



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

The following three questions all received the same answer

Football: Antisemitism

Rosie Duffield (Labour) [214080] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking with football clubs to help identify perpetrators of antisemitic hate crimes on match days.

Rosie Duffield (Labour) [214081] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of football clubs on the use of antisemitic chants at football matches.

Rosie Duffield (Labour) [214082] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with (a) the police and (b) other relevant authorities on the monitoring of antisemitism at football matches.

Mims Davies: All forms of hate crime are completely unacceptable, and government fully supports a zero tolerance approach by clubs, the football authorities and the police to dealing with anti-Semitic or other types of abuse when it occurs in our stadiums or sporting fields.

There are examples of good work happening at clubs like Chelsea to tackle the issue of anti-Semitism, and by Kick It Out and the Community Security Trust, with government's support, to monitor anti-Semitic hate crimes in the UK and highlight the concern. Together, those bodies released an anti-Semitism guide for match day stewards to help improve awareness of anti-Semitic behaviour and offering information on the current laws around it, as well as advice on what action to take. As part of the Hate Crime Action Plan (2016) and its refresh (2018), the government have also been supporting Show Racism the Red Card to educate young people and adults on the dangers of holding discriminatory/prejudice sentiments and prevent the development of harmful opinions into hate crimes.

The government is however alive to a rise in the numbers of reported incidents of discrimination at all levels of the sport, and I will be inviting together the FA, English Football League, Premier League, players' representatives, and groups such as Stonewall and Kick It Out to discuss what more football can do to stamp out racist,

homophobic and anti-semitic abuse at matches.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-29/214080/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-29/214081/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-29/214082/>

The Action Plan referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/543679/Action_Against_Hate_-_UK_Government_s_Plan_to_Tackle_Hate_Crime_2016.pdf

UK Government s Plan to Tackle Hate Crime 2016.pdf

The refresh of the Action Plan referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748175/Hate_crime_refresh_2018_FINAL_WEB.PDF

Sharia Law Independent Review

Giles Watling (Conservative) [214073] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the Government plans to publish its response to the recommendations of the independent review into the application of sharia law in England and Wales.

Victoria Atkins: On 1 February 2018 the Government published the independent Sharia review and confirmed it would not be taking forward the recommendation to regulate Sharia Councils in a Written Ministerial Statement.

The Government's commitments in response to the review can be found in the Integrated Communities Strategy green paper, published on 14 March 2018 and available on gov.uk:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integrated-communities-strategy-green-paper.](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integrated-communities-strategy-green-paper)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-29/214073/>

The Review referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/678478/6.4152_HO_CPFGR_Report_into_Sharia_Law_in_the_UK_WEB.pdf

Visas: Ministers of Religion

Eddie Hughes (Conservative) [214615] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Minister of Religion visas have been granted (a) within and (b) outside of the three week timescale target time in each of the last 12 months.

Caroline Nokes: The published quarterly transparency data does not separate the sub-categories within the wider Tier 2 route. We have therefore provided the published data for all Tier 2 subcategories which includes General, Intra Company Transfers, Minister of Religion and Sportspeople.

Link to the latest published data:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data#uk-visas-and-immigration>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-30/214615/>

All Party Parliamentary Group on Hate Crime

How can we build community cohesion when hate crime is on the rise?’

Home Office data from 2018 showed a noticeable increase in hate crimes recorded by the police across all monitored strands. This is supported both by evidence submitted to the APPG on Hate Crime enquiry itself as well as a literature review. Government statistics and reports released in 2017 and 2018 also support this statement. Although the rise can be partly attributed to greater levels of reporting by victims and witnesses, under-reporting still plagues this area of criminal justice so better reporting and recording in no way fully accounts for the increases seen.

Hate crime predominantly takes the form of verbal abuse or harassment, although this can vary within strands (e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans [LGBT] victims tend to be the victims of physical assault and individuals with learning disabilities often fall victim to financial or sexual exploitation). In many targeted communities, hate crime remains massively under-reported, in part due to the normalization of it, i.e. victims experience hate crime and hate speech so frequently it has become ‘part of life’ to them. There can also be issues around trust when it comes to dealing with the police ...

Hate crime has a markedly greater impact on the emotional and mental well-being of victims when compared to non-hate motivated offences. It leads to more behavioral changes in victims (e.g. not going out of the house as often, changing their routes to and from work etc. to avoid harassment). There is evidence that links being the victim of hate crime to serious mental health issues including suicidal ideation and suicide itself.

Children and young people are particularly vulnerable to hate crime, both through absorbing harmful online content as well as being exposed to the prejudices of adults in their day to day lives. which can have lasting impacts on their lives. ...

One area where charities and community organisations can make a valuable contribution to the fight against hate crime is through supporting the provision of restorative justice. Research has shown that use of a restorative approach can bring tangible benefits to all parties and reduce the risk of future offending by perpetrators.

To read the full press release see

<http://www.appghatecrime.org/publications/>

How Do We Build Community Cohesion When Hate Crime Is On The Rise?

<http://www.appghatecrime.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/APPG%20on%20Hate%20Crime%20Report%20Hate%20Crime%20and%20Community%20Cohesion.pdf>

High Court

Judgement: Richard Burgon MP v (1) News Group Newspapers Limited (2) Thomas Zoltan Newton Dunn

Shadow Justice Secretary Richard Burgon MP, has been awarded £30,000 damages against The Sun newspaper over claims that a heavy metal band he performed with “delights in Nazi symbols”. The Sun argued that the images were “strongly reminiscent of Nazi iconography” (the “SS” ‘lightning bolt’), and that Mr Burgon “demonstrated terrible misjudgment and exposed himself to ridicule”, but Mr Burgon said that the image was a “spoof” of an album by Black Sabbath.

To read the full judgement see

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/burgon-final-judgment.pdf>

Antisemitic Incidents Report 2018

... CST recorded a record high total of 1,652 antisemitic incidents in the UK last year. 2018 was the third year in a row that CST has recorded a record high incident total and means the problem of rising antisemitism in our country continues to grow. ...

The 1,652 antisemitic incidents CST recorded in 2018 represent a 16 per cent rise from the 1,420 incidents recorded in 2017. These 1,652 incidents were spread throughout the year, with over 100 incidents recorded in every month for the first time in any calendar year; indicating that a general atmosphere of intolerance and prejudice is sustaining the high incident totals, rather than a one-off specific 'trigger' event. In addition to more general background factors, the highest monthly totals in 2018 came when the problem of antisemitism in the Labour Party was the subject of intense discussion and activity, or when violence surged temporarily on the border between Israel and Gaza; suggesting that these events, and reactions to them, also played a role in 2018's record total.

The highest monthly totals in 2018 came in May, with 182 incidents; April, with 151 incidents; August, with 150 incidents; and September, with 148 incidents. It is likely that these higher monthly totals were partly caused by reactions to political events in the UK and overseas, involving the Labour Party and violence on the border of Israel and Gaza, during those months. ...

The 182 incidents recorded by CST in May is the highest monthly total CST has recorded since August 2014, when Israel and Hamas last fought a sustained conflict over Gaza, and is the fourth-highest monthly total CST has ever recorded.

2018 saw an increase in the number and proportion of antisemitic incidents that used political or extremist language and imagery. Forty-five per cent of the incidents recorded by CST in 2018 involved the use of extremist language or imagery alongside antisemitism, compared to 30 per cent of incidents recorded in 2017. Not all of these incidents revealed a clear, single ideological motivation: many involved the varied and confused use of different extremist motifs, drawn from a broad reservoir of antisemitic sources. ...

The most common single type of incident recorded by CST in 2018 involved verbal abuse randomly directed at visibly Jewish people in public. ...

CST recorded a 17 per cent decrease in the number of violent antisemitic assaults, from 149 in 2017 to 123 in 2018. One of these violent incidents was classified by CST as 'Extreme Violence', which means it involved potential grievous bodily harm (GBH) or a threat to life. There were 78 incidents of Damage & Desecration of Jewish property in 2018; 1,300 incidents of Abusive Behaviour, including verbal abuse, antisemitic graffiti, antisemitic abuse via social media and one-off cases of hate mail; 109 direct antisemitic threats; and 42 cases of mass-mailed antisemitic leaflets or emails. ...

Home Secretary the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP said: "All acts of antisemitism are utterly despicable and have no place in society. The Jewish community should not have to tolerate these attacks and we are doing all we can to rid society of these poisonous views. As part of our Hate Crime Action Plan we work closely with the Jewish community and soon I will be co-chairing an antisemitism roundtable to discuss how we further tackle these issues."

Communities Secretary the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said: "It is completely unacceptable to see the number of antisemitic incidents continue to rise again, particularly at such an alarming rate. I am shocked and saddened that the Community Security Trust recorded over 100 incidents each month last year. Antisemitism may be felt most acutely by the Jewish community, but it is a disgrace that concerns us all. It is as important as ever to eradicate antisemitic discourse from our society and ensure that it is challenged and rooted out from wherever it is found. ...

National Policing Lead for hate crime Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hamilton said: "We are extremely grateful for the work of our partners at the Community Security Trust, to help

shine a light on the hostility suffered by many Jewish people. It can never be acceptable to abuse someone because of their ethnicity or religion, but we see that there are still far too many people who act illegally, fuelled by global events, divisions in our society or historical bigotries. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2019/02/07/antisemitic-incidents-report-2018>

Antisemitic Incident Report 2018

https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/c/7/IR_2018_Web.pdf

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Philippa Whitford (SNP) [215590] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how her Department monitors the use of aid that it provides to the Palestinian Authority.

Alistair Burt: Direct UK financial aid to the Palestinian Authority is channelled through the EU Palestinian-European Socio-Economic Management Assistance Mechanism (PEGASE). Our money goes into a special, dedicated bank account before being paid to vetted health and education public servants in the West Bank. The bank account is only used for UK aid. Independent auditors check that the money paid out from the special bank account only went to the vetted individuals after every disbursement. Audits also include spot checks and field visits.

DFID will also help the Palestinian water and electricity authorities to increase sustainable supplies, particularly in Gaza. Through The World Bank Partnership for Infrastructure Development in the West Bank and Gaza Multi Donor Trust Fund, UK aid will flow from the trust fund to dedicated accounts that will be managed in accordance with robust rules established by the World Bank. DFID will monitor this support through independent financial audits of project spending and through regular programme updates provided by the World Bank.

DFID funding to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) is subject to the rigorous controls that are applied to all UK aid, including annual reviews, evaluation reports, and independent financial audits of programme spending. This information is triangulated with reporting from suppliers and programme partners, and through field visits.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-01/215590/>

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Philippa Whitford (SNP) [215591] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what information her Department holds on the uses of aid funding her Department has provided to Palestine.

Alistair Burt: UK aid in the OPTs supports the protection of the most vulnerable, economic growth and job creation, and the delivery of essential services. DFID have also provided a rapid and flexible response to emerging humanitarian crises in the OPTs. Our support to the International Committee of the Red Cross has provided emergency health care assistance to aid Gaza's burdened health system. DFID's support to UNICEF has helped address critical water and sanitation needs

for 2 million Gazans.

DFID funding to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) is subject to the rigorous controls that are applied to all UK aid, including annual reviews, evaluation reports, and independent financial audits of programme spending. This information is triangulated with reporting from suppliers and programme partners, and through field visits. DFID implements a robust monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that UK aid reaches the intended beneficiaries and achieves the best development outcomes, with a strong focus on ensuring value for money for the UK taxpayer. Information relating to monitoring and evaluation processes in the OPTs is stored in accordance with DFID guidelines.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-01/215591/>

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Foreign Affairs

House of Commons Written Answer

Scandinavia: Antisemitism

Rosie Duffield (Labour) [214083] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in (a) Norway, (b) Finland and (c) Sweden on antisemitism.

Alan Duncan: I have not had recent discussions on antisemitism with my counterparts, but our Posts in the region engage on such issues regularly.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-29/214083/>

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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 8 days**

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/>

Racial harassment in higher education (closing date 28 February 2019)

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

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