanship**

The General Assembly decided today to provide additional rights and privileges of participation to the State of Palestine when it assumes its position as chair of the “Group of 77” developing countries and China for the year 2019. ...

These include the right to make statements, submit proposals and amendments and introduce them on behalf of the Group; to co-sponsor proposals and amendments; and to raise procedural motions, among other rights.

Aware that the State of Palestine is a full member of the League of Arab States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Group of Asia-Pacific States and the Group of 77, the Assembly also requested the Economic and Social Council and other relevant organs, specialized agencies, organizations and entities within the United Nations system to apply the above-mentioned modalities for the duration of the State of Palestine’s chairmanship of the Group of 77.

“Today’s vote represents multilateralism at its best,” said the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine, who spoke after the draft’s adoption. The State of Palestine will “spare no effort to prove worthy of this trust in its capacity to represent and defend the interests of the Group of 77”, he said, adding that his delegation will engage constructively with all partners to “advance cooperation and mutually beneficial agreements for the common good of humanity”.

Representatives of Israel and the United States took the floor ahead of the vote to voice

their opposition to the draft.

The speaker for Israel said the Group of 77 is an important player in the development sphere of the United Nations and warned the Assembly that the resolution before it “only serves the interests of one delegation”. ...

For his part, the representative of the United States said his country does not recognize that there is a Palestinian State and therefore strongly opposes this decision to make Palestine the Chair of the Group of 77. ...

Speaking after the text’s adoption, the representatives of Germany, Netherlands and United Kingdom said they voted in favour of the draft to enable the State of Palestine to carry out its duties as Chair of the Group of 77 while also stressing their vote did not construe recognition of a Palestinian State. “The only way to give the Palestinian people the State they deserve and the Israelis the peace they are entitled to is through a negotiated two-State solution,” said the representative of the United Kingdom. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/ga12078.doc.htm>

**Chair of the Group of 77 for 2019 (A/73/L.5)**

<http://undocs.org/A/73/L.5>

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## Other Relevant Information

### Hope Not Hate

**Fear, Hope & Loss: Understanding the Drivers of Hope and Hate**

<https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/FINAL-VERSION.pdf>

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

### UK Parliament

**Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/holocaustreturnofculturalobjectsamendment.html>

**Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

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

**Online Forums Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.html>

**Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill**

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

### Scottish Parliament

**Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**Reform of the legal requirements for divorce** (closing date 10 December 2018)

<https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/reform-of-the-legal-requirements-for-divorce/>

**The future of civil partnership in Scotland** (closing date 21 December 2018)

<https://consult.gov.scot/family-law/the-future-of-civil-partnership-in-scotland/>

**\*\* 2021 Census: Outputs Strategy Consultation for Northern Ireland** (closing date 9 January 2019)

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/dfp/2021-census-outputs-strategy-consultation-for-northern-ireland-document.pdf>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438