

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Oral Answers

Racism in Football

(Urgent Question) **Rosena Allin-Khan (Labour)**: To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to make a statement on the racist abuse that was aimed at England players in their match against Bulgaria.

The Minister for Sport, Media and Creative Industries (Nigel Adams): Like all Members of this House and the country, I was appalled by the disgusting racist abuse encountered by the England football team and its support staff in Bulgaria last night. Whether you are a player, a manager, a supporter or a member of the staff no participant in sport should have to tolerate discrimination of any kind. ...

We have made progress in this country to combat discrimination in our domestic game and make our stadiums more welcoming places to be. The Government are supporting a number of anti-racism initiatives, including the Premier League's "No room for racism," "Show racism the red card" and "Kick it out" campaigns, all of which have achieved a great deal in this area, and in February my predecessor in this role held a summit on discrimination with a range of bodies acting within football, but it is clear that we cannot be complacent, and we must remain a leading voice on this issue internationally.

International competitions such as this one should bring cultures and countries together. It was a step in the right direction to see the UEFA protocol engage last night—for the first time, I understand—but it is clear that much more needs to be done to stamp out racism in the game. I am also encouraged by the reaction of the Bulgarian Prime Minister, who has spoken out and called for changes at the Bulgarian Football Association.

UEFA must now get its response right, and leave no doubt that the consequences of failing to tackle this issue will be severe. I am writing today to the UEFA president, urging him to conclude UEFA's investigations swiftly and to ensure that all football authorities and fans are clear that the consequences of failing to tackle this issue

will be severe. The England team has my full support and I expect tough action from UEFA in response to this.

Rosena Allin-Khan: ... Last night, we saw the most horrific racist abuse aimed at England players in their match against Bulgaria, which caused the match to be halted on two occasions. Photos and clips followed of fans performing Nazi salutes, and the racist chanting continued. It is utterly deplorable. I had a conversation with the FA's chief executive last night during the match, in which I reiterated our support for the England players. The entire country will be proud of the England team last night, and Gareth Southgate has shown true leadership in defence of his players. This abuse must be stamped out. No one should have to arrive at work to be subjected to any form of discrimination, so why are our players still being subjected to this? In future, if players decide to walk off the pitch in protest, they must have the full support of this House, our press and the football bodies.

We ourselves, however, are not exempt from this problem. It would be irresponsible for us to condemn the behaviour of fans around the world without addressing the fact that many players have indeed suffered racist abuse online, from the stands and in their day-to-day lives at the hands of a small section of our own fans. I know that the Government have committed to writing to UEFA, which I really welcome, but will the Minister outline what further steps they are taking to address the scourge of racism in sport? UEFA has a duty to act here. The world is watching. A fine is not enough, so I am asking our Government to ensure that we are backing up the FA to seek the harshest possible punishments. Stadium bans are a must, and forfeiting matches and expulsion from tournaments must not be ruled out. Enough is enough. The time to act is now.

Nigel Adams: I echo every single word that the hon. Lady has just uttered. ... I sense that this is a bit of a pivotal moment. We have experienced these issues for far too long, but I think there is a collective desire to see action taken. I fully support the way the FA swiftly launched its complaint, the way UEFA is undertaking its investigation and the way the players handled themselves on the pitch. They let the football do the talking in the second half, but this situation clearly cannot go on, and UEFA should rule nothing out in terms of sanctions.

As I said previously, my predecessor hosted a summit with all the football authorities in England. Our Department is outlining its plans and how it will take them forward. That follows a summit on the issue earlier in the year, which involved players, coaches, fan groups, players' representatives, a policing unit and campaign groups. There are a lot of proposals and plans that we will be working on, including stronger education measures, better reporting systems and better training and support for referees. Incidentally, I commend the referee last night for the way he handled himself and the way he supported the English players, giving them the option of step 2 of the UEFA protocol. As the hon. Lady knows, there is still more to do; it is vital that the football authorities continue to prioritise tackling this despicable abuse, and we expect them to do that.

Tracey Crouch (Conservative): ... does the Minister also agree with the chairman's comments in the post-match interview, where he said that we cannot necessarily take the moral high ground on this issue because, while we have made progress on tackling racism in English football, there is still so much more that we need to do at every single tier of football in England?

Nigel Adams: ... we need to get our own homework done before we start preaching, but the problem is of such a huge scale that when international problems such as this arise, we must speak up and we must demand action. She is 100% right that we still need to clear up the mess on our own doorstep.

Gavin Newlands (SNP): ... it would be wrong to portray last night's disgusting scenes as isolated incidents. The truth is that they are not. Racist chants and abuse form part of a growing and consistent pattern through parts of the game across Europe. This must mark

a seminal moment, as the Minister said, in how football authorities crack down and eradicate racism of all kinds in our sport. ...

We cannot have the Serbian FA fined €80,000 for fans' racist chanting while former Arsenal striker Nicklas Bendtner was fined €100,000 for displaying a betting firm's logo. These are hate crimes and should be treated as such by UEFA. ...

Nigel Adams: ... We expect the penalties to be severe. It is not the first incident; we experienced it with the Montenegro game. The idea that we have bunches of people making Nazi salutes and doing monkey chants—these are sub-human behaviours—cannot be tolerated. ...

Nigel Adams: ... racist and homophobic chanting at football matches is a criminal offence. It is quite simple. Action can be taken, and we have provided some funding to Kick It Out to ensure that all hate crimes, whether during a game or on social media, are accurately recorded so that the necessary action, including on whether to involve the Crown Prosecution Service, is taken. ...

Chris Elmore (Labour): ... What we are talking about in one example was people dressed in black shirts making the Nazi salute. These elements of racism are being pushed on social media platforms. ... May I ask him to press the Culture Secretary and, indeed, the Prime Minister to bring forward the online harms Bill that was mentioned in the Queen's Speech? That would mean that social media companies can start to be tackled and regulated so that they are unable to have excuses and to say, "Oh we can't take down these pictures of people making Nazi salutes at football matches because it takes too long to process." We need the Bill. We need it to be stronger and to ensure that this type of racism is not fuelled by the social media platforms. ...

Nigel Adams: ... what we saw last night—extremists dressed in black, making Nazi salutes and making monkey chants—was bordering on the subhuman and should not be tolerated. Online abuse—any form of online abuse—should not be tolerated. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-10-15/debates/BFBB922F-6D70-4AB3-8974-1A2FF3C46306/RacismInFootball>

House of Lords Oral Answers

Football: Racism

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Baroness Barran) repeated the first House of Commons Answer that appears in the section above.

Lord Griffiths of Burry Port (Labour): ... I wonder whether it is not the outbreak of something that lurks beneath the surface and is therefore much more widely worrying than simply what happens on the football field. That gives a sense of urgency to our need to respond. I note that the Bulgarian Prime Minister has spoken out and that, subsequently, the president of the Bulgarian Football Union has resigned. Clearly, within Bulgaria there is feeling about this too. Perhaps we should try to keep our diplomatic channels open and our arms outreached to embrace the positive side of Bulgarian society, as well as being critical of the damning and damnable incidents that we have all been witness to.

Baroness Barran: ... we welcome the positive action that was taken so promptly by the Bulgarian Government last night and note the resignation of the president of the Bulgarian FA. The noble Lord is right that there are wider forces at work here. We have worked for a long time to try to stamp out racism in all parts of our society, but particularly in football, and we continue to be vigilant.

Lord Addington (Liberal Democrat): ... It took concerted action by both the football

authorities and the Government to clean up the game here to the extent that we have. What steps are being taken to get the Governments of all the UEFA countries to take action together to make sure racism is not tolerated, so that there is consistency of action across the piece?

Baroness Barran: ... I repeat the spirit of the comments made by my honourable friend in the other place. He is open to meetings and to supporting every effort in this area. We are clear that the football authorities need to be in the lead in solving this but, as the noble Lord noted, Governments can be useful in supporting them. My honourable friend the Minister is committed to doing that.

Lord Bassam of Brighton (Labour): My Lords, it is 19 years since I took legislation through this House to tackle racism and hooliganism in our stadia. Will the Minister now look again at the legislation and consider making racist chanting and other racist behaviour in stadia a more severe and aggravated offence? Will she also press ministerial colleagues to ensure that international standards on this subject are raised and brought in line with those in this country? We have led the way in tackling these issues.

Baroness Barran: ... I commend the noble Lord for the work he led in this area. I am happy to take away his suggestions and consider them. The Government have been active in trying to work with the football authorities; we met them in February this year. Actions were published in July, and we are keen to see how those translate into practice.

Lord Cashman (Non-affiliated): My Lords, does the Minister agree that the only route out of this discrimination is through education and information? We have made great progress in this country; I welcome developments in Bulgaria. On education, does the Minister agree that we should support head teachers and teachers whether they are working in Bulgaria or Birmingham?

Baroness Barran: The noble Lord is right that education is an important part of this, and it is included in some of the proposals the football authorities published in July, as well as improving reporting systems, better training and support for referees and stewards and improved use of CCTV. It is not one single thing that will address this but a combination.

Baroness Browning (Conservative): My Lords, watching the television footage of the Bulgaria match, it was obvious that one could identify the faces of many of the culprits. What action is going to be taken against those individuals? If my noble friend does not know, perhaps she could make inquiries. Are we going to see the same people turn up at football matches elsewhere? It was quite obvious that they were not there for the football.

Baroness Barran: I do not have a specific answer to my noble friend's question, but I will inquire and write to her.

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top (Labour): My Lords, we have to be careful that we do not become too complacent. Those of us who continue to love football, who go to matches even when they are terrible, know that this is still an issue in this country. We have none the less the richest league in the world—the Premier League—and it could and should be doing far more, influencing what is going on internationally but also working not just through Premier League clubs but throughout the Football League, with grass-roots clubs that are struggling to survive and do not have the money for education and training programmes and so on. Is it not about time that the Government made it clear to groups such as the Premier League that they have a responsibility and cannot let us down by pushing it off?

Baroness Barran: The Government have made it very clear how strongly they feel about these issues. We believe that the football authorities should be in the lead in delivering on this, but there was a renewed commitment this morning from the Minister to make sure that that happens as quickly and effectively as possible.

The Lord Bishop of Leeds: My Lords, it is very clear that what we saw in that match yesterday is just part of a much wider issue around the rise of far-right fascism in eastern

European countries. Are the Government paying attention to that, and to the context in which this particular phenomenon in football fits in?

Baroness Barran: I think the Government and noble Lords are aware of the rise of far-right extremism. Sadly, that has certainly come through in statistics in our own country. We are working extremely hard to counter it.

Lord Stirrup (Crossbench): My Lords, does the Minister not agree that this is not just about football or one country? We are seeing a growth of extremist views and ideologies across our societies that harm us all. What is required is not simply to condemn them but to see a renaissance of international leadership on behalf of the values and standards we have long held dear and for which those who went before us fought and died. If she agrees, from whence does she think such international leadership might spring?

Baroness Barran: My view is that one should always start with oneself; we can all play a part in that leadership. I hear the concern of both the noble and gallant Lord and the right reverend Prelate about what is happening more broadly in our society. I absolutely acknowledge that, but would temper it with the importance of celebrating some of the extraordinary work going on at a local level to bridge those divides, both between faith communities and across other divides. We need to keep some balance in this narrative.

Lord Campbell of Pittenwee (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, to return to the point made by my noble friend Lord Addington, it is generally recognised that UEFA has been pretty spineless in dealing with incidents of this kind. Might I respectfully suggest that the Minister approach her colleague the Minister for Sport and seek a direct audience with UEFA senior officials to encourage them to take exactly the kind of approach to incidents of this kind which public opinion in this country undoubtedly deserves?

Baroness Barran: My understanding is that my honourable friend the Minister is writing or has written to UEFA and is open to a meeting if that is what is requested.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-10-15/debates/262FDC56-2C5F-4377-8647-93B57C2017BC/FootballRacism>

UK Parliament Home Affairs Committee

Inquiry into Hate crime and its violent consequences: evidence session

Q1025 Chair (Yvette Cooper, Labour): May I start by asking for your response to the figures out today showing a 10% increase in recorded hate crime? How far do you think that is affected by changes to reporting, and how far do you think it reflects a growing problem in society? ...

Catherine Anderson (CEO, The Jo Cox Foundation): ... the figures this morning aren't all that surprising, although it is a smaller rise than we saw last year ... I think that there is no question but that reporting procedures are improving. ... We saw a doubling in the number of hate crimes being reported in just the five years up to 2018, so the trajectory seems to be upwards, and the question in the work that we are doing is how do we actually stem that rising tide?

Q1026 Chair: ... We have seen rises in disability hate crime, homophobic hate crime and different strands. What do you think is driving the rise in vitriol and hatred?

Kim Leadbeater (Ambassador, The Jo Cox Foundation): I think there is frustration across the country, with people feeling disillusioned and disengaged. ... people feel that they do not have a say in things, they feel frustrated and angry, and the easiest thing to do when you feel that way is to blame "the other", someone who is not like you, for your own frustrations, whether that is around the economy, or what's going on in your town, city or village. That feeds into dislike and animosity towards people who are not like you. ... We have disconnected communities, where people do not have the sense of belonging

and the sense of identity that people used to have if you go back 50 years and beyond. ...

Q1027 Chair: How much of this is being fuelled by, or increasing because of, the online networks that we have now?

Lord Evans: The evidence that was taken by the Committee [on Standards in Public Life] indicated that that was a factor, because it is much easier to make your voice heard than it was 20 years ago when you had to write a letter or whatever. It is instantaneous; it is also anonymous, and there is a sort of—you get the echo chamber effect where people see others doing this, and therefore they feel empowered to do it themselves. That is undoubtedly a facilitating factor ...

Q1029 Toby Perkins (Labour): It seems to me that, increasingly, politics is seen to be less about ideas and more about motives. Where previously political parties would disagree with one another about what was the best route forward, now what we hear is the suggestion that the policies of our opponents are because they are ill motivated. ...

All of this is poisoning our dialogue. ...

Q1030 Toby Perkins: ... there was a video recently of someone filming themselves opening the door to a Labour party canvasser and kind of screaming in his face, and telling him that he was representing a traitor and a terrorist sympathiser. We've seen people promoting videos of people throwing vegetables and eggs at the Prime Minister, or promoting videos of people chucking milkshakes over politicians.

At what point do we recognise that an acceptance of breaking down what we would normally have accepted as unacceptable, such as low-level vandalism or extreme rudeness, is a path then to thinking that other things, which we would be horrified to see happen, were, if not inevitable, then at least, maybe, things that actions could not be taken to prevent? ...

Jane Ramsey (Independent Member, Committee on Standards in Public Life): ... Obviously, for lots of people engaged in, say, political public life—whether local councillors, would-be MPs or MPs—social media provides an amazing opportunity to reach out to many more people than before, in a different way and an interactive way.

The trouble is, as you all know, that when you have things like dogpiling, that can feel very threatening, and we know that people with particular protected characteristics—whether they are women or black and minority ethnic candidates, or they have a disability or are LGBT—are likely to experience more intense and greater volumes of attack and abuse on social media, which can readily turn into intimidation.

We differentiated between abuse and intimidation in the report [Intimidation in Public Life A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life], because we felt that intimidation is something, and we have got our definition, that will actually affect how you operate in public life—whether you want to withdraw, or whether you feel that you don't want to stand, and all that. We have a specific definition, which is a higher standard than “mere” abuse—although abuse is horrible. However, a lot of abuse in a sustained way turns into intimidation. ...

The role of mainstream media was interesting, because we definitely received evidence from MPs and candidates in the 2017 election that if there was negative, inflammatory language used in articles in mainstream media, it led to direct, huge amounts of dogpiling on social media, which was very disturbing. ...

Q1031 Catherine Anderson: ... There is a legitimising of actions whereby people feel, perhaps out of fear for their own safety, that they cannot intervene. We need to work to create a culture where people can intervene better. On the online harms point, we are very interested in the behavioural element to break down the reward system in this dogpiling that you see. If someone says something abusive or intimidatory online and 20 or 30 people pile in and say how correct and how right they are, that is a system of reward. We can only really break that down not through blocking, muting or deleting, which I know are mechanisms that social media companies advocate, because they are only part of the

solution. The true solution is where we can intervene on behaviour so that people stop, think, and decide not to act on whatever impulse is propelling them to be intimidating and abusive. ...

Kim Leadbeater: ... "Listening" is the other word that has not been mentioned this morning. People stopped listening because all they do is shout. Listening is not about waiting for your turn to speak; it's about listening to what the person is saying. ... With social media you don't need to listen, because all you do is type and put your opinions out there. ...

Q1032 Toby Perkins: Lord Evans, in terms of the broader question of hate crime and its link to political extremism, can you tell us what you have seen and the extent to which it has changed in recent years?

Lord Evans: I do not have clear evidence or data on this. ... There is no doubt that there are organised groups with extreme views who are also attracted to violence and intimidation. ... There are the individual behaviours that people are involved in as individuals, but there are also groups who actively use this as a tool. ...

Q1033 Chair: We heard some evidence from Neil Basu some time ago about how a potential rise in hate crime could end up making it easier to recruit into extremism, or could be a way of desensitising people and legitimising more extreme views. Do you think that is plausible?

Lord Evans: ... It seems to be entirely plausible because, if you look back to what organisations such as al-Qaeda and IS were doing, there was a process of radicalisation. Part of that was exposure to extreme images and the normalisation of violence, so people no longer feel it is something exceptional or outside their experience. I suspect that process reduces people's inhibitions and may add trauma on them, but it means that things that otherwise would have been beyond their experience become conscionable. ...

Q1034 Chair: So if you want to prevent rising far-right extremism, you should take seriously far-right hate crime issues as well.

Lord Evans: Yes. It is always very difficult to demonstrate where the threshold is between taking extreme positions and moving to organised violence. ... Common sense would suggest that if you start to see the world in extremely polarised ways, it is much easier to see others as the enemy and as people who need to be attacked, rather than as people who need to be debated with. ...

Q1040 Douglas Ross (Conservative): ... May I move on to the code? Looking through the proposal, I think that a lot of the behaviour that is listed as unacceptable is already unacceptable—it is illegal. ...

Q1041 Douglas Ross: ... The use of threat and violence—I would be in trouble for that. If I damaged property, I would be in trouble. I think if I engaged in bullying, harassment or victimisation, I would be in trouble. Using abusive or threatening words or behaviour—there are laws at the moment that would see you punished for that.

Jane Ramsey: You are absolutely right. The joint standard of conduct that we recommended, although it is described slightly differently in our report, was agreed in 2017 but has not yet been agreed by the political parties. ...

Q1042 Douglas Ross: ... my point was that a number of these behaviours that you have put as unacceptable are already illegal.

Jane Ramsey: At a high level they are, but they do not necessarily get dealt with. ...

Q1048 Kim Leadbeater: ... Brexit has potentially created some problems, but it has also provided an environment where problems that already existed can be discussed and talked about more. ... I think it has exacerbated some of the issues we face in our communities up and down the country. When you put that in the mix with the anonymity of social media and the problems of social media, you have got a toxic cocktail where we end up in the situation we are in now. ...

Q1055 Chair: In terms of the wider responsibility, clearly there is a responsibility on political parties and political leaders. What do you think is the wider responsibility on everybody else—people in public life? ...

Catherine Anderson: ... The combination of prejudice against minorities in particular, or marginalised groups, and a mistrust of politics, politicians and people in public life, is a toxic combination. Together, that lowers our resilience when we deal with hate crimes and extremism, which is the environment that we are operating in at the moment. ...

To read the full transcript see

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/hate-crime-and-its-violent-consequences/oral/106362.html>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666927/6.3637_CO_v6_061217_Web3.1_2.pdf

House of Commons Library

Briefing: Religious Education in schools (England)

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7167/CBP-7167.pdf>

Home Office

Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2018/19

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/839172/hate-crime-1819-hosb2419.pdf

Hate crime, England and Wales, 2018 to 2019: data tables

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/838451/hate-crime-1819-hosb2419-tables.ods

Hate crime, England and Wales, 2018 to 2019: appendix tables

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/838452/hate-crime-1819-hosb2419-appendix-tables.ods

Crown Prosecution Service

Fiyaz Mugal of TellMAMA on building trust through tackling hate crime

... The CPS has had many notable successes in the world of hate crime prosecutions.

I can say this with confidence, as I was personally targeted for faith-based hate and harassment and have supported many other victims of hate crime. My early experiences of the CPS, and the wider criminal justice system, were not entirely positive - I did not feel that everyone involved fully understood the impact that this type of vile, threatening, unrelenting hate-filled rhetoric has on victims, as well as the wider community.

I am pleased to say that although there is more to do, things have improved considerably. Year on year, the CPS secures tougher sentences for people convicted of hate crimes. ... The CPS presented evidence in court earlier this year that in the mind of National Action's Jack Renshaw, his desire to kill Rosie Cooper MP would strike a blow to the 'Jewish-controlled' state. [The CPS evidence](#) meant that Renshaw pleaded guilty to planning to commit a terrorist attack. ... Renshaw was a serious threat and the CPS made the case with clarity. ...

Another case led to the conviction of a man whose actions led to fear and trepidation within Muslim communities. Last month, [the court ruled that David Parnham](#) was suffering from a mental disorder and should be detained in hospital. If and when Parnham is deemed to no longer require medical treatment, he will be moved to a prison. ... Parnham had written letters stating that he would donate £100 to charity for every member of a racial or religious minority that was murdered. Parnham was also behind the 'Punish a Muslim' day letters that caused much distress within Muslim communities. ...

Then take the case of Jay Davison, who was found guilty of a hate crime for posting violent messages about Muslims alongside photos of himself posing topless with a fake shotgun. ... Davison received a [total prison sentence of four years on 23 September](#). It is my view that the collective action of the police and the CPS has sent a strong signal to members of the public that such actions will not be tolerated.

Today, the CPS is in a far stronger position to understand the motivations and rhetoric behind hateful and extremist actions. This is a result of training and awareness-raising informed by the very communities affected by these sorts of crimes, and a stronger assurance process. This is to be warmly welcomed. In my view, the CPS has some of the best prosecutors in the world, and now it also has some of the most informed prosecutors when it comes to hate groups and their ideologies. In the current climate, this is the best reassurance for members of the public.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/fiyaz-mugal-tellmama-building-trust-through-tackling-hate-crime>

Welsh Assembly Oral Answer

The Commission on Justice in Wales

Alun Davies (Labour): ... I and other Members were fortunate enough to visit Jerusalem earlier in the year and to meet with a former chief justice of Israel, where he explained how the Israeli jurisdiction grew out of the British jurisdiction following the secession of the UK mandate in Palestine, and was able to develop a jurisdiction over time of its own and take on additional powers and additional responsibilities as time grew. It appears to me that that's a very good model for Wales and a very good model that we may be able to follow. ...

Jeremy Miles (Counsel General and Brexit Minister): ... I will be interested in discussing further with him his reflections on the meeting and discussions he had with the former chief justice of Israel. ...

<https://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/5851#C232032>

Welsh Government Statement

Hate Crime Awareness Week 2019

... The Welsh Government's vision is an inclusive Wales in which people from all backgrounds can thrive, and where there is no room for xenophobia, racism or bigotry. We are determined to drive out hate crime and ensure victims do not suffer in silence.

The theme for Hate Crime Awareness Week 2019 is 'Spread Love, Not Hate'. ...

Since the EU Referendum, there has been a marked increase in reports relating to hate crimes and incidents. This increase has been both quantitative in terms of hate crime reports to Police forces and the Welsh Government-funded National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre and anecdotal reports where individuals claim that they did not report incidents due to a lack of faith that a prosecution would follow.

The 2018/2019 Hate Crime Statistics for England and Wales ... illustrate the need for concerted effort on the part of public authorities, including the Welsh Government, to

counter negative perceptions of minority communities, tackle hate crime where it occurs, and support victims. ...

The National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre provides independent advocacy and support for victims of hate crime in Wales. This service was expanded in April 2019 ...

In March, I also announced the 'Hate Crime Minority Communities Grant' – a one-off grant fund to support community organisations who are working closely with ethnic minority and faith communities who are at risk of experiencing hate crime. ...

We are currently developing a national campaign to try to reduce the incidence of hate crimes and incidents in Wales, to be launched in 2020. We are currently gathering the views of stakeholders, members of the public, and victims of hate crimes to inform the development of the campaign and its aims. This campaign will help us to promote positive messaging throughout the year.

We are expanding our Community Cohesion Programme ... In recent years our funding of the Programme has ensured the Welsh Government is working alongside key partners to foster cohesion, and help tackle hate crime and counter the threat of extremism. ...

Alongside these projects, the Welsh Government will continue to convene the Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board Cymru to ensure an effective forum for key stakeholders working to address hate crime across Wales....

We want to reassure anyone from diverse backgrounds, living in Wales, that we are united with them in opposing such vile and hateful acts. After the Christchurch attacks in March, I wrote to Imams to express this sentiment and I have written to Rabbis after the attack on a Synagogue in Germany just last week. Such acts are fundamentally opposed to Welsh values and we will be steadfast in condemning them when they occur.

Wales has a long history of welcoming diverse and vibrant communities, much of it harmonious, but this cannot be taken for granted. This year we commemorated the 100th anniversary of the 1919 race riots. This is a timely reminder of how intolerance and prejudice still resides in our communities and we must address this over the coming months.

To read the full press release see

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-hate-crime-awareness-week-2019>

TOP

Holocaust

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-19433 Jackson Carlaw (Conservative): That the Parliament welcomes the University of the West of Scotland's Vision Schools Scotland project and supports its key objective of accrediting primary and secondary schools that have demonstrated excellence in the teaching of the Holocaust; notes that the initiative has two levels of accreditation and that its other principal aims include assisting in the further development of Citizenship Education in schools by tackling prejudice and discrimination through the lessons taught by the Holocaust, the fostering of an approach to Holocaust Education that has a focus on antisemitism in the contemporary world as well as antisemitism at other points in history, such as in Europe during the 193's, the sharing of good practice in Holocaust Education between teachers and schools, and supporting teachers through delivery of continued professional learning; acknowledges that Vision Schools Scotland had a hugely successful pilot project in June 2017 with two secondary schools and one primary school receiving the accreditation; further acknowledges that the 2017 launch was followed by the first full awards ceremony at the Parliament in November 2018, which saw one primary and three secondary schools achieve the level 1 award, while one other secondary school was able

to achieve the level 2 award; congratulates the University of the West of Scotland and its partner, the Holocaust Educational Trust, on the early achievements of Vision Schools Scotland, and looks forward to the second annual awards ceremony, which will be held at the Parliament on 7 November 2019, which will result in more Scottish schools receiving both level 1 and 2 awards.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-19433>

Northern Ireland Executive

Genocide survivors share their experiences in Northern Ireland

A series of events to remember the Holocaust, and other genocides, is taking place across Northern Ireland over the next 10 days. ... three genocide survivors will be talking about their experiences at a range of venues, including local schools.

Susan Pollack MBE and Tomáš (Tomi) Reichental survived the Nazi concentration camps of the Holocaust during the Second World War. Safet Vukalić is a Bosnian Muslim who survived persecution in Bosnia in the 1990s, coming to the UK as a refugee in 1994.

Individually, they will be visiting over 50 schools and organisations across Northern Ireland, taking their stories to over 4,000 people. ...

TEO [The Executive Office] deputy secretary Mark Browne said: "Susan, Tomáš and Safet have lived through some of the darkest moments in human history. They have borne witness to unimaginable events in the most adverse of circumstances.

"Their message is poignant, and their stories are personal. But they also show how groups of people were marginalised by genocidal regimes. This is hugely important as we seek to learn about the past, and ensure such actions are never repeated. ...

The events are part of the lead up to Holocaust Memorial Day 2020. It takes place on January 27, and next year will mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in 1945 and July 2020 will mark 25 years since the genocide in Srebrenica, Bosnia.

Olivia Marks-Woldman, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust said: "Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is pleased to be working once again with the Executive Office to help people across Northern Ireland learn more about the Holocaust and more recent genocides.

"We are delighted that students and community groups have the opportunity to hear from Susan, Tomi and Safet. Their remarkable experiences are a powerful reminder of the consequences of unchecked discrimination and hatred, and should encourage us all to guard against identity-based hostility of any kind. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/news/genocide-survivors-share-their-experiences-northern-ireland>

European Court of Human Rights

In the case of Pastörs v. Germany

... The applicant was a Member of Parliament and chairperson of the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) in the *Land* Parliament of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. On 27 January 2010, Holocaust Remembrance Day, a memorial event was held in the *Land* Parliament. The members of the NPD Parliamentary group, including the applicant, did not attend. The following day, the applicant gave a speech in Parliament on the subject listed in the day's agenda as: "In memory of the victims of the worst disaster in German maritime history – Commemoration of those who died on the [military transport

ship] *Wilhelm Gustloff*". During that speech, the applicant uttered, *inter alia*, the following: "With the exception of the groups whose cooperation you have bought, hardly anyone is truly, emotionally taking part in your theatrical display of concern. And why is that? Because people can sense that the so-called Holocaust is being used for political and commercial purposes ... Since the end of the Second World War, Germans have been exposed to an endless barrage of criticism and propagandistic lies – cultivated in a dishonest manner primarily by representatives of the so-called democratic parties, ladies and gentlemen. Also, the event that you organised here in the castle yesterday was nothing more than you imposing your Auschwitz projections onto the German people in a manner that is both cunning and brutal. You are hoping, ladies and gentlemen, for the triumph of lies over truth." ...

The Parliament of the *Land* of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania revoked the applicant's inviolability from prosecution. ...

On 16 August 2012 the Schwerin District Court, sitting as a bench of the presiding professional judge Y and two lay judges, convicted the applicant of violating the memory of the dead and of defamation ... through the utterances cited above; the court sentenced him to eight months' imprisonment, suspended on probation.

The applicant appealed on points of fact and law. In respect of that appeal the Schwerin Regional Court ... dismissed the applicant's appeal as ill-founded. ...

It considered that the applicant's above-cited utterance, viewed objectively, had had the following content:

"The applicant asserted that the extermination of the Jews linked to Auschwitz had not taken place, or at least not in the way that it had been reported by historians. The atrocities associated with Auschwitz were a lie and a projection. The lies surrounding Auschwitz had been used since the end of the Second World War to serve various political and economic purposes."

The Regional Court concluded that the applicant had thereby denied in a qualified manner the systematic, racially motivated, mass extermination of the Jews carried out at Auschwitz during the Third Reich (*qualifizierte Auschwitzleugnung*). ...

The Regional Court found that the applicant's qualified Auschwitz denial constituted defamation under Article 187 of the Criminal Code (see paragraph 28 below). The victims of the offence were those Jewish people who – as part of the German population – had been persecuted during the Nazi tyranny because of their religion or their ethnic origin and who had either lost their lives as a result or survived such persecution. ... The qualified Auschwitz denial given by the applicant was tantamount to an untruth. ...

On 25 March 2013 the applicant lodged an appeal ...

... the Court of Appeal dismissed the applicant's appeal ...

[In the present case] The applicant submitted that the domestic courts had wrongfully interpreted his statements as Holocaust denial. They had wrongfully selected a small part of his speech and had based the applicant's conviction on these aspects viewed in isolation, rather than assessing the speech as a whole. His speech was not to be understood as such a denial, but as a criticism of the culture of remembrance, as upheld by the German establishment. Its purpose had not been to deny the suffering of Jewish victims but to call for an honouring of the suffering of "German" victims as well. ...

... the Court considers, on the one hand, that the applicant's statements showed his disdain towards the victims of the Holocaust ... On the other hand, it has regard to the fact that the statement was made by a Member of Parliament during a Parliamentary session, such that it could warrant an elevated level of protection and any interference with it would warrant the closest scrutiny on the part of the Court. Having regard to the role of Parliamentary immunity in providing increased protection to speech in Parliament, the Court considers it to be of particular relevance that the Parliament of the *Land* of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania revoked the applicant's inviolability from prosecution ...

The Court attaches fundamental importance to the fact that the applicant planned his

speech in advance, deliberately choosing his words ... and resorting to obfuscation to get his message across: a qualified Holocaust denial showing disdain towards the victims of the Holocaust and running counter to established historical facts, alleging that the representatives of the “so-called” democratic parties were using the Holocaust to suppress and exploit Germany. ...

... the applicant intentionally stated untruths in order to defame the Jews and the persecution that they had suffered during the Second World War. ... Reiterating that ... States that have experienced the Nazi horrors may be regarded as having a special moral responsibility to distance themselves from the mass atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis ... the Court therefore considers that the applicant’s impugned statements affected the dignity of the Jews to the point that they justified a criminal-law response. ...

To read the full judgement see

<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-196148>

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Israel

See also the Welsh Assembly Oral Answer in the “Home Affairs” section above.

House of Commons Debate

Britain’s Place in the World

John Howell (Conservative): ... This Government have made a big effort to encourage investment from Israel, and to encourage bilateral treaties with it. What will happen about that in the future, and how will we take it forward?

Alok Sharma: I pay tribute to my hon. Friend for the work he does as a trade envoy in Africa. He has talked about trade deals in the future. We are, of course, having relentlessly positive discussions about those, but, as I have said, we must first make sure that we get Brexit done before we move on to the next stage of this agenda. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-10-15/debates/15CDF2BD-9C01-4DFA-9F81-85B19CB327B8/Britain%E2%80%99SPlaceInTheWorld#contribution-ABE3D9CF-392C-4724-8CEA-0AE59193E1AC>

House Lords Debate

Debate on the Queen’s Speech

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated): ... Of course, I must mention Israel, which has occupied Palestinian lands now for 50 years, destroying homes, land and people, and blockading Gaza, causing immense suffering to the people of that land. Gaza, I remind noble Lords, has been deemed to be becoming uninhabitable by the United Nations, yet 2 million people are imprisoned there, denied their human rights in every respect—no clean water, scanty electricity supplies, limited food and medicines and denied access to medical and surgical treatment. Noble Lords all know the truth, even though some Members of this House turn a blind eye and do not want to know.

The Government of Israel break international law and the Geneva Convention, and deny the Palestinian people their human rights. What do our Government do—apart from blaming Hamas for everything, of course? They increase trade links and co-operation with the Israeli Government as a reward, year on year. It was fascinating to hear today that the Government immediately slapped sanctions on the arms trade with Turkey when it invaded Syria—immediately, no question about it. Yet Saudi Arabia has been doing the same thing

in Yemen for years, causing terrible famine, deprivation and damage, and the Government of Israel have been causing immense suffering to the Palestinians in the land designated for them. Why do we not curb arms sales to Saudi Arabia and Israel if we do so to Turkey? The European Union is equally guilty because the EU-Israel association trade agreement depends on Israel respecting human rights but, when challenged, EU officials merely point to countries within the EU and say they should be taking the lead. It cannot take the lead collectively. Can we hope that, once we are out of the European Union and no longer bound by the terrible tie of being in it, the UK Government will take the lead and bring the Government of Israel to order? Will our great new relationship with the United States of America perhaps enable us to bring pressure on the Government of America to stop being so subservient to the Government of Israel? I doubt it. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-10-15/debates/FF6D01A5-D0E7-49FE-B4B3-502392FF21C1/Queen%E2%80%99SSpeech#contribution-83A3C251-DDBF-45BB-8571-86CA1EF9CF85>

Department for International Development

Letter from Andrew Murrison MP regarding the fifth Quarterly Update on DFID's People for Peaceful Change programme in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

[http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2019-0947/fifth Quarterly Update DFIDS People for Peaceful Change OPT.pdf](http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2019-0947/fifth%20Quarterly%20Update%20DFIDS%20People%20for%20Peaceful%20Change%20OPT.pdf)

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Press briefing note on Israel / OPT

The UN Human Rights Office notes with concern the alleged torture of a 44-year-old Palestinian man, Samer Al A'rbeed, who was arrested by Israeli Security Forces on 25 September as a suspect in a bomb explosion that killed a 17-year old Israeli girl near Dolev settlement in the occupied West Bank. Al A'rbeed remains in the hospital in an induced coma and on artificial respiration, with critical injuries sustained after his arrest, including broken ribs and severe kidney failure.

This development is placing a spotlight on serious gaps and failings in Israel's laws and practices in relation to its unequivocal obligation under international law to eradicate torture and cruel and inhuman treatment.

Al A'rbeed's lawyer, who was only allowed to see his client four days after his arrest (on 29 September), alleges he was tortured. The Israeli Security Agency (Shin Bet) stated to the media that Al A'rbeed did not feel well during his interrogation and had to be transferred to the hospital. The Israeli Ministry of Justice has announced an inquiry.

Given the severity of Al A'rbeed's injuries, we call for the immediate opening of a criminal investigation into the case. ...

We are gravely concerned that Israeli law does not adequately define, prohibit or criminalize torture and the High Court of Justice has allowed the use of "special interrogation measures," in violation of the absolute prohibition of torture. ...

We call on Israel to revise its laws, policies and practices to bring them in line with its obligations under international law, in particular the Convention Against Torture, and ensure that all instances and allegations of torture and ill-treatment are investigated promptly, independently, effectively and impartially.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25131&LangID=E>

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Foreign Affairs

House of Commons Debate

Britain's Place in the World

Rehman Chishti (Conservative): ... I was surprised to see that the freedom of religion or belief was not in the Queen's Speech. ...

There can be no compromise on article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance." ...

Why is this important to me? I came to this country from Pakistan in 1984. My father was an imam, my grandfather was an imam, and my uncles were imams. When I arrived, I could not speak a word of English. ... My father, my sisters and I were able freely and openly to practise our faith in our great country. There is now a moral obligation on me and others who are part of minority religious faiths in this great country to stand up for individuals who are being persecuted for their faith in their countries of origin or elsewhere where they are a part of minority religious communities. That is why, for me, there can be no compromise on freedom of religion or belief. ...

CSW's website states that 83% of the world's population live in nations where religious freedom is threatened or banned. How can that possibly be right? We are talking about countries in east Asia, Latin America, the middle east, north Africa, south Asia and sub-Saharan Africa; there is persecution across the world. The Bishop of Truro's report makes it very clear that Christians are the most persecuted faith in the world, and that freedom of religion for everyone should be a priority for countries around the world. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-10-15/debates/72FE82BC-9A40-459A-A023-B3EA851DEB6E/BritainSPlaceInTheWorld#contribution-6DD22020-8E91-4D54-99A9-9A09C92D5188>

The website referred to above can be read at

<https://www.csw.org.uk/freedomofreligion.htm>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Catherine White (Labour) (12) Anti-Semitic Attack in Halle, Germany – That this House condemns in the strongest possible terms the heinous anti-semitic attack at the synagogue in Halle, Germany, and sends condolences to those affected; notes with concern the increase in antisemitism in society and the impact on the Jewish community; resolves to support the Jewish community in doing everything possible to work towards the elimination of antisemitism, and all forms of racism, in society; and calls on the Government to redouble efforts to work with faith groups to ensure the security and safety of places to worship.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/53343/antisemitic-attack-in-halle-germany>

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Other Relevant Information

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Press briefing note on Germany / Synagogue attack

We echo the Secretary-General's strong condemnation of Wednesday's attempted attack on worshippers in a synagogue in Halle in Germany, during which two people were killed and two others wounded.

Reports from the German authorities are already suggesting this was almost certainly a white nationalist attack, and a clear example of extreme anti-Semitism – deliberately carried out on Yom Kippur, one of the holiest days in the Jewish calendar. ...

This horrific attack is the latest example of an extremely disturbing rise in violence directed at Jews in many places, including a sharp rise in incidents in Germany. We need to take notice, and take further action to address the fear and insecurity that the increase in violence is sowing. The links between incitement to hatred and violence and the actual carrying out of violent hate crimes, based on race, religion or ethnicity, should no longer be in any doubt in anyone's mind. Nor should the dangerous cross-fertilization of violent extremism of all sorts via the internet and social media. No society can consider itself immune from this form of viral hatred.

The most recent report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief notes with serious concern that the frequency of anti-Semitic incidents appears to be increasing in magnitude in several countries where monitors are attempting to document it, including online, and that the prevalence of anti-Semitic attitudes and the risk of violence against Jewish individuals and sites appears to be significant elsewhere as well.

We echo the Secretary-General's heartfelt statement that places of worship around the world "must be safe havens for reflection and peace, not sites of bloodshed and terror," and that greater efforts should be made to identify and take measures to safeguard religious sites at risk.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25130&LanglD=E>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Religion/A_74_47921ADV.pdf

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

**** Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/divorcedissolutionandseparation.html>

Bill reintroduced from previous parliamentary session

First Reading, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-10-15/debates/07958610-E61F-47B4-880B-2582BD3B66D3/DivorceDissolutionAndSeparationBill\(HL\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-10-15/debates/07958610-E61F-47B4-880B-2582BD3B66D3/DivorceDissolutionAndSeparationBill(HL))

Domestic Abuse Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/domesticabuse.html>

Scottish Parliament

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/112997.aspx>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Welsh Government Strategic Equality Objectives 2020-24 (closing date 19 November 2019)

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-09/strategic-equality-objectives-2020-2024-consultation.pdf>

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