



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Public Bill Committee Debates

#### **Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill** (*Third sitting*)

**col 90 Professor Eric Kaufmann, Professor of Politics, Birkbeck College, University of London:** ... The Bill will have a very important effect. Sometimes the point is missed when we focus in on a few incidents of no-platforming. Really, the big, big issue here is the monumental chilling effect that academics feel: in a UCU-sponsored study, 35% of academics—UCU members—said that they felt restricted in saying what they believe. That is 35,000 academics. In a King's study, 25% of students claim that they will not say what they believe—that is 500,000 people. ... Issues around no-platforming are the tip of a vast iceberg of chilling effects and self-censorship that I believe is distorting the truth-seeking mission of the university. ...

**col 91 Matt Western (Labour):** You have talked of the fear of many left-wing academics of normalisation, whereby giving a platform to fascists and the like would normalise their views. Whether or not their views become normalised, would you be prepared to see an overt fascist speak on your campus and, if so, how do you think that would square with university management's myriad duties to student welfare and social cohesion?

**Professor Matthew Goodwin, Professor of Politics, School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Kent (also Associate Fellow at Chatham House and Director of the Legatum Institute's Centre for UK Prosperity):** ... tudents are more than capable of being exposed to a range of different views and of challenging those views, because ultimately we are here to develop critical thinkers; we are not here to put students in ideological monocultures that only give them one view of the world. ...

**col 92 Matt Western:** Why is it that, as you made clear in your October 2020 article for UnHerd, active mobilisation by representative Government is necessary to reverse critical race theory's grip on elite institutions? Is not a softer approach more desirable?

**col 93 Professor Kaufmann:** ... In a university, it absolutely should be taught; people are free to take it and to teach it. It is a different thing: you are dealing with adults. In a school

where every pupil has to be taught critical race theory, we have a compelled speech issue, a freedom of conscience issue.

I think critical race theory is a conspiracy theory. I am quite open about that. However, there is high critical race theory, which is interesting, is worth teaching and has some insights. The vulgar critical race theory that is appearing in schools and some diversity training, where they separate pupils by race and say that some are oppressors and some are oppressed, is nonsense. However, in a university classroom, people are free to take what they want and teach what they want. In schools, where we are not dealing with adults and it is compulsory, there is a freedom of conscience issue. I make that distinction very clearly.

**The Minister for Universities (Michelle Donelan):** ... How do you think that we can best ensure an atmosphere on campus that allows difficult and controversial topics to be discussed while maintaining an inclusive environment?

**Professor Goodwin:** ... For many of my colleagues, who have in some cases been sacked, disinvited, intimidated, harassed, undermined and mocked, this piece of legislation is very important ...

*col 94* **Professor Kaufmann:** ... It is incredibly important, therefore, to have a director of academic freedom who believes in promoting academic freedom, can see this through and can proactively make sure the legislation is applied. ...

**Michelle Donelan:** ... What is the biggest threat, as you perceive it, to freedom of speech in our universities?

**Professor Goodwin:** ... there are multiple threats relating to debates we are having around the role of China ... We also have parallel issues around the ability of gender-critical academics ... There is also the ability of some of our colleagues in history and psychology to challenge conventional wisdom on issues ranging from the role of Britain's empire through to intelligence and unconscious bias testing ... The threats are multi-faceted and are not just coming from one direction. ...

**Professor Kaufmann:** ... Certain types of left-wing research around the middle east, for example, and Islam will also benefit from this protection. ...

*col 96* ... no one will speak up against what is an illiberal policy but will make them look like a racist or transphobe, and so the policy gets through. ...

*col 97* **Professor Goodwin:** ... the protection of academic freedom should apply not just to established academics but, in particular in some cases, to academics who are at the beginning of their career and perhaps on fixed-term contracts, or who perhaps are doctoral students. ...

My view would be that it should also apply to students ...

*col 101* **Matt Western:** ... [Sunder Katwala,] You have put on record your concern about this Bill opening up universities and student unions to being sued an unlimited number of times by people such as David Irving. Could you expand on those concerns?

**Sunder Katwala, Director, British Future:** ... Everybody who is interested in academic freedom would say that it is in law and we should be protecting it, and that is being driven by the fear that there is overcreep from the side that wants to take away academic freedom. In terms of how you implement that, if you say, "Let's defend lawful speech because lawful speech is free speech, and lawful speech is academic freedom," that sounds very good, as long as you can answer the question: is all lawful speech something we want to defend as academic freedom, or are there categories of lawful speech that we do not want to defend?

Most racist and antisemitic speech does not meet the legal threshold of being unlawful. Intimidation and violence are unlawful, and other forms of stirring up are unlawful, but holocaust denial is not unlawful. We may wish to stigmatise it—we would not want it on our charity board or in our political parties, but different institutions have different rules. In

this case, what are the principles and categories by which we might say that there is a form of lawful speech that we should not be protecting under academic freedom because it is inimical to academic freedom? That is the tension.

*col 102* For example, if the Government say to universities that they should adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism, that is an important thing to do for antisemitism. There are two reasons to do that: one is symbolism—antisemitism is bad—and the other is to prohibit on campus speech that is currently lawful but also antisemitic. Comparing the Israeli Government to Nazi Germany, for example, is a lawful position that we wish to stigmatise. If you have this measure and the IHRA definition, you have potential tension at the boundary between the lawful speech that you are trying to exclude and the lawful speech that you are trying to protect. ...

With student unions, it is there to push back against not inviting, disinviting or protesting against someone whose political views you do not share. Wide boundaries are good, but are the boundaries of lawful speech exactly the boundaries you want to protect as academic freedom, or are there some hard cases? ...

What I am not clear about at this stage concerning the legislation, the principles, the operationalisation and so on is how far these things are going to be broadly symbolic—so that they are just there—or how far it goes. What are the damages? If I am disinvited because I am David Irving—I have published a book and then I was disinvited because people read the High Court judgment—what is the material loss to David Irving? I suspect that it is quite small, but we do not know. That is the level of detail that the legislation does not take us to. ...

**Matt Western:** Could that include reputational damage?

**Sunder Katwala:** Yes. Mr Irving has a very low reputation, because the High Court has said what it said about him, so him not being allowed to proceed with his event at the University of Cambridge and so on would add to the reprehensible reputation of a man with an already low reputation. There might be other cases in which somebody loses significant amounts of reputation by being cancelled for the first time. ...

*col 103* The online harms Bill has the opposite principle—again, it is a good principle—which is that there is some lawful speech that is reprehensible and we wish to stigmatise it, even though it is lawful. The example that I put to one of the social media platforms was, “No blacks in the England team—keep our team white.” It is lawful, reprehensible racist speech. It is also within the rules of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram at the moment, and they are embarrassed about that and looking into it. I feel that an event at a student union, “No blacks in the England team—keep our team white,” does not seem to be the kind of event that we want to protect, and yet that is lawful but reprehensible speech, which we want to stigmatise, even though it is free speech within the law.

If I sit in my living room or go to the pub and say, “Marcus Rashford isn’t English—keep our team white,” I am not breaking the law. I might be if I put it on the internet in particular ways, but I am not in that case—I have not hit the threshold for racist abuse. If I sent it to him with the wrong kind of epithets, maybe I would. This is a question of wide boundaries for sure, but are there hard cases for how far those boundaries go? ...

*col 106* **John Hayes (Conservative):** ... The point you are making is that some speech should be prohibited that is legally lawful. Who would arbitrate that? Would it be university authorities, Governments or the mass of students? Once you get into the territory that you are describing, which could lead to a liberal tyranny, as I am sure you appreciate, who is going to decide what is acceptable or unacceptable, if it is not the law?

**Sunder Katwala:** ... Let me give you the three case versions that I think you should examine.

One is where the content is directly discriminatory: this would be the clash with the Equality Act. If somebody said, “Let’s have a lecture on how women are not fit to study maths and sciences,” and they brought the Taliban over to advocate their view on that, you could say,

“Let’s just stand up and tell them that’s wrong.” Fine, we could do that, but, as with the Government’s position on antisemitism, there might be some kinds of versions of that—like no gays, Jews or blacks on campus, or whatever—where the responsibilities to treat students equally might be undermined.

My second category would be where people are advocating against academic freedom. If I held a campus event called “The burning books party” on 5 November, I might be burning the books that Hitler burned or burning “Mein Kampf,” but burning books or advocating the burning of books is against academic freedom. Should we have that debate? Clearly, burning a book is, in a sense, freedom of expression of a particular kind, but I don’t think we would invite people to have bonfires of books on campus. ...

*col 107* My third case would be very extreme conspiracy theories. Here we have a real dilemma. We know about Galileo, Darwin and so on, but when it comes to 9/11 “Truthers” and people who have David Icke’s view of covid—that it does not exist anywhere; it is just a plot by Bill Gates—where is the balance between the sunlight on that being right and the expression of that view? ...

Those are the categories where I think that you need to think about whether there are versions of reprehensible but lawful speech that are inimical to academic freedom rather than needing to be protected as academic freedom. The Government have taken that position on holocaust denial, as I understand it, but they have not outlined a set of principles on what is wrong with holocaust denial. How does that relate to the denial of other genocides? How does that relate to the identical position of other minority groups who are not Jewish? ...

**John Hayes:** The vice-chancellor in a particular university, or the university management, would determine what was unacceptable but lawful.

**Sunder Katwala:** Or it might be a national policy. In the case of holocaust denial, it will be a national policy that the lawful speech of holocaust denial will not be welcome on our campuses. The Government have taken that view. ...

The Government will decide in the case of holocaust denial that it needs to be very clear that it is not welcome on campus. I am saying that there are analogous cases to holocaust denial for other reasons, for other minority groups. ...

*col 108* You are going to have to have a transparent policy on which cases are decided. That is where my principles are about “What can you say about gays, women or Jews?” and “What can you or can’t you say about the lurid conspiracies that don’t seem to have any value to academic freedom?” How do you deal with those tensions? ...

**To read the full transcript see**

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-13/debates/91743fec-a6cd-4949-93eb-e9f4183013cc/HigherEducation\(FreedomOfSpeech\)Bill\(ThirdSitting\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-13/debates/91743fec-a6cd-4949-93eb-e9f4183013cc/HigherEducation(FreedomOfSpeech)Bill(ThirdSitting))

#### **Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill (Fourth sitting)**

*col 120* **Professor Jonathan Grant, Professor of Public Policy, King’s College London:** ... I think [the Bill] is somewhat overkill. ... On the elements around cancel culture, when you look at the data it is very rare that events are cancelled or people get no-platformed. I have concerns around the chilling effect, which I heard previous witnesses talk about, but I wonder whether regulation is the way to address those concerns. ...

*col 123* There is no issue when it comes to the cancelling events. The numbers are small, as the OfS demonstrates. ...

*col 128* **Matt Western (Labour):** ... I am interested to hear specifically about the situation with regard to antisemitism. Can you give a flavour on that?

**Danny Stone MBE, Director, Antisemitism Policy Trust:** ... We have data: the Community Security Trust, which records antisemitic incident figures, reported that there were 58 university incidents in 2018-19, including four assaults; 65 incidents in 2019-20, including two assaults; and 109 incidents in 2020-21. We know that in May, issues

occurred in universities where there had not previously been issues. Certainly, some of the abuse has moved online, and the Union of Jewish Students in particular has reported online abuse.

On the issue of speakers ... the CST reported that from 2018 to 2020, 15 speakers who had some association with antisemitism or had made antisemitic remarks in the past came on to campus. As a former officer of the Union of Jewish Students, I dealt with some of those cases. In 2005, at SOAS—the School of Oriental and African Studies—a speaker said: “I’m not going to say whether it is right or not to burn down a synagogue, I can see that it is a rational act”.

Somebody who came to Oxford had actually been barred from entering the UK and was broadcast in. They had been barred because of their views on terrorism. In 2017, after the passing of the Equalities Act 2010, a speaker said: “Zionists should be treated like Nazis”.  
*col 129* The point is that people are coming on to campus and expressing antisemitic views. The concern is that those impacts are being properly considered and that they do not get additional protections. ...

**Matt Western:** ... other legislation is quite clear in how it addresses and balances competing freedoms, but there is seemingly no such balance in this legislation. ...

**Danny Stone:** ... In fact, the human rights memorandum for this Bill says that there will be competing freedoms, but it suggests leaving it to the end point: the universities. ...

**Michelle Donelan:** ... you have previously raised concerns about a lack of consistency in the duties on higher education providers, in that they do not apply to student unions—something that this Bill would correct. ...

**Danny Stone:** ... there was a move to essentially prohibit the Jewish society at the University of Essex from becoming a society. That was unacceptable, and I believe it was reversed in the end. Similarly, there have been moves in the past to ban Jewish societies, and I was involved in campaigning against a motion at the University of Manchester that essentially would have done that.

On the flip side, there are front groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, which is not a proscribed organisation, that will seek to set up on campus, and there are far-right organisations that will seek to set up student societies on campus. That presents me with real concern. Could they potentially appeal and try to get money and find a route through? Yes, they might. There is a complexity in this which I would like to see recognised in the Bill. ...

*col 130* **Michelle Donelan:** Do you think Jewish students feel comfortable reporting incidents where they may have had their freedom of speech inhibited?

**Danny Stone:** I think it depends on the institution and on how confident they might be. For example ... at the moment at Bristol, and potentially at Warwick, there have been concerns raised by the Union of Jewish Students about the operation of their procedures. ... It will depend, but I can well imagine there will be instances in which Jewish students would be nervous about reporting their concerns. ...

**Charlotte Nichols (Labour):** ... Earlier, Professor Goodwin said in evidence that he would happily have invited someone from the BNP or the National Front to speak to students, if they were available. He also spoke about the need for academics to feel welcome, safe and secure, but that does not seem to apply to students, in particular those from minority groups, including Jewish students. Under the proposals in the Bill, the OfS will have a specific condition of registration relating to the promotion of freedom of speech. Should it also have a condition in relation to discrimination?

*col 131* **Danny Stone:** ... The first ministerial guidance to the OfS suggested that it looked at discrimination. ... the OfS, which already has certain principles that it must abide by in respect of freedom of speech, as Nicola Dandridge was saying, will now have a specific condition of registration, so this is the time to include a condition of registration in respect of discrimination. ...

**Charlotte Nichols:** ... what [do] you think that the Bill, if enacted, would mean for cases such as that of Professor David Miller at the University of Bristol? He has been widely condemned by the Union of Jewish Students, the Board of Deputies and more than 100 parliamentarians across both Houses of Parliament and all political parties regarding allegations of antisemitism. Would the Bill protect him?

**Danny Stone:** Before coming here, I had a look at the expertise that David Miller's professes on the Bristol website, which is the Zionist movement, the Israel lobby and racism. One can see, using the Miller case as an example, why that might present an issue in the future. If an academic has the right to protest that they have not got a promotion or have been passed over for a job because of free speech they have used in their area of expertise—well, hold on, the area of expertise here is Israel, Zionism and racism.

David Miller, however, has talked about Jewish students "being used as political pawns" by "a violent, racist foreign regime engaged in ethnic cleansing."

Everyone, I think, recognises that that is an antisemitic statement. Certainly, as you say, across Parliament it has been recognised as such. There will be other examples of academics who have a particular area of expertise and that area of expertise will potentially give cover for them saying particular things. If you remove that, the problem is not fixed, because in the past other academics have spoken in an antisemitic way when those particulars are not their area of expertise. ...

**col 132 Hillary Gyebi-Ababio, Vice-President for Higher Education, National Union of Students:** What I would say is that to focus on freedom of speech as just being about making people uncomfortable is quite restrictive. If we are going to speak about freedom of speech in that regard, we also have to speak about the freedom of people to have opposing views and the right of people to protest when they do have opposing views. Even more so, I think it is important that when we think about freedom of speech, we acknowledge the fact that freedom of speech is important to have, to champion and to promote, but we also have to be mindful of where it might encroach into places where people feel harmed, and are harmed, especially if they come from a vulnerable or marginalised group with protected characteristics under the Equality Act. ...

**col 133 Emma Hardy (Labour):** ... the Minister wrote to universities asking them to adopt the definition of antisemitism. The Chair of the Education Committee has promoted, and asked universities to adopt, the definition of antisemitism. That definition is not law, so there are times when we want to restrict what people say that are not necessarily within the law. Do you want to comment on why adopting that definition is important, despite it not being law?

**col 134 Danny Stone:** ... The IHRA definition is excellent and it was created ... to try to bring uniformity for practitioners who were trying to understand why Jews were fleeing antisemitism and antisemitic terrorism in Europe. It helps to bring a standard of understanding to people. What it does not do ... is to block people from saying anything. It is an advisory tool. It helps people to understand what antisemitism may be in a particular context. That is a very useful thing for universities, and the Secretary of State and the Minister have been very good in supporting the IHRA definition. But, as you say, it does help to guide what our expectations are around antisemitism, and presumably, if something is found to be antisemitic, we do not really want that. ...

**Fiona Bruce (Conservative):** ... you have given us some carefully collated data on antisemitism which has been very helpful, not just in relation to the Bill but more widely. What are your thoughts about faith-based views being expressed and how there may have been an impact on those in the university arena, including in terms of the chilling effect? ... things like a biblical view of creation, pro-life views or a faith perspective on the meaning of marriage—or indeed having a faith at all? ...

**Danny Stone:** ... I would want to speak to, for example, the University Jewish Chaplaincy about that to understand what has happened. From my limited knowledge, I know that

there are issues around exams on Jewish festivals, but I do not have much more. My general principle, as before, is that there has to be a right to offend. There has to be a right of freedom to express difficult, controversial opinions, but I am afraid that I do not have enough on the specifics for you. ...

*col 135* ... the Union of Jewish Students asked me to raise specifically that there has been disruption of where Jewish students who have a particular Zionist identity are looking to host Israeli speakers. Those talks, in numerous cases—I have 20 different examples in front of me—have been interrupted and the students have not been able, in their opinion, to host people with views that they want to be shared.

These are not controversial things; it is Israeli students and a group of Israeli minorities cancelled at short notice. There is a concern in that regard about being able to have a well thought through, rational and calm discussion about what is happening in the middle east, and whether that might be impacted. The UK Lawyers for Israel have raised that in front of the Joint Committee on Human Rights. ...

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op):** ... when I was a student at the University of Bradford, I hosted a speaking tour of Zionist refuseniks—people who were proud Israelis and Zionists, but at the time were refusing to fight in the Israel Defence Forces. I remember the paperwork and bureaucracy required to host those young people from Israel at university, and to get them to speak about their experiences and how they, very importantly, were not anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist, but had disagreements on certain policies. ... Is there a danger with some of this, particularly around tort, that universities will require even more paperwork and more thresholds that might mean that people such as myself in Bradford, who had a countervailing view at the time, might end up saying, “I can’t be bothered to host that speaking tour”?

*col 136* **Danny Stone:** ... In some instances, that bureaucracy can be helpful. We worked on the Manchester guidelines, which meant that when a speaker was coming to campus it was advertised in a bar so that students could raise concerns if somebody was coming and they thought that there would be a problem. Then the university could put in place various measures to ensure that that talk went off without any problem. Perhaps the event was recorded; perhaps the speaker was asked to undertake to uphold the various principles that the university has or its requirements in respect of the public sector equality duty. ...

**Lloyd Russel-Moyle:** I was on a panel at one event where there was ... the Miller chap from Bristol, and I remember that at the end of the event I said I think what has been said here is a load of rubbish... I told my office at the time to write a letter to him to say that I would not sit on any more panels and would not host any events with him. Is there a danger that if I were an institution and then wrote to Mr Miller with that, I would open myself up for tort liability, because I would be effectively saying, “I don’t want to host your views anymore”? ...

**Danny Stone:** ... I do think there is a difference between people in public life being on panels and deciding their engagement with particular speakers—and institutions. ... I do not know—it may very well. ...

*col 137* **Richard Holden (Conservative):** ... I just wanted to pick up on something that we got evidence on earlier, which was that about 20% of students are apparently feeling unable to express their views in the classroom. I just wondered whether there were any specifics around Jewish students, given what you had said about the UJS having difficulty with people coming on campus.

**Danny Stone:** ... there have been various Israeli speakers that they have sought to have on campus, including a professor of international law at City University in 2015—cancelled. In 2018 it was the Israeli ambassador; the event was initially cancelled and then held after a legal threat. There is a suggestion by a law lecturer at City University that they had been refused a sabbatical for attending a law conference in Israel. For Israeli minorities that I

spoke to, events were cancelled at short notice and held off campus, because the SU imposed charges. This is actually something fairly important; it has happened a number of times—student societies being asked to pay a fee to cover the security costs of an event going ahead. ...

There are anecdotal examples of Jewish academics who have felt that they have been passed over for a promotion, or that they have not necessarily had the support that they thought they should have for speaking about antisemitism. On the flip side, as I pointed to before, I know that there are academics who have expressed antisemitic views, and we have significant concerns about that. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-13/debates/6340e837-596a-4a94-af12-53a98f10430f/HigherEducation\(FreedomOfSpeech\)Bill\(FourthSitting\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-13/debates/6340e837-596a-4a94-af12-53a98f10430f/HigherEducation(FreedomOfSpeech)Bill(FourthSitting))

## Scottish Government

### Actions to improve racial equality

... The Immediate Priorities Plan for race equality focuses on the roots of inequalities which disproportionately impact minority ethnic communities.

The plan – which will run till 2023 – includes investing in services tailored for communities. For example, mental health initiatives and associations, ensuring equal participation and adequate support to progress in the workplace, continuing the roll out of the emergency sustenance funding assisting low-income families as part of pandemic recovery.

Other actions include:

- work to ensure minority ethnic people are properly represented and included in data collected and used by public bodies
- curriculum reform and work to diversify the teaching profession.
- creation of a long-term strategy that addresses structural and organisational racism

Equalities Minister Christina McKelvie said: “For many people from minority ethnic communities in Scotland, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed, or worsened, existing inequalities in society. It is vital that our response tackles those inequalities and their causes head-on. ...

“Our Immediate Priorities Plan for Race Equality in Scotland highlights the actions we are taking across government. This work includes our recovery from the pandemic, and also includes areas as diverse as our wider health priorities, education, housing, fair work, poverty and social security. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.scot/news/actions-to-improve-racial-equality/>

### Race Equality Immediate Priorities Plan

<https://tinyurl.com/23fsdrsy>

### Anti-racist Policy Making in Scotland

<https://tinyurl.com/nr6p5muu>

### Anti-racist policy making: Learning from the first 20 years of Scottish devolution

<https://tinyurl.com/3pvmzrs6>

TOP

# Holocaust

## House of Commons Written Answers

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [41607] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate his Department has made of the annual (a) operating and (b) maintenance costs of the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Luke Hall:** Ahead of the public inquiry in 2020, running costs including maintenance costs were estimated at around £6 million. Estimates will be kept under review as the programme proceeds.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/41607>

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [41608] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on what date the estimated cost of the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre was increased from £100 million to £102 million; for what reasons that estimated cost changed; and if he...

**Luke Hall:** The overall cost was estimated at £102 million in December 2018. As set out in the answer to Question UIN253497 on 21 May 2019, additional funding is to cover the revised entrance pavilion, the Memorial courtyard and surrounding landscaping, and to take account of VAT incurred on the overall project costs.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/41608>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2019-05-13/253497>

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [41608] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much and what proportion of the private funding required for the creation of the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre has been raised as of 2 September 2021.

**Luke Hall:** A fund-raising campaign is being led by an independent charity, led by Foundation member Gerald Ronson CBE, who has committed to securing pledges of at least £25 million.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/41609>

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [41610] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether it is his policy that work will begin on constructing the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre only when the private funding required has been raised in full.

**Luke Hall:** Funding arrangements will be in place before main construction begins.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/41610>

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [41611] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what organisation he plans to (a) own and (b) manage the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and what his timetable is for setting up that organisation.

**Luke Hall:** We are considering various operating models and a decision will be made in good time before the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre opens.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/41611>

### Holocaust Commission

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [41612] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, for what reasons the Government has not announced funding for implementation of the recommendations of the 2015 Holocaust Commission other than the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Luke Hall:** The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation will continue to consider all the recommendations made in the Commission's report and the best way to deliver them.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/41612>

### National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [41613] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what the wording was of the recommendation of 13 January 2016 by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation relating to the location of the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and if he will place the minutes of the relevant part of that meeting in the Library.

**Luke Hall:** The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation recommendation of 13 January 2016 was "*in principle to siting a memorial in the Gardens (without prejudice to the site of a learning centre)*".

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/41613>

TOP

## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Trade Agreements

**Emily Thornberry (Labour)** [45076] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when she plans to hold consultations on (a) new free trade agreements with (i) the Mercosur countries and (ii) the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and (b) enhanced free trade agreements with (A) Turkey and (B) Israel.

**Emily Thornberry (Labour)** [45077] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when she plans to publish the objectives and scoping assessments for (a) new free trade agreements with (i) India, (ii) the Mercosur countries and (iii) the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and (b) enhanced free trade agreements with (A) Turkey, (B) Israel, (C) Canada and (D) Mexico.

**Ranil Jayawardena:** At the start of new free trade agreement negotiations, HM Government plans to publish its outline approach, including negotiating objectives and a scoping assessment. Having undertaken consultations on our proposed deals with India, Canada and Mexico, we plan to undertake further consultations in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-08/45076>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-08/45077>

#### Israel: Arrest Warrants

**Andy Slaughter (Labour)** [41750] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the decision by the

International Criminal Court of 5 February 2021 to extend its jurisdiction to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, whether the Government has agreed to give advance warning to the Israeli Government (a) of any plans to arrest Israelis on their arrival in the UK and (b) in the event that a request for an arrest warrant is issued against an Israeli citizen.

**James Cleverly:** The UK is a strong supporter of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and we respect the independence of the Court. In this instance, we do not consider that the ICC has jurisdiction as the UK does not currently recognise Palestinian statehood.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/41750>

*The ICC decision referred to above can be read at*

[https://www.icc-cpi.int/CourtRecords/CR2021\\_01165.PDF](https://www.icc-cpi.int/CourtRecords/CR2021_01165.PDF)

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Ruth Jones (Labour)** [42106] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment his Department has made for the implications for his policies of the recent meeting between President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Defence Minister, Benny Gantz.

**James Cleverly:** We welcome the efforts of Israeli and Palestinian authorities to work towards a just and lasting resolution that ends the occupation and delivers peace for both Israelis and Palestinians. That is why we will continue to support steps to increase understanding and dialogue between the parties that can help create the conditions for meaningful negotiations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-03/42106>

### **Palestinians: Overseas Aid**

**Andrew Gwynne (Labour)** [45062] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the 2020-21 Memorandum of Understanding between his Department and the Palestinian Authority, whether his Department undertook an assessment in 2020-21 of whether there had been a breach of the commitments in that memorandum by the Palestine Authority.

**James Cleverly:** Our partnership with the Palestinian Authority (PA) includes a commitment from the Palestinian leadership to adhere to the principle of non-violence and to tackle any language and actions that could incite violence or hatred. We have a regular dialogue with the PA in which we reiterate the need for both sides to prepare their populations for peaceful coexistence, including by promoting a more positive portrayal of each other. We continue to assess the PA's commitment to peace in line with our Partnership Principles and we assess that the PA continues to demonstrate a credible commitment to our agreements.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-08/45062>

*The Memorandum of Understanding referred to above is not currently available online.*

### **Palestinians: Overseas Aid**

**Diana Johnson (Labour)** [45069] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will publish his Department's most recent Partnership Principle Assessment with the Palestinian Authority.

**James Cleverly:** We do not publish Partnership Principles Assessments. We have an active dialogue with the Palestinian Authority (PA) on the issues identified through these channels and we assess that the PA continues to demonstrate a credible commitment to our agreements and the 'partnership principles'.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-08/45069>

### Arab States: Israel

**Diana Johnson (Labour)** [45068] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to promote further diplomatic normalisation between Israel and Arab nations.

**James Cleverly:** The UK warmly welcomed the normalisation agreements between Israel, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Sudan. These are historic steps which see the normalisation of relations between friends of the UK. We also want to see greater coordination and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians, particularly on economic initiatives, to help improve the day to day lives of Palestinians under occupation, and build increased dialogue.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-08/45068>

### Israel: Palestinians

**Philippa Whitford (SNP)** [44363] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent representations his Department has made to the Government of Israel on the ending of policies and practices which inhibit a covid-19 response in the occupied Palestinian territories including the blockade and closure of Gaza.

**James Cleverly:** Cooperation is key to tackling Covid-19. The British Embassy Tel Aviv and the British Consulate-General Jerusalem are in regular contact with both parties and continue to urge them to coordinate on vaccine access.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-07/44363>

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## Other Relevant Information

### European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

**The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) issues a new General Policy Recommendation to the 47 Council of Europe member states**

The Council of Europe's expert body on racism and intolerance (ECRI) has today published an updated General Policy Recommendation on preventing and combating antisemitism, to help prevent increasing antisemitism and attacks on Jews in many parts of Europe.

Ahead of publication, Council of Europe Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić said: "Antisemitic attacks – including in schools, vandalism of synagogues and the spread of antisemitic hatred online – are on the rise. This is a dangerous trend and European governments should join forces to counter such extremism in all its forms".

ECRI Chair Maria Daniella Marouda said: "ECRI strongly emphasises the role of education, including education about the Holocaust, in promoting tolerance and respect for human rights, and thus also in the struggle against antisemitism."

Noting that antisemitic acts are committed by a wide range of perpetrators, including neo-Nazis, political and religious extremists, ECRI's Recommendation provides comprehensive guidance to governments on how to combat antisemitism in four specific areas:

- Policies and institutional co-ordination;
- Prevention and education;
- Protection of Jews, Jewish communities and their institutions;
- Prosecution and law enforcement.

Regarding prevention and education, ECRI encourages political actors, opinion leaders

and other public personalities to take a firm public stand against antisemitism, making clear that antisemitism should never be tolerated. ECRI recommends taking into account the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working Definition of Antisemitism as a non-legal tool to better understand and identify expressions of antisemitism ...

ECRI also proposes that governments should regulate internet companies, including social media networks, telecom operators and internet service providers in order to set up effective systems to monitor and stop antisemitic hate speech online, in compliance with international human rights standards.

Regarding protective measures, the Recommendation suggests that governments should ensure the protection of Jews, Jewish communities and their institutions by promoting their cooperation with local and national law enforcement and security authorities. ECRI also proposes improving co-operation with Jewish communities in order to determine and implement necessary security measures and ensure financial support.

Whenever tensions rise in the wake of any renewed violence in the Middle East, sweeping generalisations about all Jews and antisemitic violence also rise in Europe. ECRI points out that, all too often, insufficient emphasis is placed on the need to distinguish between legitimate criticism of the actions of Israel, to the extent that it is held to the same standards as any other state, and the public expression of racism and hatred against Jewish people in general.

In the field of prosecution and law enforcement, ECRI recommends that "antisemitic crimes committed online are punished just as crimes offline and are adequately addressed by means of effective prosecution and other measures. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/-/the-european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance-ecri-issues-a-new-general-policy-recommendation-to-the-47-council-of-europe-member-states>

**ECRI General Policy Recommendation No.9 (revised) on Preventing and Combating Antisemitism**

<https://rm.coe.int/rec-09rev-2021-028-en/1680a3c141>

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## **Relevant Legislation** \*\* new or updated today

### **UK Parliament**

#### **Assisted Dying Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2875>

#### **Charities Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2877>

#### **Education (16 to 19 Academies) (Religious Character) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2946>

#### **Education (Assemblies) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2878>

## **\*\* Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

Public Bill Committee

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-13/debates/91743fec-a6cd-4949-93eb-e9f4183013cc/HigherEducation\(FreedomOfSpeech\)Bill\(ThirdSitting\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-13/debates/91743fec-a6cd-4949-93eb-e9f4183013cc/HigherEducation(FreedomOfSpeech)Bill(ThirdSitting))

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-13/debates/6340e837-596a-4a94-af12-53a98f10430f/HigherEducation\(FreedomOfSpeech\)Bill\(FourthSitting\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-13/debates/6340e837-596a-4a94-af12-53a98f10430f/HigherEducation(FreedomOfSpeech)Bill(FourthSitting))

## **Israel Arms Trade (Prohibition) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3025>

## **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3017>

## **Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2900>

## **\*\* Nationality and Borders Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023>

Joint Committee on Human Rights

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/2688/html/>

and

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/2689/html/>

## **Online Safety Bill (Draft)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill>

## **Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2942>

## **Northern Ireland Assembly**

### **Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill**

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/2017-2022-mandate/primary-legislation---bills-2017---2022-mandate/organ-and-tissue-donation-deemed-consent-bill/>

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## **Consultations**

**\*\* new or updated today**

### **\*\* closes today**

**Domestic Abuse Act statutory guidance** (closing date 14 September 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/domestic-abuse-act-statutory-guidance>

### **\*\* closes in 9 days**

**Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill** (closing date not stated, but no later than 23 September 2021)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2021/july/have-your-say-on-the-higher-education-freedom-of-speech-bill/>

**Dispute Resolution in England and Wales** (closing date 30 September 2021)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1008174/dispute-resolution-call-for-evidence.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1008174/dispute-resolution-call-for-evidence.pdf)

**Equality and Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2025** (closing date 30 September 2021)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/our-strategic-plan-2022-2025-have-your-say>

**\*\* Labelling for Animal Welfare** (closing date 6 December 2021)

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-welfare-market-interventions-and-labelling/labelling-for-animal-welfare/>

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