

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

Females: Antisemitism

Paula Sherriff (Labour) [210562] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to tackle antisemitism against women.

Heather Wheeler: The Government was pleased to support the Sara Conference in November 2018. The conference focused specifically on the intersectionality between antisemitism and sexism, looking particularly at the experience of Jewish women in public life. The conference brought together an excellent cross-section of policy makers, academics, and other experts, and set the agenda for what key organisations in this regard, such as the Antisemitism Policy Trust, will do going forward. The Government will continue to work closely with the Antisemitism Policy Trust, to understand this specific threat and to support their work.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-21/210562/>

Females: Judaism

Paula Sherriff (Labour) [210563] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Sara conference of 26 November 2018, what plans his Department has to encourage more Jewish women to participate in public life.

Heather Wheeler: The Government was pleased to support the Sara Conference in November 2018. It was an important platform for policy-makers, public figures, and experts to discuss the intersectionality between antisemitism and sexism, and an important start to understanding how antisemitic abuse targeted at women can be tackled. The conference set the future direction for organisations dedicated to this issue, such as the Antisemitism Policy Trust. We will continue to work closely with the Antisemitism Policy Trust as they develop this important work and encourage women to enter public life.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-21/210563/>

Religion: Community Relations

Paula Sherriff (Labour) [210564] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, how much funding her Department has allocated to interfaith projects in each of the last three years.

Victoria Atkins: The Government Equalities Office has not allocated any funding to interfaith projects during the last three years.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-21/210564/>

Faith Schools: Admissions

Vernon Coaker (Labour) [210470] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to promote inclusivity in religiously selective schools; and if he will make a statement.

Anne Milton: Like all schools, those with a designated religious character are required by law, and for academies, through their funding agreement, to promote inclusivity through supporting integration and community cohesion whatever their character and ethos. They are also required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and to promote fundamental British values, including mutual respect and tolerance of those of other faiths and beliefs.

We know that the vast majority of schools with a religious character are open and inclusive. We believe that the broad religious literacy, which most promote, is helpful in giving students what they need to navigate our multicultural society.

In its response to the “Schools that work for everyone” consultation, the department announced the retention of the 50% cap on faith admissions in faith free schools. We also announced strengthened expectations on integration to ensure that the potential impact on the intake of neighbouring schools is assessed, before a new school is approved.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-21/210470/>

The UK Government response referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706243/Schools_that_work_for_everyone-Government_consultation_response.pdf

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Holocaust

House of Commons Debate

Holocaust Memorial Day

col 378 **Ian Austin (Labour):** ... Right at the outset, I want to pay tribute to the Holocaust Educational Trust and the brilliant work its fantastic team do to teach young people about what can happen if hatred and racism become acceptable. Thanks to their hard work and Government grants—launched in 2006 and continued, I am delighted to say, by every Government since—the trust takes two students from every sixth form in the country to Auschwitz-Birkenau. ...

There is a particular group of people to whom I want to pay tribute today: the survivors ... who all spend so much of their time travelling around the country to tell communities like ours where racism and prejudice can lead. I think it is extraordinary that these heroes, many of them now in their late 80s and 90s, use their direct personal experience of these terrible events to help us build stronger communities and a more tolerant, united country.

I am sure everybody here will want to salute them and pay tribute to them all. ...

col 379 Last year, I spent a week touring Poland with a brilliant project called March of the Living ... We visited the sites of ghettos and concentration camps, before marching—thousands of us—from Auschwitz to Birkenau, but I will never forget visiting Belzec. It is a tiny site, about as big as two football pitches, where hundreds of thousands of people were murdered. Imagine this: at the peak of the killing in 1942, three or four transport trains arrived every day. In one month, August 1942, 130,000 Jews were murdered in Belzec. Imagine that: 130 000 people slaughtered in a place the size of two football pitches in just one month. ...

In 1937, 10,000 Jews lived in Ostrava. The town had several synagogues and Jewish schools and businesses. In the single room that serves as its synagogue today, there are seats for 30 people —30 people. In Poland, we went to a place called Nowy Targ, where we found what had been my dad's uncle's shop. There is a mass grave of the 500 Jews butchered in a day, including at least one of his cousins. Some 3,000 Jewish people lived there before the war. "How many live here now?" I asked the local historian who was showing us around. She looked at me as if I was mad. She said, "None"—none. ...

col 380 I grew up learning about the holocaust from my parents and hearing stories about the suffering, the appalling cruelty and the scale of the slaughter, and that left me with a conviction that I have held ever since. It is a conviction that prejudice leads to intolerance, then to victimisation and eventually to persecution. It is a conviction as well that we have a duty, every single one of us, not to stand by, but to make a difference and to fight discrimination, intolerance and bigotry wherever we find it. ...

col 381 One of the reasons I joined the Labour party ... was to fight racism. ... I am shocked that a party with such a long tradition of fighting racism has caused such offence and distress to the Jewish community. The first thing I did when I became an MP was lead a campaign to drive the British National party, which had a councillor in Dudley, out of the town. Since then I have stood with Muslim constituents who have been targeted by the English Defence League, but that would all be completely meaningless if I ignored antisemitism in my own party. It is easy to oppose racism at events or in meetings where everyone agrees with you. It is easy for those of us in politics to criticise our opponents, but that is completely meaningless if we are not also prepared to criticise when it is more difficult. Labour Members must understand that we will have no right to criticise our opponents on such issues if we do not first get our own house in order. ...

col 383 Joan Ryan (Labour): ... I am reminded of lives cut tragically short, communities uprooted and destroyed, and the sheer depravity of the systematic attempt to slaughter the Jews of Europe. I am also reminded of something else from that journey [the March of the Living] last spring, and the fact that even in the midst of places of great horror and suffering, we celebrated life. ...

Our journey also gave us the opportunity to celebrate the life of the Jewish people's homeland, which was reborn in the aftermath of the holocaust. We recalled the contribution of the survivors to the state of Israel, and all that many of us admire so much about its achievements, its values, and its resilience.

However, remembrance and celebration alone are not enough to truly honour those who died in the holocaust and those who risked all to save the lives of others; we must also learn from the holocaust. Tragically, the flames of racial and religious hatred continue to be fanned around the world. Antisemitism remains a scourge of the modern world. Hideous antisemitic tropes, repugnant conspiracy theories and malicious examples of holocaust denial are all used by populists and demagogues for political ends throughout the middle east and in Europe. ...

col 384 Here in the UK, on campuses, in trade unions and even, sadly, as we have heard, in the Labour party, pernicious comparisons have been drawn between Israel and Nazi Germany. In the United States, we see neo-Nazis, racists and white supremacists tolerated, excused and encouraged by those at the highest levels. We must stand up with

courage against antisemitism and racism each and every day, wherever we find it. ...

I commend the vital work of organisations such as the Holocaust Educational Trust, March of the Living and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. By teaching younger generations about the horrors of the past, they are working for a future that is free of hate. Let us remember, too, the moral duty that each of us has to play our part in this struggle. That duty was best put by Elie Wiesel, who wrote: “The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference.” ...

Stephen Crabb (Conservative): ... Auschwitz-Birkenau is a place of fascination. The architecture, the gateway, the railway line have become immediately recognisable symbols of the holocaust. It draws visitors by the thousands every week. It features in the Lonely Planet guide under “attractions”. It also remains one of the world’s largest crime scenes—a place of proof and evidence—even as some continue to promote theories, whether through vile cartoons or pseudo-academic papers, that these events never took place.

Auschwitz is also, for many, a deeply spiritual place. For some, it is a place where God did not intervene—where He turned His back. For others, it is the place where faith found new depths and new heights, even in the midst of a visitation of pure evil on an entire people group. ...

col 385 What is the message? What lessons cry out to us today from these darkest of events? For me, the lesson is that the roots and origins of the holocaust run very deep. It was not a quirk of history. It did not just happen by accident in the chaos of warfare. ... Genocides require planning, organisation, equipment, supplies. That needs effective management and leadership. However, to undertake something so horrific on such a vast scale, something else is required. Yes, genocide requires a large number of people to carry out tasks, but it requires an even larger number of people to turn a blind eye—not to question, not to resist. It requires a population to stay silent, out of fear or assent.

In all examples of genocide we see the same pattern, where the violence and killing has been supported by years of conditioning the population to really hate the group that is being targeted for elimination. It starts with what we now call stereotyping—generalisations, mockery, blame, lies, bullying, verbal abuse, victimising, conspiracy theories. That is what provides the deep soil from which grow the hideous and vile acts of genocide. That is the very essence of antisemitism. Who can say that we are not living with that in our very midst in 2019? That is the lived experience of some of our colleagues, and some of our constituents, right now. ...

col 386 **John Mann (Labour):** ... In this country, in the past year, there were 170,000 anti-semitic internet searches. Since last year’s Holocaust Memorial Day, searches on “Holocaust hoax” are up 30,000. We have talked in previous debates about holocaust denial. Let me put another term on the record, because it is the pertinent one in this country for some at the moment—holocaust revisionism. Some people want to twist and turn what happened for their own ends; they would like to give some lip service, but only some, while twisting the facts and minimising the consequences and the implications. ...

The problem is not just a British one ... When I went around Majdanek, I observed it in detail. In an hour, at every major exhibit and in the gas chambers, one could go around without even realising that the Jewish people were the target of the Nazis in the holocaust. I went to the cathedral, up the tower, and I did not need binoculars—one can see Majdanek from the centre of Lublin now, as people could at the time. Yet there is still not a single reference in the exhibitions to the fact that the target there—the mass murders—were primarily the local and Polish Jewish population. ...

col 387 **Bob Stewart (Conservative):** The holocaust is what happened to the Jews of Europe, but we should recall that the genocide that the Nazis inflicted on Europe took a great number of other people. For example, it is said that 3 million Christian Poles were killed for “Lebensraum”. For me, Holocaust Memorial Day means them, too; I am quite

sure that the Holocaust Educational Trust would not mind that association. ...

Andrew Percy (Conservative): ... In recent days and weeks, I have been appalled to see references made to the Jewish ancestry of Mr Speaker or other colleagues. They might have a different perspective from me on the Brexit debate, but to have their Jewish ancestry brought into it was truly disgusting. ...

col/ 388 I will tell a story about why I think that there is something peculiarly evil and different about Jew haters. Some colleagues might know that I converted—I would say converted back—to Judaism some time ago. I had never really faced any racism before that ... I had never really given racism a thought, but I converted to Judaism and was then subjected to two incidents, by the same people on different occasions. Sadly, one incident started with them chanting the Leader of the Opposition's name at me, and then screaming that I was "Israeli scum" and responsible for killing Palestinian children. ... it was reported to the police, but no action was taken, unfortunately.

The second incident happened in a shopping centre in Doncaster. The same people again screamed at me for being "Israeli scum". This is where Jew hate is somewhat different: the incident became more sinister when one of the individuals said, "You should tell people before an election that you're a Jew." ... I was then told to eff off and "eat my Jew halal food," so we could say something about the education levels of such people. The interesting point, however, is that they started with Israel and moved on to my own Judaism. A few years ago, when I responded as a Minister to the Holocaust Memorial Day debate from the Dispatch Box, I talked about that Israelification of antisemitism, which we have to be very careful about. ... I am sad to say, due to the failings of Humberside police, the trial which had been set has unfortunately not taken place; the police failed to follow certain procedures. ...

This is a particular hate that is different from some of the other hate that we see in politics, though all of it is unacceptable. Since I converted to Judaism, I have understood the peculiarly evil element behind antisemitism. ...

col/ 389 **Luciana Berger (Labour Co-op):** ... It is beyond our comprehension that humans are capable of inflicting such horrors on other humans. It questions the very nature of humanity, and leads us to the contemplation of evil. Yet we have continued to witness horrors in our own times, in Cambodia, Rwanda and Bosnia, and the House recently debated the plight of the Rohingya in Burma, driven from their homes, their villages in flames.

Humanity never seems to fully learn the lessons of history. That is why Holocaust Memorial Day is so vital and continuing holocaust education is so critical—so that we can do everything possible to ensure that it really does not ever happen again. ...

I have seen the testimonies that are housed at Yad Vashem. That project ... has done so much to capture the stories and the background. For every single person who perished, there is a whole history and a family who have been affected up to the modern day. It is critical for those testimonies to be at the centre of every holocaust memorial ...

col/ 390 It is important to recognise that the holocaust did not start with gas chambers. It started with ideas, with books, with newspapers, with films, with torchlight processions, with speeches. It culminated in crematoria, but it began with words. It had its roots in the warped racial theories of the 1890s, and in conspiracy theories such as those in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. The Nazis did not invent antisemitism, but they modernised it, made it the state religion, and turned an industrial state into a machine for killing every Jew in Europe. ...

In the 1930s it was *Der Stürmer*, which ran from 1923 onwards with its unceasing antisemitism. It told its readers week after week that Jews spread disease, and the caption on every front page read "The Jews are our misfortune!". Today it is social media, with all its manifestations of modern antisemitism: Jews secretly run the banks, organised 9/11, profit from wars, manipulate the media, and have loyalties to foreign powers.

When people deny the holocaust or claim that Jews exploit it, we cannot be bystanders. When people online draw up lists of Jews in the media, we cannot be bystanders. When people use the term “Zio” or “Rothschild” instead of “Jew” to cover their racism, we cannot be bystanders. Whether it is the neo-Nazis or those who think that they belong to the left, we must say no, and call it out as loudly as we can. Every single time, it must be challenged swiftly and without favour, no matter where it rears its very ugly head. ...

Theresa Villiers (Conservative): No other episode in human history can match the holocaust for scale and depth of evil—an evil that sought to harness the technology of the modern world to deliver mass murder on an industrial scale, in an attempt to eliminate an entire ethnic group. The fact that it could have happened not in the distant past but in supposedly civilised 20th-century Europe still shocks me, and I still find it impossible to comprehend, so many years after I first learned the story of those terrible events. That so many people stood by when their Jewish friends and neighbours were torn from their homes and subjected to unspeakable cruelty is the most truly shocking part of that story. ...

col 392 Antisemitism has mutated, taken on new forms, and gained a lethal new lease of life with social media. It has also been given new life by the militant anti-Zionism of the radical left, so today is a time for all of us to make a commitment once again to root out antisemitism wherever it emerges, and to say loud and clear that we will never, ever tolerate this vicious form of racism. ...

col 394 **Fiona Bruce (Conservative):** ... We should ask ourselves what has gone wrong when after each fresh atrocity we say, “Never again.” Why have we not, both here in the UK and in the international community, worked harder to implement an effective atrocity prevention strategy, rather than simply hoping that genocides will not cyclically reoccur?

col 395 **Carolyn Harris (Labour):** ... I find it particularly difficult to comprehend the fate of children in the holocaust. Many Members will be aware that I have spent a lot of my time campaigning in Parliament for the rights of children, and when I read about the experiences of children in concentration camps, it truly breaks my heart. I understand that around 1.5 million children died in the holocaust—a number too great even to comprehend. ...

Young children were particularly vulnerable and were often sent immediately to the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau. ... As well as more than 1 million Jewish children being killed, tens of thousands of Romany children, German children with physical and mental disabilities living in institutions and Polish children lost their lives. ...

col 396 It has been estimated that only 6% to 11% of Europe’s pre-war Jewish population of children survived, compared with 33% of the adults. ...

Gillian Keegan (Conservative): ... The holocaust is a subject that is difficult to approach. It is tough to find the right words, but it is even more difficult knowing that this is not some distant event that is completely removed from how we conduct ourselves today. Even with the effects still so prevalent, antisemitism continues to raise its ugly head and is trying to infect the political mainstream once again. ...

col 397 The mass graves of Auschwitz and the other concentration camps marked the end of a gradual process. The holocaust did not begin with the gas chambers; it started with the legitimisation of antisemitism in mainstream debate. It was instigated by making “different” wrong. The fact that Dr Joseph Goebbels and the other Nazis were able to spin lies and manipulate fact to legitimise their racist, tyrannical agenda should serve as a warning to us all today. The Nazis learned how to make the most of the new media capability of the day—the radio—and that is happening again. In so many ways, the advent of fake news on social media platforms today is a chilling echo of how a lie can be halfway around the world before the truth has its shoes on.

The holocaust began with hate speeches and radio broadcasts, but it then developed into legal discrimination against Jewish people through the so-called Nuremberg laws. Permission was given for violence to be visited on Jewish minorities across Europe. It was incentivised by the Nazis, who offered rewards for betraying Jews in hiding and then stole

their property. It ended with the final solution: the gas chambers of the concentration camps.

We in the Chamber today have something that Jewish people and other minorities did not have during that period: a voice. We must use it and retell their stories to ensure that we call out antisemitism wherever we find it and to ensure that this tragedy never happens again. Simon's story shows us that we can be better as human beings, and that humanity, freedom, tolerance, forgiveness and respect are noble values that each one of us has a duty to uphold. ...

col 398 **Chi Onwurah (Labour):** ... We will also remember that much of the antisemitic hatred that preceded the holocaust was directed against poor Jewish immigrants from Russia, Poland and the other countries of eastern Europe and that that hatred was present not only in Germany, but in France and here in the United Kingdom. We must remember that at the core of so much of the hatred that prepared the ground for the holocaust was the idea that Jews were alien and could never truly be German, French or English. We must commit to fighting that invidious and corrupting lie wherever it raises its head. ...

As my Jewish constituents have made clear, the terror of the holocaust does not fade for our Jewish communities. Incidents that may seem marginal and inconsequential to some are experienced from the point of view of survivors and their children and grandchildren as harbingers of horrors too awful to think about. Fear echoes down the generations while many of us go about our business feeling safe and secure. ...

Nowhere is that recognition more important than in discussions about the middle east. Those of us who support the cause of Palestinian rights must recognise that we see antisemitic ideas surface time and again in debates over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There must be zero tolerance of antisemitism in such debates, just as there must be space for an honest appraisal of the actual issues and behaviours of those involved in the conflict. There must be zero tolerance within the Labour party, too. I am sad to report that Jewish constituents have told me that they no longer feel welcome in our party. ...

col 399 **Bob Stewart (Conservative):** ... The Jewish genocide during the second world war, when two thirds of the Jews of Europe were destroyed by the Nazis, was appalling, but genocide's shadow continues. We have heard about Cambodia, where between 10% and 30% of the population were murdered by Pol Pot. We have heard about Rwanda, where one million people were killed. We have heard about Bosnia, where 3% of the Muslim population was killed—most notably and horrifically when 8,373 men and boys were killed at Srebrenica in July 1995. Myanmar continues. So, too, does the genocide of the Yazidis in Syria and Iraq.

We still have this scourge in the world, and I believe that is what the Holocaust Educational Trust is all about. ...

col 400 **Lisa Cameron (SNP):** ... I am grateful for the excellent work of Karen Pollock and the Holocaust Educational Trust, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, Danny Stone and the Antisemitism Policy Trust, and Danielle Bett who does such excellent work in Scotland via the Jewish Leadership Council. ...

Politics is important in this debate, and we must never ignore the fact that the holocaust occurred via politics. That is why we must never ignore antisemitism, because ignoring is condoning. Antisemitism may be on the fringes of today's society and politics, but it continues to exist.

I had first-hand experience of antisemitism when I was "named and shamed" in 2015. I was put on an online list of Israel's agents in British politics. The list described me and others as "shameless British parliamentarians willing to sacrifice freedom of expression to please their paymasters. British politics must cleanse itself of this corrosive influence...Zionist corruption which has implanted its roots in pretty much every British Parliamentary party."

col 401 Antisemitism was never an issue in the over 20 years that I worked as a doctor,

but it has been since the year I was elected. ...

The presence of that list online caused me to be called to a local meeting in 2015, which I attended with my husband and children. The list was brought up on a computer screen, and I was challenged about it. Others were as surprised as I was that that had happened, but no concern was raised about the impact it might have on me, my security or that of my children. The only concern was that people thought and were saying that I was a Zionist and an agent of Israel. ...

As recently as last year, individuals tried to prevent me from marking world war two and attending a Remembrance Sunday service by calling a meeting at the same time and then pretending not to know it was Remembrance Sunday. I was the only local MP to be treated in such a way. Never did I think that I would be repeatedly excluded from local meetings or from speaking at scheduled events ... These issues make me very concerned about the way ahead in UK politics. The message of the Holocaust Educational Trust is to “speak louder,” which can be difficult because antisemites want to silence victims. Those who speak out are frightened of then being targeted, but we must take courage and speak louder. We must support all those who come forward. Remembering means that we never turn away from, minimise, ignore or condone antisemitism. ...

col 402 **Bob Blackman (Conservative):** ... I think there is real hope. Yasmin Mohamed, a student at Canons High School and a Holocaust Educational Trust ambassador, commented after the reception that she had “seen first-hand where antisemitism, intolerance and hatred has led in the past and I’m now committed to ensuring that the Holocaust is never forgotten. I want to ensure that we learn from the past so that we can build a better future.”

I am pleased that we will soon witness the Holocaust memorial centre close to Parliament so that we can educate young people and have a memorial to the victims of this terrible disaster. ...

Lyn Brown (Labour): ... Through the 1930s, everything that makes a place a home was stripped away from Jewish people, in Germany and then throughout Europe. It was a gradual, harrowing experience. In '33, the Nazi Government began the creeping exclusion of Jewish people from public life. Jewish people were no longer protected by the police or courts, and kosher meat was banned. In '34, Jews were barred from military service, banned from becoming doctors or lawyers and even prevented from being accountants and actors. In '35, the infamous Nuremberg laws defined Jewish Germans as non-citizens, depriving them of their rights to vote and stand for public office, and legally condemning relationships between Jewish Germans and their non-Jewish neighbours.

col 403 The Jews were not just made homeless in Germany; they were portrayed as universally homeless—abandoned by everyone and a threat to the homes of all. Being put in that position must have been terrifying. ...

When we look at people who are seeking refuge in the United Kingdom today, I hope we will pause and remember. I hope that we will recommit ourselves to helping those who are fleeing in terror, torn from their homes and wanting to build a new home here. I hope we will act on the message “Never again”. ...

col 405 **Stephen Kerr (Conservative):** ... In my Christian faith, we are invited to practise love, one to another, and to treat other people the way we would want to be treated. Those behaviours begin with what we are thinking and feeling, and we are accountable for our attitudes and behaviours. When we spread deliberate lies, when we abuse other people, when we hate other people because they are different or see the world differently from us, and when we give expression to that hate, we are descending to an infernal pit of self-loathing and self-destruction.

Loving our neighbours as we love ourselves, respecting every human being without prejudice, and upholding the universal human right of individual agency—these are the values that elevate our common humanity. We must always remember what happens

when we do not listen to what Abraham Lincoln described as “the better angels of our nature.” We must individually live out our commitment and prayer of never again. ...

col 406 Matthew Offord (Conservative): ... On Sunday, I attended the funeral service at Bushey new cemetery. It was significant because it was the first and only interment of victims of the Holocaust ever to take place in the United Kingdom. It is remarkable that such a ceremony should take place more than 70 years after the death camps were discovered. The remains were originally given to the Imperial War Museum many years ago. They were acknowledged by a pathologist to be the remains of six people—five adults and one child—and because they were never going to be put on display, it was decided that they should be buried. That was certainly the appropriate decision. ...

The address given by the Chief Rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis ... moved many people to tears. I watched as several men carefully wiped their eyes when the Chief Rabbi spoke personally to the infant among the six. He said:

col 407 “Your childhood was robbed. You experienced such fear and dread, then the ultimate wickedness saw your life taken. We don’t know who you are, your name, if you were male or female or the details of your family. But we do know you were Jewish. All of us here feel a strong connection to you.” ...

As prayers were said and the coffin lowered, people were invited to come forward to place earth in the grave. With such a large crowd, it did not take long for the space to be filled. What struck me as I stood by the graveside was the number of people who held pictures and artefacts of relatives whom I presume were victims of the Holocaust. For them, the funeral was very real, and it cannot be said definitively whether or not the grave contained one of their relatives. We will never know. In so many ways, these six people represent the millions who do not have a last resting place, and whose families, friends and relatives cannot mourn them because they do not know what happened to them. ...

col 408 Pat McFadden (Labour): No words—certainly none that I have—can describe adequately the horror of the Holocaust, the attempt to wipe out the Jewish population of Europe, the killing of Roma, gay people, trade unionists and many other victims of Nazi ideology. ...

This is also a moment to reflect on our own politics. It is estimated that 70,000 refugees came to the UK from the rest of Europe in the years running up to the war, including children saved through the Kindertransport programme. Yes, the UK could have done more during the war, but surely today we have to ask questions about our own debate on refugees. It has become too easy to talk about refugees in a way that strips them of their humanity and ascribes to them some darker, ulterior motive, and it has become too easy to say they should go anywhere but here. ...

This is also a moment to stand strong against the politics of hate, which seeks to demonise any group or community on the basis of race, faith or both. The antisemitic abuse that is routinely posted online, including to Members of this House, is not only unacceptable in itself but a warning of what happens when people ascribe great virtue to themselves and those who agree with them but show a closed and hostile mind to others, when people have a hierarchy of victimhood, where some are allowed to be victims but others are not. ...

col 409 Ian Paisley (DUP): ... Northern Ireland was the last part of the kingdom to benefit from the Holocaust Educational Trust work, not because there was any lack on our part, but, sad to say, because of political disagreement. I am delighted that that was righted in 2016 when the two Government Departments came together, led by Ministers from my own party, and put in place the funding to allow for the trust’s “Lessons learned” programme to be extended to Northern Ireland. It is sad that some misguided people think that that is some sort of front for something else and do not recognise how significantly important it is to put that programme in place for our young people. ...

col 410 Liz McInnes (Labour): ... Last year, it was my privilege to lead a parliamentary

delegation on a visit to Rwanda ...

One of the most moving and disturbing parts of the memorial museum for me were the stories told of the children who were killed in the massacre. There were small children, babies and toddlers. Their short lives were chronicled: their likes, their dislikes and their favourite activities. Following this simple account of the normal things that children like to do and are preoccupied with came the violent manner of their death—attacked by machetes and clubs and thrown against walls. I defy anyone to visit that museum and not to come out thinking in a different way; it is one of the most shocking and humbling experiences that I have ever had. ...

col 411 One perpetrator explained how he had been poisoned by the venomous propaganda of the genocidal regime, which had convinced him that his Tutsi neighbours were his No. 1 enemy and did not deserve a place in the world. He said that the thought of having to go back to his village once he had served his sentence and live side by side with people whose loved ones he had killed was almost unbearable. Yet he was pardoned by the survivors and now lives in harmony alongside them, with his son marrying the daughter of the family whom he had killed in what he described as an astounding sign of our reconciliation. ...

David Linden (SNP): ... it is more important than ever, particularly given the dwindling number of holocaust survivors, to take this opportunity to reflect not only on that awful atrocity, but on other genocides. That is why it is so important to place on the record our thanks to the Holocaust Educational Trust for its work in all our constituencies. In Scotland, over 3,000 pupils and teachers have had the opportunity to benefit from the “Lessons from Auschwitz” project ...

col 412 I also want to stand up today and make sure that the Jewish community in Scotland know how safe they should feel in our country. There is no doubt that in this country the Jewish community have had to endure some utterly despicable behaviour ... I think that it is really important that I ... put that on the record today, to make sure that we never forget the contribution of the Jewish community, not just then but now, and that we embrace them and show them how much a part of our community they are.

I want, in my capacity as a member of the all-party parliamentary group on British Jews, to make some reference to current events, particularly in Hungary. I do not believe that the UK Government have done enough to confront the Hungarian Government about their state-sponsored antisemitism, as seen in the campaign against George Soros, for example. I also make a plea to the Minister to see that the UK Government do more to encourage other countries to promote the just and speedy restitution of property that was seized by the Nazis during the holocaust, much of which has still not been returned to the families of the original owners, despite promises to do so across Europe. ...

Peter Grant (SNP): ... we are failing to see the same warning signs as those that were there in Germany in 1932 and 1933. We are failing to see them here today in these islands. ...

col 413 As everyone else has done, I say thank you to Eva and to all the other survivors, who do not need to put themselves through this. They could just go away and live a quiet life, and try to come to terms privately with what they had experienced in their younger years. They choose to put themselves through it to try to give us the warning, again and again, of what happens when hatred becomes normalised—when it becomes normalised to spit at a child on their way to school just because he or she is Jewish, normalised to react to news of a killing by wondering which side of a divide the killers were on and which side the victim was on before we decide how we are going to react, or normalised for Christians to hound their fellow Christians out of their homes because they are the “wrong kind” of Christians. ...

A lot of this hatred comes not just from social media but from the front pages of newspapers that I do not need to name. ... When those same newspapers ask for an interview, when

they offer 150 quid for an article, or when they invite us to celebration parties for their editors' achievements, we need to think about how we respond, because if we support, in any way whatsoever, the purveyors of hatred—whether it is antisemitism, Islamophobia or any other form of hatred—our words, “Never again”, will only be words, and hollow words at that. ...

col 414 **Jim Shannon (DUP):** ... I am proud to be a friend of Israel. I am proud to remember the Balfour declaration and the role that the British played, along with their allies, in returning some of Israel to her people after the second world war. ...

We now have a part to play to secure the history of the Jewish people once again. In a world that seeks to whitewash and even begin to refute the evidence of a holocaust, it is more important than ever that we in this country take a stand about the true history of the Jews during the second world war.

Those stories need to be told. My fear is that when we lose the first-hand experiences, it becomes simply numbers on a page, and now it becomes a number that umpteen people on Facebook deny, without measures being taken by the administration. ...

Will the slaughter of 6 million human beings become a fact in a history lesson, or will it be a lesson that every generation learns regarding mankind's ability to be completely and utterly full of evil and madness? We must not allow the massacre of Jews during the holocaust to become something in movies and history classes; it must be a living, breathing lesson embraced by every generation. ...

We must ensure that we live in a United Kingdom where our British Jewish citizens feel able and happy to recount the stories handed down through generations. We must ensure that the representatives in this Parliament play their part and stamp out the antisemitism and misinformation that is not dissimilar to the propaganda that Goebbels was so proud of. We have a role to play in protecting not simply the history of the holocaust but its legacy: the promise from a horrified world that we will never let this take place again. ...

col 415 I will finish with a line I read in an article, which said: “One thing we all share: none of us can trace our families back more than a couple of generations. The Holocaust, as I've come to think of it, is history's loudest full-stop.”

It should not be allowed to be a full stop. It must be an ellipsis that indicates an unfinished thought. We cannot draw a line under the holocaust as something that was done and is over. We must ensure that we continue to think about and consider the holocaust—the history and, most importantly, the humanity of it all—and we must ensure that the generations that follow do the same. ...

col 416 **Patrick Grady (SNP):** ... The national lottery has recently announced £296,000 for Scotland's first Jewish Heritage Centre, which will be based in the Garnethill synagogue, the oldest in Scotland—founded in 1879—which I have had the privilege of visiting. That will include a Scottish holocaust era study centre to provide public access to the important records held by the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, which document the experience of adult and child refugees who fled Nazi Europe before the outbreak of the second world war and of those who came after as survivors of the concentration camps. ...

An undeniable rise in incidents has been documented by the Community Security Trust, and we have a particular responsibility as parliamentarians to lead by example and promote zero tolerance ... Likewise, we should support positive initiatives that celebrate faith and diversity, and promote tolerance. ...

Yvonne Fovargue (Labour): ... we must show solidarity in the face of antisemitism, because unfortunately that scourge is still very much part of the modern world. Social media has given it a new platform on which people can speak vile hatred and feel validated in their views by others. I am horrified that many British Jewish people to whom I have spoken are considering moving either to Israel or to another country. It is appalling that in this country, and this century, people are considering being “torn from home”—the theme of today's debate—but it is not altogether surprising. There has been an increase in

attacks, and in my area of Greater Manchester there have been three attacks on the Urmston Jewish Cemetery. ...

col 418 We must tackle antisemitism wherever it is seen, and ... there should be no bystanders. ... We must condemn antisemitism and root it out wherever it is seen, including in our own backyards, and that includes the Labour party. ...

Remembering the holocaust gives us a perspective on the world we live in today, and that is all the more important as we reflect on the genocides that have continued to occur in recent years ... we also need to be aware of the bigotry, the prejudice, the hatred, and the anti-democratic forces that are still here today. The holocaust may be a part of the past, but the causes continue to cast a dark shadow over the present, and we must remain vigilant and speak out, and be louder. ...

col 419 **The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Heather Wheeler):** ... The holocaust remains an incalculable tragedy that has touched so many lives, including hundreds of refugees, kinder and holocaust survivors who now call Britain home. Every year we are privileged to hear their testimony. Some tell of their life before the Nazi occupation and the impact of Kristallnacht. Others give harrowing accounts of conditions in the death camps and the forced marches. Others were separated from their parents as children, to be brought up safely.

There are also stories of those who reached out and saved others. We can take pride in the fact that some of those extraordinary people were British. ...

Few events have had such a monumental impact on our democracy, our history and our values as the holocaust. That is why this Government are so proud to support the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and its vital work in communities across the country. I pay tribute to Laura Marks and the team led by Olivia Marks-Woldman who have ensured that Holocaust Memorial Day goes from strength to strength. Their incredible efforts will see more than 10,000 events take place up and down the country this year.

I acknowledge a number of others as well: Karen Pollock and the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust, educating young people of every background about the holocaust and the important lessons it teaches us today; Dr Ben Barkow, his work at the Wiener Library and in setting up the Holocaust Explained website to help us all better understand that dark period of history; Lillian Black, who has worked tirelessly to create the holocaust centre at Huddersfield University, which will provide vital holocaust education for young people; and, finally, the amazing work at the holocaust memorial centre in Newark, which is ensuring that survivor testimony is preserved for future generations.

col 420 I will also reflect on the historic task given to my Department to build a national holocaust memorial and learning centre ... There can be no more powerful symbol of our commitment to remember the men, women and children who were murdered in the holocaust, and all the other victims of Nazi persecution, including Roma, gay and disabled people, masons and others. It will draw on the history of the holocaust and subsequent genocides. It will stand as a memorial, yes, but equally it will stand as a warning—a warning of where hatred can lead and a warning that when we say, “Never again”, we have to mean it. ...

We must remember, too, that tolerance and reconciliation begin at home. The rise in the number of antisemitic incidents in the UK is shameful. It saddens me that Jewish communities in the UK should ever feel a sense of threat. ...

Each year that passes, I am mindful that living witnesses to the tragedy of the holocaust are becoming fewer in number, so I will conclude by remembering two incredible women we lost last year: Gena Turgel, who survived the Krakow ghetto, a death march, Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, as we have heard; and Sabina Miller, who was born in Warsaw, survived the Warsaw ghetto and spent most of the second world war on the run from the Nazis. In later life, Sabina worked closely with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, receiving the British Empire Medal in 2017 for services to education. Both lives are a warning of the dangers of hatred but, equally, they are profound examples of tolerance, kindness and

respect. They are examples we should do our best to follow—and never forget. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-01-24/debates/55340293-5D4A-4B46-B8F5-E52ABF06AA3C/HolocaustMemorialDay>

House of Commons Oral Answers

The Leader of the House of Commons (Andrea Leadsom): ... Sunday will mark Holocaust Memorial Day—an opportunity to remember the 6 million Jews murdered in the holocaust, and the millions of Roma, Gypsies, disabled people, political prisoners, homosexuals and others murdered under Nazi persecution, just for being who they were. We also remember and mourn all those murdered in genocides around the world. We should also pay tribute to the wonderful work of the Holocaust Educational Trust, which enables 100,000 people every year to hear a survivor's testimony. The trust has taken more than 38,000 people to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau as part of its holocaust education programme. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-01-24/debates/B56A95A6-AF04-4978-8D56-D834AC5CC970/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-E234D7D4-FA15-4440-829A-150C234E19C8>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Library

Briefing: Holocaust Memorial Day: 27 January 2019

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2019-0011/LLN-2019-0011.pdf>

Downing Street

UK Prime Minister@10DowningStreet

"No words can ever do justice to the six million souls who were so cruelly murdered in the Holocaust – but we can pay a fitting tribute through our deeds today." – PM Theresa_May writes in the HolocaustUK Book of Commitment.

<https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet/status/1089462179315793921>

Scottish Parliament Debate

Remembering the Holocaust

12.50 Richard Lyle (SNP): ... Today, we commemorate a tragedy of the past, but I believe that the topic is completely relevant to the issues that we face in our world today. ... Through various stages of persecution, Jews were oppressed by the laws of the countries that they lived in, separated from their loved ones, placed in various types of camps and prisons, and ultimately killed in their millions by horrific and inhumane methods. ...

Last year, as a member of the cross-party group on building bridges with Israel, I and other members visited Yad Vashem, the world Holocaust remembrance centre, set on the slopes of the Mount of Remembrance on the edge of Jerusalem. ... Although not an emotionally easy museum, Yad Vashem is worth a visit, in order to understand the true scale and impact of the Holocaust. The photographs and displays, and the walk round the gardens, were very emotional, especially when we came upon a railway car that had been used to transport people to their death. I will always remember what I saw on that visit. ...

What goes through someone's mind to make them desire to exterminate millions of people

who are entirely undeserving? As we look back, collectively, we must ask the burning question that is in all our hearts: how could this happen? How could something so evil take place in a civilised, modern society? ...

More than anything, the Holocaust represents a tragedy that is a reminder of humanity and its struggles. On a day such as today, when we mourn the atrocities of Nazi Germany, it is easy to point fingers and cast blame—and it is deserved blame—but to forget that Hitler was human and that Nazis were people is a mistake that none of us can afford to make. To do so would be to lower our guard at a time when we must be constantly vigilant. ...

Let us not be blinded, because although we achieved victory against Nazi Germany, we have not defeated human evil. To this day, dangerous people still seek to spread death and destruction. Tragically, only a few months ago, a shooting at a synagogue in Philadelphia resulted in the deaths of 11 people. ...

We must all recognise that it does not matter what religion we follow, what country we live in, where our parents were born or what language we speak. A crime against humanity affects us all. ...

12.58 Adam Tomkins (Conservative): ... the Holocaust happened because, not very long ago, in the heart of Europe, it was the policy of the Government of a leading European country to eliminate the Jewish people from the face of the earth. Yet the Nazis were not angry with the Jews: the brutality, the beatings, the mass murder and the killing on an industrial scale did not happen because anyone had cause to be angry; they happened because of cold, calculated hatred. ...

Every year, reflecting on the Holocaust and its legacy, I find myself coming back to the same phrases and even to the same basic thoughts. On the one hand, the Holocaust was unique. Yes, there have been other genocides, but there has been only one Holocaust—only one programme of systematic death so comprehensive in its scale and so audacious in its evil ambition that a whole new country had to be found to give a dispersed and fractured people a home. On the other hand, what strikes one about the Holocaust is also what Hannah Arendt infamously called its “banality”. They were just trains—just ordinary goods wagons, with the goods counted on and counted off, and taken on a journey. To think of it, one shudders, but is always a little incredulous.

That is what hatred can do. Hatred does not create monsters. Monsters are extraordinary and instantly stand out from the crowd. We can see them a mile off and they are very rare. Hatred does not create monsters, but it does allow ordinary men and women to commit terrible acts as if they were the most mundane, quotidian of tasks: just loading goods on to a train. ...

The Holocaust was not mad; it was calculated. It was committed not in a frenzy of anger and emotion but in a climate of cold-headed hatred. There is plenty of room in politics for emotion, for frenzy and even for anger, but not for hatred. Yes, we here disagree on many matters, and those disagreements may make us angry from time to time, but let there be no room here or anywhere else in political life for hatred. Let that, for us, be the lesson of the Holocaust. ...

13.03 Tom Arthur (SNP): ... One of the most chilling facts about the Holocaust was the decision to use carbon monoxide and Zyklon B gas in the extermination. During the early phase of the killings in the occupied territories of the east, as the Wehrmacht advanced, SS Einsatzgruppen would follow up behind, killing, shooting and massacring, such as happened at Babi Yar in Ukraine. However, it was determined that using gas would be more humane—not for the victims, but for the perpetrators. ...

To know that that happened in living memory, in one of the most advanced civilisations in the world, is a lesson for us all. That is what human beings are capable of. It was not some aberration; it was the end of a cold, clinical and—for them—logical process. We must remember that. ...

13.10 Alex Rowley (Labour): ... I was in Auschwitz last Easter and it was a chilling visit

that remains in my mind every day. I asked the excellent guide how the Holocaust could have happened. Her answer was ... about how hate, antisemitism, racism and false news can spread so that people start to believe it. That is why it is right and proper that we always call out hate, racism and antisemitism, wherever they exist. ...

13.16 Gillian Martin (SNP): ... This Tuesday, in the garden lobby of the Parliament, I sat transfixed, along with many others here, as I listened to the account of Holocaust survivor Janine Webber. That is the first time, to my knowledge, that I have been in the same room as someone who survived the Holocaust. ...

Alongside the accounts of horrors and hatred, which we must tell forever as a warning from history ... there are the Janusz Korczaks and the Stefa Wilczynskas, whose stories of courage and love we must never forget. There are the stories told by Janine Webber of her aunt, who saved her life, and of the Pole who harboured 14 Jews in Warsaw when all around them, people were being put into wagons and taken to Treblinka. Alongside those horrors, there are stories of love that we must never forget. In the midst of hatred, the stories of love shine through. ...

13.10 Ross Greer (Green): ... In the year since we last held this debate, we have seen yet more events that throw into question whether Europe and the wider world has learned from history's worst atrocity. Antisemitism might be a more visible issue today than it was a few years ago, but that is not because it is being rooted out. ... we cannot underestimate the very real threat that hatred still poses to all of us, but which disproportionately threatens already-oppressed communities such as our Jewish friends and family.

In the past week, *The Ferret*—the blog of Scotland's investigation collective—has found that an extremist antisemitic and fascist organisation plans to infiltrate our community councils. The group is modelled on Oswald Mosley's pro-Nazi fascist organisation from a few decades ago. ...

We should not for a second treat Holocaust memorial day as an opportunity only to remember. It is an opportunity to remind ourselves of the horrors that were allowed to happen on our continent within living memory, and to recommit ourselves to stopping them from happening again. ...

13.25 Annabelle Ewing (SNP): ... On the 74th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, it is vital that we continue to bear witness to the 6 million Jews who were murdered by the Nazis. We must do so not only in memory of those who were murdered, but to ensure that we are always vigilant and that such state-sanctioned, clinical, calculated mass extermination never happens again. ...

13.29 Oliver Mundell (Conservative): ... When I speak on this topic, I am conscious of the deafening silence from the millions upon millions of voices and souls who are not here to tell us their story and whose offspring are not here to contribute to our society and our world. ...

Most of all, the Holocaust is a reminder that we cannot let our common humanity be challenged or divided, because it is indivisible. ... we are all human beings of equal worth and value, and it is incumbent on each and every one of us to do what we can to make the world a better place and make room for others....

13.34 Emma Harper (SNP): ... It is extremely important that young people have the opportunity to visit the sites of the concentration camps and experience for themselves what, for me, was reflected only in school history books. I therefore recognise the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust and its continued commitment to supporting our young people's education. ...

I will share with members an experience that gave me a physical connection with the Holocaust. ... I was in the operating room, about to assist a surgeon with taking the gall bladder out of a 76-year-old patient. The woman ... was very frightened of her surgery and of being put under anaesthesia, and I reassured her that we would look after her and keep her safe. I held her hand, and, when I looked down, I saw her outstretched forearm on the

surgical arm-board. On it was scribed—or written—a pale grey set of numbers: 162 753. I do not know whether those are the exact numbers, but I definitely remember that they made me feel shock, anger and compassion all at once in a quick flood of emotion—and they still do today. ...

I was 26 years old when I looked after that lady, and I thought about how, when she was 26, she was there—and she was a survivor. The numbers that had been rudely forced on to her pale skin had made a permanent lifelong mark, but, more important, she had survived the horrors and nightmares of Auschwitz. ...

13.38 Pauline McNeil (Labour): ... It is to my shame that it has taken me until this stage in my life to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau, in Poland, but I did so on the very last day of 2018. I have read what most people have read about the Holocaust and the death camps, but ... it does not prepare anyone for the sheer scale of Auschwitz. ...

The Holocaust is a human story of what was perpetrated by human beings while other human tolerated it. It is about the worst of mankind. ...

We must do our duty and speak up against injustice, evil, racism and antisemitism wherever they arise. We must hope that never again will mankind allow to prevail any such conditions that any people must endure as their fate. May we be blessed with the memories of the Jewish survivors as we remember the Holocaust and as we try to do all that we can to ensure that such an event will never happen again anywhere in the world. ...

13.48 The Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government (Aileen Campbell): ... International Holocaust memorial day provides an important moment for us all to gather and to reflect collectively on the terrible events of the Holocaust, and the millions of people who were murdered. It is also an opportunity to remember the courage and bravery shown by all of those who fought for liberty, freedom and justice, some of whom, sadly, paid with their lives. ...

Sadly, the Holocaust and the remembrance that followed have not spelled the end of hatred. As others have mentioned, this year marks the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide and the 40th anniversary of the end of the genocide in Cambodia. Last year marked the 25th anniversary of the start of the atrocities in northern Bosnia. ...

The debate has coalesced around a strong, united—and, in many ways, simple—message: we must not be complacent in the face of discrimination, racism and hatred. We must take action to tackle hatred and intolerance and to promote the positive vision of the society that we aspire to be. ...

In part, that is why each year we work in partnership with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and Interfaith Scotland to deliver Scotland's national Holocaust memorial day event. ... Scotland is united in the stance that lessons of the past must guide our future. ...

Although I am proud that Scotland has a long history of welcoming people of all nationalities and faiths ... and that we do so with a vigilance that never permits the creep of complacency. Although Scotland is an open and inclusive nation, we are not immune from hateful behaviour or prejudicial attitudes.

In June 2017, we published an ambitious programme of work to tackle hate crime and build community cohesion. ... One area that I want to particularly emphasise is our approach to tackling antisemitism. We know from our regular engagement with Jewish organisations and community leaders that Jewish people continue to experience antisemitism and discrimination. I heard that message at our most recent interfaith summit; I struggled to listen to it because of the impact that antisemitism has on the Jewish community. Antisemitism is absolutely unacceptable. There is no place in Scotland for any form of antisemitism or religious hatred that makes our communities feel insecure or threatened in their daily lives. Scotland's diversity is our strength and we value and appreciate our relationships with our Jewish communities. That is why we formally adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism in June 2017. ... We are committed to providing opportunities for Scotland's children and young people

to learn about the Holocaust as part of their education. For that reason, the Scottish Government continues to support the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust, whose lessons from Auschwitz project is an incredibly powerful way for young people to gain insight into the horrors of the Holocaust and, just as importantly, to learn about why it happened. ...

This is about more than memory and not forgetting. It is about action, vigilance and commitment: commitment to tackle all forms of oppression, hate and discrimination; vigilance to never let it go when we hear hate or witness prejudice and to never tolerate attempts to create an otherness of anyone who may be different; and action to work collectively to create a Scotland and a world that are tolerant, kind and compassionate and which celebrate diversity. ...

To read the full transcript see

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11909&i=107677#ScotParlOR>

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Holocaust Memorial Day

Tom Arthur (SNP): To ask the First Minister how the Scottish Government is marking Holocaust memorial day. (S5F-03010)

The First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon): We must never forget the horrors of the Holocaust and other genocides around the world, which are a stark reminder of the inhumanity and violence that bigotry and intolerance can cause if left unchallenged.

Last year, as I have noted in the chamber before, I joined young people from 89 Scottish schools on a Holocaust Educational Trust visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau. I will never forget what I saw there and I am sure that neither will the young people who were with me. We must never forget what antisemitism can lead to if it is not challenged and why education about tolerance, compassion and respect is so important.

Next week, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government will speak at this year's national event to mark international Holocaust memorial day, which will take place in East Renfrewshire. I know that a members' business debate on the subject will take place later today. I also had the honour of signing the Holocaust memorial day book of commitment in Parliament earlier this week.

Tom Arthur: Two of the most important lessons of the Holocaust are about the capacity of human beings to systematically inflict suffering and death on other human beings and about the fact that such actions could take place in what had been regarded as an advanced society.

A third lesson, which the First Minister referred to, is about the consequences of leaving hate and discrimination unchallenged. What began with casual antisemitism, laced with conspiracy theories and pseudo-science, traversed a darkening spectrum of increasing social and economic marginalisation that led ultimately to the factories of death at Chelmno, Majdanek, Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibór and Auschwitz-Birkenau.

As the Holocaust slowly passes from living memory, will the First Minister advise the Parliament on how the Scottish Government will continue to support work to ensure that the memory of the Holocaust is preserved for future generations and that future generations are taught those lessons, which we must never forget?

The First Minister: I thank Tom Arthur for reminding us so eloquently and powerfully of the horrors of the Holocaust and other genocides and for reminding us, particularly in the world that we live in today, of the importance of no one being a bystander in the face of intolerance and hate.

When we stand at the end of the railway line in Birkenau, as many in the chamber have done, we realise powerfully that the Holocaust did not start there; it ended there. It got to that stage because hatred, antisemitism and intolerance were

tolerated by many people. As we mark Holocaust memorial day this year, the most important message is that we must not be bystanders.

As the Holocaust passes out of living memory, it is vital that the next generations remember and learn the lessons. Learning about the Holocaust is part of international citizenship education, which is central to curriculum for excellence.

In addition, the Scottish Government supports the Holocaust Educational Trust's lessons from Auschwitz programme, which includes a visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau and aims to increase knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust. I have made a very public commitment to the trust that, as long as I am the First Minister, we will continue that support. I am sure that all parties are committed to continuing that support long into the future.

Students who participate in the programme become Holocaust ambassadors in their schools and communities, and they do excellent work to keep remembrance alive. In our roles as constituency and regional MSPs, it is important for us all to support those fantastic young ambassadors, who not only keep the memory of the Holocaust alive but help to pass on to the next generation and beyond the message about not tolerating hatred.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11909&i=107674#ScotParlOR>

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-15590 Annabelle Ewing (SNP): Recognition and Remembrance of Irena Sendler – That the Parliament notes the heroism of Irena Sendler, who was born on 15 February 1910 and dies on 12 May 2008 and was a Polish social worker and humanitarian who had access to the Warsaw Ghetto and served in the Polish Underground during the Second World War in German-occupied Warsaw; notes that, over four years, she rescued approximately 2,500 Jewish children, and that she was arrested and tortured by the Gestapo before being sentenced to death and subsequently escaping due to the intervention of her colleagues, who bribed the German guards on the way to her execution; further notes that she said later of her exploits, “Heroes do extraordinary things. What I did was not an extraordinary thing. It was normal”, and recognises and commends her bravery and that of her colleagues.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-15590>

Scottish Government

First Minister @ScotGovFM

“We must never forget the horror of the Holocaust, and challenge hatred, intolerance, prejudice, racism and antisemitism whenever and wherever it occurs”. FM Nicola Sturgeon has signed the HolocaustUK Book of Commitment to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. #WeRemember

<https://twitter.com/ScotGovFM/status/1089472399521783808>

Welsh Assembly

Holocaust Memorial Day 2019 – Torn from Home

... This week, Assembly Members and staff gathered on the steps of the Senedd to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. Dawn Bowden AM's 90 Second Statement highlighted the efforts of those from a Merthyr Tydfil community, who this week gathered to mark the completion

of a Holocaust memorial garden, with help from the Holocaust Memorial Trust, explaining that what started as an initiative by a community and volunteers is a part of the international effort of remembrance, research and education around Holocaust. She stated that “we should never forget the horrors of Holocaust, and we should use this time to reflect on conditions that allowed such barbaric acts to incur.” ...

The National Assembly for Wales is an inclusive organisation, where our employment opportunities are open to all and where the people of Wales can actively engage in our work. By marking days like Holocaust Memorial Day, we are inspired to continue to build diversity and inclusion into everything we do. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://assemblyblog.wales/2019/01/25/holocaust-memorial-day-2019/>

The 90 Second Statement referred to above can be read at

<http://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/5420#C158573>

Welsh Government

Mark Drakeford @fmwales

Today is Holocaust Memorial Day - an opportunity for us all to remember the millions of innocent people killed in the Holocaust and other genocides around the world. We all have a part to play in learning lessons from the past and challenging those who spread hate.

<https://twitter.com/fmwales/status/1089448066606874624>

A video message from the First Minister of Wales is also available at the above link

Northern Ireland Executive

‘Torn from Home’ - a time to remember and honour survivors

A Holocaust memorial event was held in Belfast City Hall to mark 74 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The event was hosted by The Executive Office in collaboration with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) and Belfast City Council. ...

Olivia Marks-Woldman, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust in London was keynote speaker at the event. She said: “The event at Belfast City Hall will be one of more than 11,000 taking place across the country to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2019 – in schools, workplaces, local authorities, libraries and many more varied settings. Last year we were delighted to see more than 750 activities taking place in Northern Ireland. ... we are pleased to see people learning lessons from genocide, for a better future – particularly at a time when rising antisemitism, anti-Muslim hate and other forms of prejudice are causing real damage across society.”

Speaking at the event, the Head of the Civil Service, David Sterling said: “... The theme for this year’s commemoration, ‘Torn from Home’ is regrettably very relevant to our society today ... The trauma and distress caused to people who feel they have no option but to leave their homes as a result of war or poverty cannot be underestimated. ...

I firmly believe that the testimonies of survivors of the Nazi Holocaust and subsequent genocides play an important role in helping us to understand these challenges and to address them in a compassionate way.

Their testimony must never be forgotten. We must learn from this terrible history so there is no repeat of the wrongs of the past.”

The Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Deirdre Hargey added: “Remembering the Holocaust gives us an opportunity each year to not only recall and remember, but to also look at its legacy and its relevance for us in today’s society. We should never forget how

such events came about and we must continue to realise our own responsibility to challenge the expressions of hatred and other forms of prejudice and discrimination that can foster separation and hatred.”

Closing the commemoration, Laura Marks OBE, Chair of the HMDT said: “As people come together across the UK to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2019, we are pleased to see The Executive Office of Northern Ireland making a strong commitment to remembering all those murdered during the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.”

To read the full press release see

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/news/torn-home-time-remember-and-honour-survivors>

European Commission

Statement by President Jean-Claude Juncker on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day 2019

On 27 January we commemorate the six million Jewish women, men, and children as well as all other victims murdered during the Holocaust. On this day, 74 years ago, the Allied Forces liberated the extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau, where they discovered unspeakable horrors. Hatred against “the other” was translated into killing “the other”.

On this day, I am deeply worried. I would never have thought that during my lifetime Jews would be afraid to practice their faith in Europe. It saddens me that nearly 40% of them are considering leaving Europe. Holocaust denial is still alive in Europe. One in three Europeans declares to know ‘just a little’ about the Holocaust and one out of 20 has never heard of it.

Ignorance is dangerous. As time goes on and memories fade, it is our moral duty, more than ever, to remember. We cannot change history but we can make sure that future generations do not witness this intolerable horror again.

We will not tolerate any form of Antisemitism from everyday hate speech, offline and online, to physical attacks. The European Commission is working hand-in-hand with all Member States to combat this menace and guarantee the security of Jewish communities in Europe.

Our Union was built on the ashes of the Holocaust. Remembering it and fighting Antisemitism is our duty towards the Jewish community and indispensable to protect our common European values.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-19-541_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-19-541_en.htm)

Council of Europe

International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust: Statement by the Finnish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers

“The role of the commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust is to engrave on the minds of the younger generations the lessons learnt from these tragic events and to make sure that each of us remains vigilant to help prevent manifestations of intolerance and incitement to hatred that may lead to acts of genocide”, Timo Soini, Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland said in a statement made on the occasion of the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust and the prevention of crimes against humanity (27 January).

The Minister added: “This Day must inspire us to honour the victims and survivors of the Holocaust, but also remind us that in the name of ideology, the human being is capable of the best and the worst.”

The Minister underlined that through this commemoration we are committed to tirelessly continue our efforts to preserve, in Europe and in the world, a society based on our common values of democracy and human rights that unite us in the Council of Europe. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/international-day-of-commemoration-in-memory-of-the-victims-of-the-holocaust-1>

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

Antisemitism in the EU persists seven decades after the Holocaust

With antisemitism once again on the rise, International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January is a moment to reaffirm our commitment to human rights and remember the millions who were killed during the Second World War.

Last December, Member States agreed to significantly scale up efforts to combat antisemitism. The EU Council's Declaration promised a common approach to better protect Jewish communities and institutions across Europe.

"FRA welcomes the renewed pledge to better protect Jews in Europe," said FRA Director Michael O'Flaherty. "In honouring the victims of antisemitism past and present, we stand firm in working towards ensuring that hate and discrimination have no place in our society." In the years leading up to the Holocaust, hate, prejudice and racism towards Jews were all too common across society. The gradual normalisation of antisemitism paved the way for one of the worst atrocities ever to take place in Europe.

More than seven decades later, once again Europe is haunted by widespread antisemitism. It not only threatens our Jewish communities, but also the very values of human and fundamental rights on which we have built the European Union.

In December last year, the agency published the results of the biggest antisemitism survey of its kind ever worldwide.

The survey shows that almost 90% of the respondents feel that antisemitism is getting worse in their country, especially online. Almost 30% of the respondents have been harassed and over one third of all our respondents considered emigrating from the EU.

The results of the reports shows a frightening reality of what it is like to be Jewish in the EU today. It serves as a powerful indication of the views of almost the entire Jewish population living in the EU.

Worryingly, FRA's survey results contrast with the general public's view where only 36% believe that antisemitism has risen, according to the most [recent Eurobarometer results](#). Worse still, only 4 in 10 Europeans think the Holocaust is sufficiently taught in schools. And among people who finished their education earlier, even less.

Such findings serve as a clear reminder of the urgent need to roll out more effective measures to prevent and fight antisemitism. The European Commission's call for an expert group should help spearhead these efforts. This includes raising awareness of antisemitism today combined with Holocaust education. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2019/antisemitism-eu-persists-seven-decades-after-holocaust>

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Greater educational efforts, stronger condemnation of anti-Semitism truest way to commemorate victims of the Holocaust, OSCE officials say ahead of international remembrance day

Enhanced educational efforts and stronger condemnation of anti-Semitism and all forms of intolerance must be part of any commemoration of the Holocaust, OSCE officials said ahead of Sunday's International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Ingibjörg Sólrún

Gísladóttir, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism, stressed in a statement today that this was the truest way to commemorate the victims of genocide under the Nazi regime.

“We cannot forget the genocide of Europe’s Jews and of all the victims of the Nazi regime. Millions were killed simply because of who they were,” Gísladóttir said. “As we commemorate the victims of the Holocaust, we must recommit ourselves to taking action against anti-Semitism. Governments and civil society must work together to address anti-Semitism and all forms of intolerance and discrimination, to ensure we will never again witness such atrocities.”

Underlining the need for such work, Rabbi Baker stressed that this must come in the form of concrete, comprehensive measures.

“Our remembrance on this Holocaust Commemoration Day must also be a call to action. Anti-Semitic incidents are increasing, Jewish communities are fearful of attacks and uncertain about their future,” he said. “We know where hatred, prejudice and anti-Semitism can lead. But knowing alone is not enough. This must be coupled with strong and comprehensive measures – including security and education – and a commitment that ‘Never Again’ is not an empty phrase but our guiding principle.”

Gísladóttir also stressed the importance of education: “We need to make sure that the history of the Holocaust is taught in every school, in every country, so that our children learn the importance of open and tolerant, democratic and inclusive societies, based on respect for human rights.”

“It is also important to honour those who had the courage to act and protect Jews, Roma and Sinti and other victims of the Nazi regime. Their individual acts of heroism are a powerful example of the ability each of us has to do good in the face of unspeakable evil,” the ODIHR Director added. “The Holocaust provides the strongest example of unbridled prejudice. Each and every one of us, especially those in positions of authority, must take responsibility for addressing anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance.” ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/409887>

United Nations

Tackling ‘deeply worrying’ global rise in anti-Semitism is a job for all societies everywhere, says UN chief

Warning that anti-Semitism, the world’s oldest prejudice, has persisted to torment new generations, Secretary-General António Guterres has pledged that the United Nations will always be at the forefront of the fight against all forms of hatred, and work to strengthen efforts to uphold human dignity for all.

“Our urgent challenge today is to heed the lessons of a period when human dignity was cast aside for a racial ideology,” Mr. Guterres said in an address early Saturday morning to the [Holocaust Remembrance](#) Ceremony held annually at New York City’s historic Park East Synagogue.

He recalled that the last time he addressed the event had been just four days after a man carrying “weapons of war” stormed into a synagogue on Shabbat in Pittsburgh shouting “all Jews must die”. ...

“It was a barbaric assault – the worst anti-Semitic attack in the history of the United States. In our sorrow, we joined hands here in this pulpit,” he said, adding that many faiths had been represented, Jews, Christians, Muslims and others, including the top leadership of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, all declaring their utter opposition to hatred of any kind.

“I am afraid, however, that in the months since Pittsburgh we have had more reasons for

profound concern,” lamented Mr. Guterres, noting that last month, headstones in a Jewish cemetery in Strasbourg were defaced with swastikas; this month, rocks were thrown through the windows of the central synagogue in Sofia; and for some time now, anti-Semitic attacks in the United States and Europe have been on the rise.

Statistics and polls paint a deeply worrying picture, he said, explaining that anti-Semitic incidents in the United States increased by 57 per cent in 2017. One European poll reported last year that 28 per cent of Jews had experienced some form of harassment for being Jewish. Another revealed the strong persistence of classic anti-Semitic motifs.

“The old anti-Semitism is back – and getting worse,” said the UN chief, warning that Nazi symbols and slogans remain widespread, as anti-hate organizations track hundreds of neo-Nazi, pro-Nazi and white supremacist groups.

“And as we know all too well, where there is hatred of Jews, hatred of others is also near at hand,” he said, noting that indeed, the world was witnessing a disturbing increase in other forms of bigotry: attacks on Muslims were on the rise; intolerance was spreading at lightning speed across the Internet and social media; and hate groups were using social media to link up with like-minded bigots across borders.

“Hate is moving into the mainstream – as major political parties incorporating ideas from the fringes and parties once rightly considered pariahs are gaining influence,” he said, adding: “We should not exaggerate the comparisons to the 1930s, but equally we should not ignore the similarities.” ...

To read the full press release see

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/01/1031392>

United Nations Opens Holocaust Exhibition on Story of Ruth Maier

A powerful exhibition tracing the journey of Ruth Maier, a young diarist who perished in the Holocaust, is now on display at the United Nations Visitors Lobby in New York. The exhibition titled *Lives cut short — Seeking Refuge During the Holocaust: The Short Life of Ruth Maier* ... is part of a week-long series of Holocaust remembrance activities that will be held at the United Nations in observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust under the theme “Holocaust remembrance: Demand and Defend Your Human Rights”.

Through photographs and diary extracts, this exhibition tells the story of a Jewish girl named Ruth Maier. Born in Vienna in 1920, Ruth began keeping a diary when she turned 13. She recorded her everyday life, and the increasing persecution of Jews in Austria after the “Anschluss” of 1938. After witnessing the violent antisemitism of the November Pogrom in 1938, Ruth found refuge in Norway. There she completed her schooling and revealed her talents in writing, drawing and painting. Writing poetry and her diaries in her new language, Norwegian, she shared her thoughts about love and life, which became increasingly more difficult under occupation by the Germans.

Ruth Maier could not escape anti-Semitism or the reach of the Nazis. In 1942, she was arrested in front of her friends and deported to the Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940–1945), where she was murdered on 1 December 1942. Since 2014, Ruth Maier’s diaries have been part of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Memory of the World Register, secured at the Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies. The story of Ruth Maier is a reminder of the immeasurable loss to the world of the unrealized potential of the 6 million murdered during the Holocaust. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/note6519.doc.htm>

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Statement by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet on the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust: "Holocaust remembrance: Demand and defend your human rights"

On this day in 1945, the largest Nazi extermination camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau, was liberated. Some 7,500 people were freed that day; thousands more had been forced to march across the freezing landscape, and over the preceding three years, it is estimated that more than 1.1 million people – nine out of ten of them Jews – had been killed. Auschwitz-Birkenau was the first Nazi extermination camp to be established in Poland, and the largest; those who were not killed in the gas chambers had perished because of forced labour, starvation, disease and supposedly "medical" experiments.

Alongside millions of Jews, the victims of the Nazi camps included hundreds of thousands of Roma and Sinti people, people with disabilities, homosexuals, prisoners of war, political dissidents and members of Resistance networks from all over occupied Europe.

Humanity could never again be the same after this frightful crime – perpetrated on such a massive scale, and planned so systematically. Countless people participated, actively or through indifference, as women, men and children were humiliated, rejected, rounded up, transported to places of horror and killed.

On this International Day of commemoration, we express our respect and sorrow to the victims of this terrible crime.

We are seeing a sharp increase in many forms of hatred today, including the poison of anti-Semitism and other attacks on minority communities. They include physical assault and harassment of children and adults, as well as broad campaigns of vilification against members of racial and ethnic minorities, and migrants – in some cases, with the active backing of national leaders.

We also see continuing efforts to minimise or deny the events of the Holocaust, and the participation of its accomplices in perpetrating these crimes.

We must stand together against this normalization of hatred. We must push back against this slowly rising tide of anti-Semitism, xenophobia and other attempts to deprive specific categories of people of their humanity and rights.

The social media accounts of the Auschwitz Memorial recently noted: "When we look at Auschwitz, we see the end of the process. It's important to remember that the Holocaust actually did not start from gas chambers. This hatred gradually developed from words, stereotypes and prejudice – through legal exclusion, dehumanisation and escalating violence."

Today, too, we are seeing legal exclusion, dehumanisation, hateful propaganda and escalating violence against some communities.

It is time for us to wake up to the lessons of the 20th century. In the face of attempts to dehumanise and demonise communities, we must stand up to defend human rights.

We must counter the hostility and scapegoating which are increasingly anchored in the political landscape – and which can never be justified. They fuel violence; they hurt and humiliate people; and they harm society, destroying our sense of a common community engaged together in seeking out solutions for the greater well-being of us all.

Only by defending human rights, and by demanding that leaders act to end discrimination, can we truly ensure that persecution and genocide truly will not happen again.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24121&LangID=E>

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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>

International Development Assistance (Palestinian National Authority Schools) Bill

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

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Consultations ** new or updated today

**** closes in 4 days**

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>

Scottish charity law (closing date 1 April 2019)

<https://tinyurl.com/y9ln88df>

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