

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

Contents

Home Affairs

Holocaust

Israel

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Home Affairs

House of Commons Written Answer

Hate Crime and Radicalism: Internet

Lucy Powell (Labour Co-op) [199414] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding the Government has provided to organisations tackling online extremism and hate crime in each of the last five years.

Victoria Atkins: Over the last five years the Government has committed to funding a range of organisations tackling online extremism and hate crime.

This has included: over £450k to MOPAC for a London Hate Crime Hub through the Police Innovation Fund; £200k for the first year of the police National Online Hate Crime Hub which went live in January 2018; alongside £100k to the Police to support the TrueVision website for hate crime reporting. As part of the response to online extremism under the Counter Extremism Strategy, we have provided £272,419 in grant funding for Civil Society Organisations through the Building a Stronger Britain Together Programme.

There has also been funding to tackle broader issues than online extremism and hate which would have benefit for both issues. For example, over £1.8m funding to tackle online harassment through the Office for Students.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-05/199414/>

Information about the Building a Stronger Britain Together Programme can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-a-stronger-britain-together>

TOP

Holocaust

House of Commons Written Answers

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [203297] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to page 11 of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation consultation document, published in September 2015, what the

fourth central London site was that had been subject to discussions.

Jake Berry: The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation's document published in September 2015 invited suggestions of sites suitable for the Memorial and Learning Centre. The discussions referred to on page 11 of that document were held in confidence and concerned a site that subsequently became unavailable.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203297/>

The consultation document referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/459046/National_Memorial_and_Learning_Centre.pdf

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [203298] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what the property was in Millbank that was offered to the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation as a site for the Holocaust Learning Centre in late 2016; and for what reasons the offer was not taken up.

Jake Berry: Millbank Tower was considered as a possible site for the Memorial and Learning Centre. The proposal was tied to the development of the wider site: to date, there is no evidence of redevelopment coming forward and occupational office leases have now been extended to 2022. Victoria Tower Gardens was preferred by the UKHMF Board as the outstanding candidate site for the following reasons:

- its relevance as a commemorative garden of Britain's national conscience, already containing significant memorial sculptures, marking momentous historic events, with significance for the struggle for human rights, that remain relevant today and will do so in the future;
- it provides an iconic location adjoining Parliament, sitting along the riverfront immediately next to the House of Lords;
- it is visually prominent and adjacent to one of the most visited parts of London, within easy reach of a major tube station and many bus routes;
- the resonance of being next to Parliament and on the timeless banks of the Thames is exceptional; and
- under the shadow of Victoria Tower, the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre would question the impacts of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides on our own Parliament.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203298/>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [203299] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to his Answer of October 2017 to Question 106036, if he will place in the Library a list of (a) the almost 50 sites considered for the UK Holocaust Memorial and (b) the dates on which each of those sites was proposed to the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation.

Jake Berry: To release the information requested could prejudice the commercial interests of the sites' owners.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203299/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-10-06/106036/>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [203300] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing,

Communities and Local Government, if he will place in the Library the minutes of UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation meetings; and for what reason those minutes have not been published to date.

Jake Berry: The minutes are the property of the Foundation which is an independent advisory body.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203300/>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [203301] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to his Answer of 6 November 2017 to Question 111730, on what date the Government announced that it had decided that the Holocaust Learning Centre would be co-located in Victoria Tower Gardens with the Holocaust Memorial; and what form that announcement took.

Jake Berry: On 14 September 2016 a press release from the Department of Communities and Local Government and the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation announced the start of an architectural design competition for the new Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens. The press release explained that design teams were invited to submit initial expressions of interest in the project, with shortlisted teams then submitting 2-part designs, the first fulfilling the minimum commitment of a striking new national memorial, and the second including the below-ground learning centre to be taken forward subject to technical, financial, planning or other constraints.

Following the successful conclusion of the design competition, a further press release on 24 October 2017 announced that Adjaye Associates, Ron Arad Architects and the landscape architects Gustafson Porter + Bowman had been selected to design the UK's new Holocaust Memorial and a co-located Learning Centre.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203301/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-06/111730/>

The September 2016 press release referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/international-design-competition-opens-for-new-uk-holocaust-memorial-beside-parliament>

The October 2017 press release referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/adjaye-associates-and-ron-arad-architects-win-uk-holocaust-memorial-international-design-competition>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [203302] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment the Government has made of the potential effect of the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre on the trees in Victoria Tower Gardens.

Jake Berry: Arboricultural experts have been commissioned and their detailed advice has ensured that designs for the Memorial take full account of the valuable trees in Victoria Tower Gardens. Improved drainage and surface permeability, especially in the hard landscaping and paths, will create a healthier environment for the trees.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203302/>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [203303] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what role the Royal Parks will have in the selection of the design of the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre to be put forward for planning permission.

Jake Berry: The Royal Parks has had no role in the selection of the design. The Royal Parks will be consulted as part of the independent planning process.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203303/>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [203304] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, which body will have responsibility for maintaining the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre once that centre is built.

Jake Berry: We propose to establish a new arm's length body to construct the Memorial and Learning Centre and to prepare for its operation. Further consideration will be given to the long-term status of the operating body prior to opening.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203304/>

House of Lords Written Answer

Imperial War Museum: Finance

Baroness Deech (Crossbench) [HL12316] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will maintain current levels of grant-in-aid to the Imperial War Museum Holocaust Exhibition after the construction of the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

Lord Ashton of Hyde: As an Arm's Length Body of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, Imperial War Museums receives annual Grant-in-Aid funding to carry out a number of objectives, including securing free access to their permanent collections, of which the Holocaust Gallery forms a part. Museums themselves determine how best to allocate Grant-in-Aid across their organisations in addition to self-generated funding. The Government has committed funding in the current Spending Review period. Future funding decisions will be made at the next comprehensive spending review.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-12-14/HL12316/>

TOP

Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

European Union: Treaties

Chuka Umunna (Labour) [200630] To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with reference to the more than 750 agreements with more than 168 countries in which the UK participates as an EU member, how many agreements the EU has informed third countries the UK is to continue participating in during the transition period; how many countries have agreed to each of those more than 750 agreements; what oversight the UK has of that process; and whether the Government is taking steps to secure agreement on rolling over those deals with those countries.

Kwasi Kwarteng: We value our international agreements and want to continue to cooperate in key global issues such as air services, trade, climate change, international development and nuclear cooperation. We have agreed with the EU that they will notify treaty partners that, during the implementation period, the UK is to be treated as a Member State for the purposes of its international agreements. This approach provides a basis for continuity across all relevant agreements.

A number of third countries (including Canada, Chile, Israel, Switzerland, South Africa, and Singapore) have welcomed the focus on delivering continuity into the implementation period. Countries are understandably waiting for the notification to be issued by the EU before they are able to confirm their clear agreement, and we are continuing to engage with them.

We are also engaging with our international partners in order to put in place arrangements that will come into force following the implementation period, and are making good progress with this work.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-10/200630/>

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Sammy Wilson (DUP) [202743] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what sums her Department has disbursed in aid to the Palestinian Authority in each of the last five years.

Alistair Burt: Figures for UK overseas aid spending are published annually in the 'Statistics for International Development' reports (SIDs), and are reported by calendar year. A summary of financial support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) in each of the last five years is provided below. Figures for 2018 have not yet been published. Further detail can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-international-development>

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Amount in £millions (to the nearest £million)	£42m	£34m	£25m	£0m	£45m

Source: Statistics for International Development

Note: The 2017 figure represents the combined total of two payments made in separate financial years, one before April 2017 (£25m) and the other after April 2017 (£20m).

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-17/202743/>

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Sammy Wilson (DUP) [202745] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the Palestinian Authority is breaking any conditions attached to the delivery of aid by the UK.

Alistair Burt: The UK's financial support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the UK and the PA. This MoU includes a commitment to the UK's partnership principles, and is reviewed on an annual basis. At the last review in May 2018, DFID assessed that the PA continued to demonstrate commitment to these shared principles. The next full annual assessment will take place in 2019.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-17/202745/>

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Sammy Wilson (DUP) [202748] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department has investigated allegations that UK aid has been

used to purchase school books encouraging Palestinian children to sacrifice their lives in the name of religion.

Alistair Burt: No UK aid is used to fund the purchasing of school textbooks in the OPTs. UK aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA) is used exclusively to pay the salaries of teachers, doctors and other public servants working in the health and education sectors. Our money goes into a special, dedicated bank account before being paid to individuals who have been vetted in advance. Independent auditors then check that the money paid out of the UK dedicated bank account goes only to these vetted individuals after every disbursement.

The UK government is deeply concerned about the findings of a report into the PA's new curriculum conducted by IMPACT-se. It is a priority for DFID to commission an independent review of the PA's textbooks. We are also continuing to raise our concerns about incitement, which I did myself at a meeting with the Palestinian Education Minister earlier this year. Earlier this month, DFID officials met the PA Education Minister and raised UK concerns over specific examples in the textbooks.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-17/202748/>

The report referred to above can be read at

http://www.impact-se.org/wp-content/uploads/The-New-PA-2018-Curriculum_Grades-1-12.pdf

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Sammy Wilson (DUP) [202749] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department has audited the expenditure of Overseas Development Assistance by the Palestinian Authority.

UK officials safeguard and continuously monitor the expenditure of UK aid in the

Alistair Burt: Occupied Palestinian Territories. This includes our support to the Palestinian Authority, which is channelled through the EU Palestinian-European Socio-Economic Management Assistance Mechanism (PEGASE). Our money goes into a special, dedicated bank account before being paid to individuals who have been vetted in advance. Independent auditors then check that the money paid out of the UK dedicated bank account only goes to these vetted individuals after every disbursement. We remain confident that these measures enable us to adequately monitor and evaluate our support to the Palestinian Authority.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-17/202749/>

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Gaza

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL12268] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the destruction of farmland and crops in Gaza by Israeli settlers.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, as there are no Israeli settlers in the Gaza Strip. Israel dismantled all their settlements in the Gaza Strip in 2005.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-12-12/HL12268/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL12269] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the ruling by the Israeli High Court of Justice on 26 November to classify methods used by Israeli intelligence officers against a Palestinian

prisoner as enhanced interrogation rather than torture.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not made any assessment of this issue.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-12-12/HL12269/>

West Bank: Sewage

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL12271] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about the contamination of schools and communities in the West Bank with sewage, reportedly dumped by Israeli settlers.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities, we have made clear to the Israeli authorities our concerns about the humanitarian and environmental impact of the damage to water sources and the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land that has been caused by settlement-related activity. We condemn the destruction of Palestinian property and have called on the Israeli authorities to cease such activity.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-12-12/HL12271/>

Jerusalem: Evictions

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL12272] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about plans to evict residents of the villages of Silwan and Batn al-Hawa in East Jerusalem following the decision by the Israeli High Court of Justice to refuse those residents' petition and instead refer that petition to the Jerusalem Magistrates Court.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly make clear our serious concerns about the situation in East Jerusalem to the Israeli authorities, both bilaterally and in co-operation with EU partners. We supported an EU statement on 24 November raising concerns over recent developments which could lead to the eviction of Palestinians from Silwan. Officials from our Consulate-General in Jerusalem and Embassy in Tel Aviv routinely meet Palestinians at risk of eviction from their homes, most recently visiting families in the East Jerusalem neighbourhoods of Sheikh Jarrah and Batn al-Hawa on 13 December.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-12-12/HL12272/>

The statement referred to above can be read at

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/54380/statement-spokesperson-latest-demolitions-and-israeli-settlement-plans_gl

TOP

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>

Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill

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

Scottish Parliament

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill

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

TOP

Consultations

** new or updated today

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>

Islamophobia (closing date 11 January 2018)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2017/islamophobia-call-for-further-evidence-17-19/>

Connected communities – Tackling loneliness and social isolation (Wales) (closing date 15 January 2019)

<https://beta.gov.wales/connected-communities-tackling-loneliness-and-social-isolation>

The Macpherson Report: Twenty Years On (closing date 16 January 2019)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/macpherson-report-twenty-years-on-inquiry-17-19/>

Extremism in England and Wales (closing date 31 January 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/extremism-in-england-and-wales-call-for-evidence>

Racial harassment in higher education (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/racial-harassment-higher-education-our-inquiry>

Draft guidance to challenge bullying in schools [Wales only] (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://beta.gov.wales/draft-guidance-challenge-bullying-schools>

One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here (closing date 24 February 2019)

<https://consult.gov.scot/hate-crime/consultation-on-scottish-hate-crime-legislation/>

**** Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission – Draft Strategic Plan 2019-22**

(closing date 15 March 2019)

<http://www.nihrc.org/news/detail/ni-human-rights-commission-draft-strategic-plan-2019-2022-consultation>

TOP

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