



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Holocaust Memorial Day 2021

col 572 **Stephen Crabb (Conservative):** ... Over the past 20 years, Holocaust Memorial Day has become an important part of our national life, with the numbers of events growing every year. That is largely down to the incredible work of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, and the Holocaust Educational Trust, which both work tirelessly to ensure that the collective memory of the holocaust is renewed and strengthened with every passing year. ...

Holocaust Memorial Day is when we remember the millions of people murdered under Nazi persecution, and in the genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur. The theme this year is “Be the light in the darkness”, and at the close of the ceremony last night we lit candles. Those candles symbolised the lives of those who were murdered in the death camps and subsequent genocides, as well as the lives of the survivors who still live and walk among us, and those who have passed away.

The candles also represented hope—the hope that comes from a collective determination never to allow such atrocities to take place again; the hope that comes from standing together against antisemitism and all forms of prejudice. ...

col 573 Holocaust Memorial Day is about remembrance, but it should also be a moment that moves us to consider the darkness still around us today. I am talking about the cancer of antisemitism that even now eats away inside some of our institutions, and that spawns and thrives on social media, and casts dark shadows across our own society and those of some of our closest neighbours. ...

How can it be that Jewish students in this country do not feel protected by our institutions, places of openness and learning turned into dark corners where Jewish young people experience fear? The adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance modern definition of antisemitism should merely be the first step in tackling rising levels of antisemitism, yet even that is seen as too much to ask for from some universities, whose academics spuriously claim that the definition would shut down legitimate debate about Israeli Government policies.

We must not shy away from the reality that modern antisemitism invariably morphs into

anti-Zionism and the demonisation of Israel itself. ...

col 574 ... genocides do not happen by accident. They follow a pattern. They require planning. It requires powerful people to deliberate and take calculated decisions to persecute and, ultimately, visit death upon entire communities. Weapons and implements of torture and murder need to be bought, acquired, constructed. Genocides require ideologies to flourish that focus on differences between people and groups—ideologies that glorify strength and superiority, that systematically dehumanise minorities. Those ideologies infect school rooms, universities, bars and individual homes. They are ideologies that create those dark places where the unthinkable somehow becomes justifiable and even normal.

It requires methods of mass communication and propaganda—radio, television and, in our own age, the unregulated channels of social media—to turn communities against each other. Most of all, genocides require people to turn a blind eye—neighbours, work colleagues, friends, even family members. Genocides require people to turn away. They require good people to do nothing. ...

col 575 **Margaret Hodge (Labour):** ... As holocaust survivors inevitably die, it falls to us to keep the knowledge of what happened alive. My grandmother's letter, written nine days before she was killed, in which she says twice, "Don't forget me completely", sealed my determination to fight racism and antisemitism wherever and whenever I meet it.

When I was first an MP, I was a Labour MP who happened to be Jewish, but when antisemitism moved to the mainstream of my party, I became a Jewish Labour MP—my identity interwoven with my work. ...

A year has made a huge difference. By his actions, our party's new leader is demonstrating zero tolerance of Jew hate, not just suspending and expelling individuals but transforming our culture and re-establishing trust with the Jewish community, who were hurt and genuinely frightened. As a party, we are finally focused on eliminating antisemitism, responding to the shameful findings of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report and restoring our core values.

The history of the Jews and our knowledge of present day genocides tells us that if we ignore prejudice and hate, it can deepen and destroy. I came into politics to fight racism, so I will always do all I can to nurture the light and conquer the darkness. ...

col 576 **Peter Bottomley (Conservative):** ... The purpose of the holocaust memorial and education centre is for us to know, to care and to act, whatever our heritage. ...

The proposal in September 2015 was that the centre should be completed by 2020, a year ago, that it should have the support of the local authority wherever it was to be built, and that it could be built anywhere within 3 miles of London on a suitable site. ...

The Secretary of State may shake his head. ... He will need to consider what he is putting forward and his deputy needs to say whether he can seriously make a decision on the Secretary of State's behalf when the Government are so implicated in an inappropriate scheme in an inappropriate place ...

John Cryer (Labour): ... The indications are, and the figures back this up, that antisemitism is on the rise not just in Britain but across Europe and perhaps elsewhere. ... Our personal experiences support the notion that antisemitism is on the rise in this country and elsewhere. The question is why is that?

I suspect that the reason is at least partly because the events of the holocaust of the 1930s and 1940s, and of world war two, are slipping from memory and into history. ... That generation is passing into history. ...

col 577 We know that historically racism often starts with the Jewish community and then spreads to other communities. ... We also know that holocaust denial, or perhaps not so much holocaust denial but a tendency to say, "Well, there are a number of interpretations you can make of the holocaust," is a sort of academic approach to moral relativism. There is a tendency, which is more widespread now than it was a few years ago, to put forward

that pseudo-academic view. ... The fact is that the holocaust was about one thing: the attempt to wipe an entire race off the face of the planet. It was not about anything else. It was simply that: genocide on a scale that has not been seen before or since. The crucial thing is that every time someone takes a moral relativist approach to the holocaust and its memory, it chips away at its historical integrity and undermines the beliefs of people ... who want to remember how it really was. ...

John Howell (Conservative): ... The hon. Member for Hampstead and Kilburn and I wrote an article for the *Daily Mirror* online yesterday, in which we said: "Speaking as a Christian and a Muslim, respectively, we both know that marking Holocaust Memorial Day is more important than ever. Commemorating the millions of people who were murdered in the Holocaust, under Nazi persecution and in the genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur is vital for us to learn where persecution based on faith and identity can lead."

col 578 As the Chief Rabbi said last night: "If we are all the light in the darkness, think of what a wonderful world we can achieve."

Let us, in participating in this debate, aim to be that light in the darkness. ...

Lisa Cameron (SNP): ... It is crucial that, in remembrance, we do not picture atrocities of genocide perpetrated during the Holocaust as historical events. It is important to reflect on the reality that the seeds of antisemitic distrust, prejudice and hatred were spread years prior to armbands being worn, ghettos being built, trains being loaded and gas chambers being filled.

A recent briefing from the Antisemitism Policy Trust found that throughout history Jewish people have been blamed for diseases and pandemics. Indeed, since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, these age-old tropes have re-emerged in updated forms, on our social media channels and popular antisemitic online forums, such as 4chan and Gab. It did not take long for the virus to be named "the Jew flu"—part of a Zionist agenda to start world war three—or for antisemites online to encourage people deliberately to try to infect Jewish people, as part of the "holocough".

In its latest report, the Community Security Trust recorded 789 antisemitic incidents that took place across the UK in the first six months of 2020. It would be easy to dismiss the instances outlined as the actions of a deluded fringe, but that would also be foolish and could be deadly. ...

We disrespect the memory of millions who died in the holocaust if we fail to take action to stamp out the recurring lies that culminated in such widespread destruction of life 80 years ago. We are, indeed, arrogant to presume that stereotypes of the past can find no audience in the future. ...

col 579 **Andrew Mitchell (Conservative):** ... Living free in Britain today are five alleged Rwandan genocide perpetrators: three were senior Government officials in the 1994 genocidal regime and one of those was allegedly heavily involved in the notorious massacre of 45,000 Tutsis at Murambi—the worst massacre since the second world war. ...

These are the facts. Living in this country today, free and at large for more than 14 years now, are five people accused of the most heinous of crimes: genocide participation—crimes against humanity. Four out of five are living at the taxpayer's expense and more than £3 million of taxpayers' money has been spent on meeting their legal fees. Is it any wonder that in Africa, and in the UK, too, people accuse the British establishment of hypocrisy? To them, it looks suspiciously as if crimes against white Europeans are taken more seriously than those perpetrated against black Africans. ...

Mark Tami (Labour): It is nearly 76 years since the end of the second world war in Europe, but the lessons that the world needs to learn from the events that culminated in the holocaust remain as relevant today as they were then. The holocaust did not begin and end with Auschwitz and the other extermination camps; its roots lay in the falsehoods

and hatred that festered for centuries before and continue to exist today. ...

col 580 Today, that poison and those lies have not gone away. We rarely see the mass rallies and events, but the battle has moved online, where hate speech and holocaust denial can be found at a disturbing level. ...

... the holocaust is not just a terrible one-off event that happened in our history, carried out by a madman and his thugs. The truth is very different. Before the establishment of mechanised extermination in death camps, Einsatzgruppen squads followed the German advance into eastern Europe and Russia, shooting over 2 million men, women and children. These groups were led not by so-called thugs but by a university lecturer, a theologian, a doctor. These should be warnings to us about how this can take over. ...

col 581 **Chris Evans (Labour Co-op):** ... it is easy to assume that we would never see the horror of a country actively seeking to destroy and wipe out any trace of the Jewish community ever again. "Never again", we were told, but each time we have conspiracy theories on the internet around Jews, we take a step back towards the hatred that brought the Nazis to power in the 1930s. ...

col 582 **Matthew Offord (Conservative)** In last year's debate, I spoke about the only concentration camp on British soil, on the island of Alderney. Lager Sylt and Lager Norderney contained Russian and Polish prisoners-of-war, as well as Jewish slave labourers. I raised the issue of undisclosed and unrecorded burial sites of murdered inmates and told the House:

"Rabbinic law dictates that the grave sites of Jewish people should not be disturbed."

However, I expressed my personal view that "unmarked graves, mass graves and locations of bodies hidden by their murderers are not proper graves in themselves, and I believe that it is appropriate for the identification of bodies to be undertaken"—[\[Official Report, 23 January 2020; Vol. 670, c. 492.\]](#) ...

Putting aside the religious issues, it has been stressed to me that opening mass graves is not as revealing as one might imagine that and that gains in knowledge are slight compared with the moral and spiritual costs of disturbance. ... I have been advised that a considerable amount is already known about what lies beneath that ground. That is because the British Government are still sitting on embargoed files that detail what they found at the cemetery after the war and their own excavations at the cemetery. Today, I am calling on the Government to find the missing records of the 1961 exhumation, and the detailed records that the UK made of each set of remains by the British excavation in Alderney. We have a duty to ensure that no one is left behind. ...

col 583 **Rosie Duffield (Labour):** Yesterday, my friend Paula Sherriff ... tweeted a quote that read: "If we held a moment of silence for every victim of the Holocaust we would be silent for eleven and a half years."

It is often easy to feel disconnected from the figures and statistics that are read out in this place. Six million people. Six million Jews were murdered by the Nazis. Most of us will struggle to imagine a number too huge to picture in our minds. ... they were forced out of their homes, rounded up, robbed, starved, humiliated, branded, tortured, experimented on and killed because of their race and religion. One deranged bully devised and built a murderous plan to wipe out an entire race of people. ...

Right now, we know that there are groups of people being persecuted, imprisoned, rounded up, robbed, tortured and branded because of their race and religion. And what are we doing to stop it? We have to find ways to make sure that we are not being mere bystanders. ...

col 584 **Mary Robinson (Conservative):** ... Seventy-six years ago, the world said, "Never again." Every year on this day, we say, "Never again." But the truth is that it has happened again and is happening again. It happened again in Rwanda, and in Cambodia, and Bosnia. It happened more recently to the Yazidis and the Rohingya. It is happening to the Christian minority in northern Nigeria ... Right now, it is happening to the Uyghurs in

Xinjiang. ...

Nothing past or present compares to the holocaust for its inhumanity, but we live in a world where there is still antisemitism and genocide. It is now more important than ever that we are able to keep that flame alight and say "Never again". ...

Pat McFadden (Labour): ... We should never engage in the conferring of collective guilt, we should openly reject conspiracy theories about dual loyalties or international cabals influencing world events, and we should reject the world view that results in a hierarchy of victimhood where some cannot accept that Jewish people could really be the victims of racism.

col 585 The experience of remembering the holocaust should also inform the ways that we think about refugees today. The UK can be proud of the role we played not only during the war, in liberating the world from tyranny, but before the war, in making a new home for around 10,000 children through the Kindertransport programme. Each one of those children was given a new life and a new chance. Today, when child refugees are still trying to reach our shores, we should remember how precious that chance of a new life can be, and what an amazing contribution to our country can be made by those who are given a chance. ...

col 587 **Feryal Clark (Labour):** ... Justice and peace go hand in hand, but bringing to justice those who committed these evil acts will dissuade future perpetrators while also breaking the cycle of violence by demonstrating that justice systems can work. The crisis for Yazidis is not over. Justice means more than perpetrators being tried for terrorism against the Iraqi state; it means, where possible, convicting ISIS members for crimes committed against Yazidis, for torture, kidnapping, enslavement, rape and murder. ... Yazidis need more than remembrance ...

Liam Fox (Conservative): For many of us, as we contemplate the inhumanity, brutality and sheer scale of the holocaust, one uncomfortable question sits in our minds: how could ordinary people like ourselves collude with, acquiesce in, or support a regime that behaved in such a barbaric way and, perhaps even more uncomfortably, do the factors exist in our contemporary world that could allow it to happen again. ...

The basic template of extreme nationalism, a deeply distorted sense of identity and self-worth combined with the exaggeration of perceived slights and the identification of a suitable scapegoat, is still in play. Across the world, many of these stereotypical ideas are being played out again with varying degrees of sophistication and brutality. The dehumanising of opponents, internally and externally, is a timeless theme in the book of extreme nationalism. It is the beast that stalks its prey of plurality, decency and civility. Decades separate us now from the holocaust, but human behaviour still holds flaws and dangers. We must confront dangerous ideologies whenever and wherever they take root. Today of all days, we remember that we have been warned. ...

col 588 **Liam Byrne (Labour):** ... Those of us have been to Yad Vashem will know that in the Avenue of the Righteous there is only one memorial to an entire national movement, and that is the memorial to the Danish resistance ... Together, it organised the extraordinary evacuation of 7,200 Jews, along with 700 of their relatives, in October 1943 after Hitler had given the order to arrest the Jews, with extermination in mind. ... thousands of ordinary Danes ... came together inspired by one simple idea: that ordinary people can make a difference in standing up to hate. ...

col 589 **Nusrat Ghani (Conservative):** ... the president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, Marie van der Zyl, wrote to the Prime Minister. I believe her words should be shared with all MPs:

"I know you understand that, as a community, we are always extremely hesitant to consider comparisons with the Holocaust...In my letter, I noted the similarities between what is 'alleged to be happening in the People's Republic of China today and what happened in Nazi Germany 75 years ago... Today we stand at another of these crucial junctures, and

it is time to act to protect the Uyghurs.”

I hope that colleagues will join the Board of Deputies and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust in supporting the genocide amendment. Let us put our words, “Never again”, into action. ...

col 590 Bob Stewart (Conservative): ... I have been a witness to genocide. In 1992-93, I was the British UN commander in Bosnia, and the whole country was an example of genocide. ...

My mother went to Belsen at the end of the war. She was an officer of the Special Operations Executive. She never told me about it until I was stationed nearby. I said to her then, “Why, mum, have you not told me about this?” She said, “Robert, I was ashamed.” I said, “Mum, why were you ashamed? You were in uniform. You were fighting the Nazis. You had learned to parachute. You had learned to fight them.” She said, “I was ashamed, Robert, because this genocide occurred in my generation.”

Genocides have occurred since 1945. As I have said, I was a witness to one; it is burned into me. The purpose of this debate is to make sure that we try to stop it happening again. ...

col 592 Bob Blackman (Conservative): ... Six million men, women and children were murdered for no reason other than their faith. This was murder on an industrial scale, with thousands of people responsible for the holocaust. We can never forget what happened, but those who have long memories can forgive those people who perpetrated this crime against humanity. ...

Sadly, the number of holocaust survivors is dwindling each year, but I pay tribute to those who go into schools, colleges and other meetings around the United Kingdom to bear personal testimony to what happened to them when they were growing up. The reality is that, without their personal testimony, it is hard to contemplate how 6 million people could have been murdered in such a way. ...

We must have the Holocaust memorial and education centre built alongside Parliament in Victoria Tower gardens as a permanent reminder of the horrors that can be inflicted by evil people, so that when people visit the cradle of democracy that is Parliament, they can also visit the memorial centre on a free-of-charge basis, and young people can be suitably educated. ...

col 593 Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op): ... We have a duty to speak out about what is happening now, as well as reflecting on what happened to my own ancestors—people I will never get to meet and whose children were never born. ... This is not a day just about Jews and the holocaust; this is a day about all those facing oppression, genocide and persecution. As a Jewish person, I send my solidarity and my support to all those facing persecution. We need to be able to shine a light in the darkness. ...

Saqib Bhatti (Conservative): ... Even during a pandemic, the determination of the British people to hold virtual commemorations online across the country is heartening and demonstrates our resolve to remember the horrors of the holocaust. ...

I agree with the Prince of Wales, who said that the important truth is that we are increasingly losing living voices to educate us. As well as bearing witness to what happened, by listening to these stories and by sharing them we ensure that our future generations will have the courage to speak up in the face of evil. That is why I am a big believer in the importance of programmes such as the Lessons from Auschwitz project, the Ambassador programme and the Outreach programme. Those programmes are important not just because they teach us about the false doctrines of the past; they warn us against malevolent ideologies in the present and the future.

The relevance of that in today’s United Kingdom cannot be understated. The Communities Security Trust recorded over 1,800 antisemitic incidents in 2019, a 7% rise on the record of 2018. In 2018, cases of antisemitic incidents rose by 16% from 2017, the highest yearly total since records began in 1984. Clearly, there is more we must do to tackle the ideology

of blind hate. We cannot allow ourselves to forget the tragic horror and torment that the Jewish people faced during the holocaust. ...

col 594 Florence Eshalomi (Labour Co-op): ... Three weeks after I was elected as the MP for Vauxhall, anti-Islamic slogans were painted on the walls of a mosque in my constituency. ... It came three days after antisemitic graffiti was sprayed across a synagogue and shops in north London, during the Jewish festival of Hanukkah.

Genocide does not just happen. People do not wake up one day and decide that they hate each other. It is a slow process that builds over time. We know from history that latent hatred can lead to genocide when it is left to fester and then exploited by those in positions of power. We cannot pick and choose which forms of racism or hatred we do not like. We must all be united in condemning all forms of racism and hatred, whenever and wherever it happens. ...

col 595 Nicola Richards (Conservative): ... I struggle to comprehend the enormity and sheer scale of the holocaust. That is why that genocide stands out in history, and why we can, and should, never forget it happened. ...

When we really understand that this was a mass, industrialised killing across borders, and across Europe, to wipe out an entire race, the holocaust takes on an even more sinister meaning. It was organised. It involved complex logistics to move people around, and to murder as many Jews as possible after the Nazis had taken from them everything they could. ...

col 597 Lyn Brown (Labour): ... We know in this place that racial hatred and genocidal violence is still with us in this world. That is why I was so disappointed that last week, despite the pleas of holocaust survivors, the Government refused to change the law to prevent trade deals with countries committing genocide. We must have clear pathways to identify and prevent another genocide. "Never again" must not be a platitude. It is an instruction. We must be the light in the darkness. ...

Eliot Colburn (Conservative): ... For Jews around the world, including here in the UK, the holocaust is not just a terrible memory; it is something they live with on a permanent basis—the photographs of family members they never got to meet, and the knowledge that the thriving Jewish communities across Europe were all but annihilated. Today, 76 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, the world's Jewish population still has not returned to what it was prior to the second world war. ...

col 598 Gerald Jones (Labour): ... We are fortunate here in the UK not to be at risk of genocide. However, discrimination has not ended, and neither has the use of the language of hatred or exclusion. There is still much to do to create a safer future. It might be easier for some to ignore massacres that are happening halfway around the planet, but perhaps it is not so easy to turn a blind eye to events happening in our own backyard. In 2014, antisemitic incidents in the UK reached their highest ever level, double the number of the year before. This continues to be a stain on our society today. Anti-Muslim hate tripled in London after the Paris attacks. Following the EU referendum, hate crime aimed at EU nationals spiked across the UK. ...

col 599 Imran Ahmad Khan (Conservative): ... Tragically, antisemitism continues to rear its monstrous head. In December 2018, a survey found that 89% of Jews living in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the UK felt that antisemitism had increased in their country over the previous decade.

The United Kingdom must be the light in the darkness now, and provide an example by standing up to those currently committing genocide. Limiting trade and commerce unilaterally with genocidal regimes is one step that the UK must take in leading the world against genocide. ...

Our world's shameful past, and its present, makes it clear that human decency is fragile, and admonishes us that if we treasure humanity, we cannot take our values for granted.

To safeguard humanity, we must never forget the evils deliberately inflicted upon the Jewish people throughout the holocaust, and we must appreciate that, as I speak today, similar filthy crimes are being perpetrated by a totalitarian state. We cannot be complicit or deliberately turn a blind eye to genocide out of convenience or lust for blood-stained trade. ...

col 600 Bell Ribeiro-Addy (Labour): ... We should never underestimate how important it is that we take this time every year to remember the horrific events that have occurred in the past; to remember the 6 million Jews murdered during the holocaust, as well as the other millions who were murdered under Nazi rule, and to remember those who were killed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Darfur and in other horrific genocides. ...

col 601 Peter Gibson (Conservative): ... Antisemitism is simply racism, and like all racism it has no place in our society. Racism is born out of ignorance, and ignorance can be overcome with education and understanding. The planned education centre and dedicated holocaust memorial in Victoria Tower gardens will serve as a beacon to future generations to reject hatred, prejudice and denial. ... It is by coming together as a nation—as a community—that we can combat hatred and prejudice globally. We must be the light in the darkness. ...

col 603 Wes Streeting (Labour): ... One of the things that I find most troubling about the lessons of the holocaust—the lessons from Auschwitz and, in particular, from visiting Auschwitz just before the 2019 general election—is that it is very easy to look at the holocaust and the Nazi persecution and to ask, with confusion, bewilderment and a total lack of understanding in many respects, how it was that these uniquely evil people, the Nazis, could perpetrate such appalling acts of genocide, but the uncomfortable truth is that the Nazis were not extraordinary people. They were ordinary people capable of acts of extraordinary evil. That is the fundamental truth of the holocaust, and why we must always guard against antisemitism in our society.

It is very easy to condemn the antisemites of the world where they bear the swastika or march through the streets of Charlottesville, but it is much less comfortable confronting antisemitism among the people we know in our communities, perhaps even in our families or, indeed, in our political parties. So if the words “Never again” are really truly to mean something, being the light in the darkness is not just about our country’s responsibility on the global stage to tackle ongoing acts of genocide and atrocities such as those being perpetrated by China; it is also our everyday responsibility as citizens and Members of Parliament to tackle antisemitism under our very noses. ...

col 606 Christian Wakeford (Conservative): ... The Community Security Trust recently undertook a study of holocaust denial in relation to an alternative social media site, BitChute, which unfortunately still operates, providing a safe space for antisemitic, racist, misogynistic and conspiracy-fuelled content from the far right. The CST conducted searches on BitChute in the 24 hours running up to Holocaust Memorial Day this year. The searches related to five non-offensive terms related to the holocaust: “holocaust”, “Auschwitz”, “Hitler”, “gas chambers”, and “Anne Frank”.

What was found were easily accessible videos in vast quantities that both denied and glorified the holocaust. In every single case, the vast majority of the search results were overtly antisemitic. The CST limited its search to the first 20 videos per search item, and 94 of them were considered overtly antisemitic. These 94 videos had a combined viewing figure of over 1.5 million. Some of the videos are inaccessible in the UK, and rightly so, but this is easily circumvented by using a virtual private network. These 94 videos were only a fraction of thousands more that were glorifying the holocaust, and we do need to be doing more to remove this content. Holocaust denial is only one part of the problem on BitChute, which still hosts large quantities of other antisemitic, racist and conspiracy-fuelled material. ...

col 608 Marco Longhi (Conservative): When other countries were rounding up their

Jewish communities and herding them on to the trains to the gas chambers, Britain provided a haven for thousands of refugee children. ...

We must all take responsibility not just for our actions, but for our language as well. There is no place for identity-based prejudice and hostility, wherever this manifests itself. All of us have a duty to be vigilant, alert to the insidious traps set by those who seek to divide us. ... We must not allow any cesspit of hateful, antisemitic, racist abuse to grow and take hold. We all know what happened when it did. ...

col 609 Antony Higginbotham (Conservative): ... It is a sad reality that far from eradicating antisemitism, it appears to be on the rise. We know there are places on the internet where it thrives alongside other hate and extremism. Those are not dark, unknown corners of the internet, but the platforms many of us use: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, as well as the more obscure ones ...

col 610 Patricia Gibson (SNP): ... As we reflect today on the murder of six million Jews in the holocaust, we have heard today, shamefully, how antisemitism is still increasing. It is shameful that armed guards are often felt necessary to guard synagogues in London. That is something that should be part of our reflections today. ...

In the world today, nation states that perpetrate such evil must not be glad-handed. They must not be gently coaxed as we seek to sign trade deals. States that perpetrate such evil must not be flattered because we believe them to be powerful and important. We must not tiptoe around leaders or regimes that preside over brutality.

There must be no doubt that we will not tolerate genocide, flagrant abuses of human rights, or hatred in any form. If we are truly serious about condemning such persecution, that must be reflected in this House's supporting the amendment to the Trade Bill that seeks to terminate any trade deal with any country committing genocide. There can be no equivocation when it comes to dealing with evil. ...

col 612 Kate Osborne (Labour): ... The world has a duty to remember that the holocaust was an evil attempt to eliminate 6 million innocent Jewish people and so many others, including LGBT, Roma, Sinti and disabled people, as well as trade unionists and the elderly, all of whom were victims of such horrific Nazi brutality. They were heartlessly killed for no reason other than that they were shockingly identified as being inferior by virtue of their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or political affiliation.

That humans are capable of such appalling brutality, based on an adherence to a doctrine of hate, is incomprehensible, but to fail to retell one of the darkest periods of human history would be an injustice to those who perished. ...

Hatred and intolerance continue to exist 76 years later, and hate speech and hate crimes are on the rise. Our communities are becoming increasingly divided. All too often, acts of horrific cruelty are still being carried out around the world against people because of their religion, their race and their beliefs. In memory of the millions who perished, let us recommit ourselves to tolerance and respect and to stand together, so that their legacy will be a society of co-operation and compassion. We can and we must be the light in the darkness. ...

col 615 Jo Gideon (Conservative): ... We all have moments in our lives that remain embedded in our memories long after others fade. I remember vividly the eerie silence and the absence of birdsong as I entered the site. The sign "Arbeit Macht Frei" was a grim reminder that I was stepping back into the setting of the most abhorrent atrocity in the last 100 years. Before visiting the Auschwitz living museum, I had not fully understood the extent to which the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis reached beyond the Jewish population, to include a wide range of political opponents, other ethnic groups such as the Roma community, gay men and people with disabilities. But in remembering the lives of these victims, so brutally murdered by the Nazis, who felt empowered to commit these atrocities, we must recommit ourselves as a society to tackling that hatred, intolerance and prejudice in whatever modern day shape it may take. ...

Lessons were meant to be learnt from the horrors of the holocaust. The world was to change for the better forever. How, then, do we explain Bosnia, Cambodia, Darfur, Rwanda, the Rohingya people and the plight of Uyghurs in China? ...

col 616 Catherine McKinnell (Labour): ... Just three weeks ago, a group of thugs stormed the heart of US democracy. Among their number was a man wearing a “Camp Auschwitz” t-shirt, and others wearing shirts emblazoned with deeply offensive and disturbing messages. This did not come out of nowhere. Too many politicians have failed to take a stand for freedom, tolerance and the rule of law over the last few years. ...

One of the reasons why the rise of the Nazis is so difficult for us to come to terms with is that it is not something that happened centuries ago or in a failed state on the other side of the world; it happened in western Europe in the mid-20th century. It stands as a grave warning of where hatred and misinformation can lead, if we allow it to, even in the wealthiest and best-educated societies. ...

Today, the worrying reality is that many British Jews see antisemitism creeping back into everyday life. So what do we do? First, we educate. ...

Secondly, we legislate, through the online safety Bill, and by adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of antisemitism. ...

col 617 Duncan Baker (Conservative): ... Had I been the MP for North Norfolk in the 1930s, I wonder how I would have reacted to the growing stories of antisemitism in Europe. I wonder how Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Thomas Russell Albert Mason Cook, my predecessor from 1931 to 1945, would have reacted. According to *Hansard*, in the years between his election and the outbreak of war, he did not once mention the subject. ... our records show not only a lack of interest in the rise of evil elsewhere, but a positive wish to keep it there. There are quite a few examples to choose from, but perhaps this one from a debate in 1938 is as good as any to prove the point:

“We must remember that if these people come in here, we risk the rousing of anti-Semitism in this country.” —[\[Official Report, 24 November 1938; Vol. 341, c. 2053.\]](#) ...

Too often, especially these days, people are afraid of calling out wrongdoing or evil for fear of being branded a troublemaker or disrupter, of going against the tide, of challenging authority, of raising their voice when others say they must not, because it means putting their career and reputation at risk. ...

... today we should be standing up for the Rohingya in Myanmar, and against the Dinka ethnic group in South Sudan for their persecution of the Neur people. We should be calling out the persecution of the Yazidis in Iraq. Perhaps most seriously, there is the persecution of the Uyghurs by the Chinese state. We put our economic comfort against the untold distress of an entire people. These atrocities are happening today. Are we a light in their darkness? We should be. ...

col 619 Steve McCabe (Labour): ... We must never forget that we allowed it to happen. That is why we cannot quietly ignore or excuse antisemitism. That is why we must challenge phoney equivalence arguments and free speech excuses, no matter where they come from or who says it. Excuses mean complicity.

When we think of Israel, it is right to question the motives of those who constantly single out that state for special treatment. That does not mean that I do not support a just settlement, a democratic and viable Palestinian state, and a secure and recognised Israel—I do support those things. It does mean, however, that when I hear the frank views of As’ad AbuKhalil, who has said: “The real aim of BDS is to bring down the state of Israel... That should be stated as an unambiguous goal”, or those of Iran’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, who has said: “It is the mission of the Islamic Republic... to erase Israel from the map of the region”, I question the intentions and the motives of those who support such people and such movements.

It was exactly those kinds of views that paved the way to Auschwitz. We should never forget what indifference and turning a blind eye can lead to. ...

col 620 Zarah Sultana (Labour): ... History is not over. Antisemitism and the far right are on the rise. Earlier this month, we saw fascists wearing Nazi iconography storming Capitol Hill. A man who called white supremacist protesters “very fine people” held the world’s most powerful office. In Hungary, the Prime Minister spreads Soros conspiracies and lauds generals who sent tens of thousands of Jewish people to Nazi concentration camps. In Brazil, the far right president attacks the rights of LGBT people, indigenous people and trade unionists. Here in Britain, antisemites still spread conspiracies about the Rothschilds and George Soros.

col 621 Antisemitic violence remains a growing threat to Jewish people. Our communities are still divided by racism. Frantz Fanon, an intellectual of the anti-colonial struggle, said that whenever he saw an antisemite, he knew that he, too, was threatened. That was not only because plenty of antisemites are white supremacists, but for a deeper reason. It is because that kind of thinking that produces antisemitism blames social ills on minority groups. It is a thinking that encourages us to turn on each other and to treat our neighbours as our enemies. So long as that thinking exists, Fanon said that none of us are safe from denigration and attack. That is why we all have a stake in fighting for each other, in combating antisemitism and racism in all of its forms. ...

Dean Russell (Conservative): ... The trouble with the darkness is that it allows otherwise good people to believe that they cannot see what is happening around them. No baby is born with hatred in their heart, yet there are those who will twist the human condition to nurture hate and to plant the seeds of hate with words of envy and of “us versus them” and, ultimately, at the worst extreme, to generate acts of evil while others pretend they do not see them. ...

We cannot bring back to life the millions whose lives were tragically ended, but with every candle we light, every child we educate, every time we choose not to like or share statements of intolerance and every time we challenge acts of hate around the world, we shine a light on those who would prefer to hide in the darkness. ...

col 624 Christine Jardine (Liberal Democrat): ... We all continue to share a responsibility, not only for those whose lives and loved ones were stolen in the holocaust, but for those who suffer now—today. They suffer the indignity and cruelty of being forced to kneel on railway platforms in China before being boarded on to trains and transported to camps. The echoes of the holocaust in those pictures were evident to us all. I pay tribute to the Board of Deputies of British Jews for leading the calls for action to protect the Uyghur Muslims. We must all listen to them. We must act and ensure that the lessons of the holocaust are never forgotten, its horrors not repeated again in our lifetimes, and the light of remembrance never ever allowed to dim. ...

David Amess (Conservative): ... I simply do not understand and have never understood antisemitism. The most important lesson from the holocaust is that although we cannot police the world, it is simply not acceptable to stand by and do and say nothing when genocide happens. For evil to prevail, all it needs is for good people to remain silent. I therefore support the genocide amendment to the Trade Bill. We should not be supporting genocide in any form—whether against the Jewish community, the Uyghurs or anyone else ...

col 626 Jonathan Gullis (Conservative): ... I went to Yad Vashem ... and laid a wreath. It was when I was there that I thought about meine oma, who was born in the late 1920s under Nazi Germany rule and grew up under a Nazi Germany education system. As soon as that war ended, she fled to this country to start again. ... I can see in her eyes the pain, the shame and the sorrow she feels for having been a part of a nation—by birth, not by belief—that committed one of the greatest atrocities known to human history. Sadly she lies very unwell at this moment in time, but she asked me today to stand in this House and simply say sorry for her for being a member of that nation and maybe not having the courage that she wished she had to send the fight back against that evil Nazi regime.

I spent eight and a half years as a schoolteacher, and it never ceased to amaze me that when we talked about the holocaust, it was one of the very few topics where I could hear a pin drop in the classroom. Students understand the importance of this subject and that we need to know our history to learn from it and ensure that we do not allow such atrocities to happen again. ...

col 627 Alistair Carmichael (Liberal Democrat): ... Today, I want to pay particular tribute to the British Jewish community for all that they have done when confronted with what they have seen happening in Xinjiang province to the Uyghur Muslim population. The *Jewish News* in particular has taken a brave and courageous stand. Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis spoke powerfully this week about the resonances that he, as a Jewish man, could see from Xinjiang province of what his own people suffered in Europe in the 1940s. They were powerful words to which we should listen and pay the most careful attention.

What happened at Auschwitz and elsewhere in the 1940s came, at the end of the war, as a surprise and certainly as a shock to many people, but we now live in a very different age ... Nobody will ever be able to say that they did not know what was happening in Xinjiang province and that they did not know what was happening to the Uyghur Muslims. ...

col 628 Jim Shannon (DUP): ... I want to speak about the IHRA definition of antisemitism. It was announced in December 2016 that the Government had adopted that definition, but only last year the Secretary of State for Education highlighted the fact that only a handful of universities had adopted the definition. Also, I say respectfully that Members of this House promoted the Palestine Solidarity Campaign lobby day in December, actively promoting an antisemitic trope—that Israel is an apartheid state—given as an example by the IHRA, but this House did nothing. If there is no penalty for breaching the IHRA definition, its adoption is worthless. If we have learned nothing from the past, we can be certain that it will be repeated. This cannot and must not be allowed to happen. ...

col 629 Kirsten Oswald (SNP) ... We all need to understand the horror of this murder of millions and millions of innocent people. There were more Jews murdered than the entire population of Scotland. The lessons in that for us all bear repeating again and again. That is why the work of organisations such as the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and the Holocaust Educational Trust matters so much. ...

None of us should kid ourselves that this cannot happen now. ...

col 630 So we need to commit, and we must always focus on being the light. I will conclude by reflecting on the words of Jane Haining, who is a personal hero of mine. Jane was a Scottish teacher, working in Budapest at the time of the holocaust. She stood with her Jewish students in the darkest of times. ...

col 631 Steve Reed (Labour Co-op): ... Labour's new leader made clear in his acceptance speech last April his determination to root out antisemitism and make our party a safe space for Jewish people to be members of and to vote for once more. We understand the hurt that antisemitism has caused to the Jewish community and we will continue to work closely with and listen to the community as we seek to heal that pain. With the support of the Leader of the Opposition, I have asked every Labour council to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism, with all the examples. We have backed the Secretary of State's request for universities to do the same, and we support the establishment of the holocaust memorial and learning centre in Victoria Tower Gardens, right next to this place, the heart of British democracy. ...

col 633 The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick): ... It is distressing, but perhaps not entirely surprising, that covid-19 has itself given the hatemongers another excuse to dredge up and repurpose age-old antisemitic tropes, claiming, just as they did as far back as the black death and later, that the Jews were the cause of the virus. ...

As we have heard in the course of this debate, we see antisemitism everywhere. ... we see it most prominently on social media, where, sadly, antisemitic abuse is rife. We see it

on our university campuses, and I pay tribute to the fantastic work and bravery of the Union of Jewish Students, which does so much to ensure that Jewish students can enjoy all that university should have to offer.

No realm of public life has escaped the cancer of antisemitism, which is why I am proud that we are the first Government to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism. It is a tool to identify how antisemitism manifests itself in the 21st century, but as the hon. Member for Strangford (Jim Shannon) said, it is a tool only as useful as our willingness to apply it robustly. ...

The work of tackling antisemitism will continue, I hope, through a new holocaust memorial and learning centre, which currently awaits the outcome of a planning inquiry. If built, it will be a world-class memorial on our preferred location next to the Palace of Westminster. ...
col 634 We gather today to fulfil a solemn obligation—an obligation of remembrance, to never allow the memory of those who died in the holocaust to be forgotten. Memory is the constant obligation of all generations. Today we mourn with those who mourn, and we grieve with those who grieve. We pay tribute to those who survived, who all these years have borne witness to that great evil and have served mankind by their example. We honour and remember the memory of all the allied forces who suffered appalling casualties and freed Europe from the grip of tyranny. Today we acknowledge the resilience and strength of Jewish people here in the UK and around the world. Finally, we pay tribute to the memory of those non-Jewish heroes who saved countless lives; those who the people of Israel call the “righteous among the nations”. In an age of indifference, they acted. In an age of fear, they showed courage. Their memory and their example should, like the light in the darkness, kindle a new flame in our hearts to do the same in our time. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-01-28/debates/COFE9708-9882-4882-B192-BAB440CDC202/HolocaustMemorialDay2021>

The Daily Mirror article referred to above can be read at

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/whatever-your-politics-must-urgently-23390412>

The Antisemitism Policy Trust briefing referred to above can be read at

<https://antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Coronaviru-antisemitism-May-2020.pdf>

The Community Security Trust Incident Report referred to above can be read at

<https://cst.org.uk/data/file/c/5/Incidents%20Report%20Jan-Jun%202020-1.1600688900.pdf>

Information about the Community Security Trust report on right wing antisemitism on social media, referred to above, can be read at

<https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2020/06/11/hate-fuel-the-hidden-online-world-fuelling-far-right-terror>

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Israel

House of Lords Written Answers

Occupied Territories: Coronavirus

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL12160] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) the government of Israel, and (2) international partners in the World Health Organization (WHO), about making COVID-19 vaccines doses available in the Occupied Palestinian Territories before the arrival in March of WHO vaccine supplies.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The British Embassy in Tel Aviv and the British Consulate-General in Jerusalem are in regular contact with the Israeli and

Palestinian authorities respectively. We will continue to raise access to safe COVID-19 vaccines.

The UK supports World Health Organisation (WHO) leadership on the COVAX Facility. The UK will continue to liaise with the WHO on timescales for vaccine delivery in the OPTs in our capacity as a major contributor to COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) and as a key international partner to the Palestinian Authority. We understand first vaccine deliveries are anticipated to begin in the first quarter of 2021.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-14/hl12160>

Israel: Textbooks

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL12020] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that material is being included in textbooks for school children in Israel which incites hatred and violence towards Palestinians.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government strongly condemns all forms of violence and incitement to violence, including the use of racist, hateful or anti-Palestinian language and any comments that could stir up hatred and prejudice. We have a regular dialogue with both the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel in which we reiterate the need for both sides to prepare their populations for peaceful coexistence, including by promoting a more positive portrayal of one another to contribute to building the conditions needed for a peace.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-11/hl12020>

Scottish Parliament Motion

John Finnie (Green) [S5M-23999] **COVID-19 Vaccination in Territory Occupied by Israel** – That the Parliament expresses its anger at the Israeli Government's reported failure to vaccinate Palestinians living in the occupied territories against COVID-19; understands that while Israel has the highest rate of vaccination in the world, Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza are being denied the vaccination; notes calls from UN human rights experts to ensure that the Israeli state provides swift and equitable access to the vaccine for Palestinians under occupation; further notes the reported statement from the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights which states differential access to vaccines in the occupied territories is "morally and legally" unacceptable, and calls on the Israeli authorities to fulfil what it considers their obligations and provide equal access to vaccinations.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-23999>

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Other Relevant Information

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Equality Act 2010: Guiding principles for associations

Following the publication of the findings of their investigation into antisemitism in the Labour Party, the EHRC have published a set of guiding principles for all associations and membership bodies. ... These principles will support associations, including political parties, in ensuring that they protect members, prospective members, employees and

agents from all forms of discrimination.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-2010-guiding-principles-associations>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2622>

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

**** Domestic Abuse Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2709>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-01-27/debates/33525572-1CFA-44DC-BAF2-A644FBB81EB4/DomesticAbuseBill>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

Freedom of Speech (Universities) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2820>

Genocide Determination Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2537>

Marriage (Authorised Belief Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2795>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

Scottish Parliament

**** Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill**

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/domestic-abuse-protection-scotland-bill>

Stage 1 debate

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13083&i=118440#ScotParlOR>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/hate-crime-and-public-order-scotland-bill>

Post-mortem Examinations (Defence Time Limit) (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/post-mortem-examinations-defence-time-limit-scotland-bill>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Introduction of a statutory opt-out system for organ donation for Northern Ireland

(closing date 19 February 2021)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/organ-donation>

Human Rights Act Review (closing date 3 March 2021)

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/93/human-rights-joint-committee/news/138635/call-for-evidence-the-governments-independent-human-rights-act-review/>

Social Distance, Digital Congregation: British Ritual Innovation under COVID-19

(closing date not stated)

<https://bric19.mmu.ac.uk/take-the-survey/>

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