



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House Lords Debate

Nationality and Borders Bill: Report Stage, House of Lords

col 867 Lord Dubs (Labour): ... Until we left the EU we had the benefit of the Dublin treaty, particularly Dublin III. To summarise, the benefit of that was that a refugee child or a child claiming refugee status could seek to join a relative living in this country. ...

When we were concerned that Brexit would put an end to all this because the Dublin treaty would no longer apply, this House passed an amendment to the 2017 legislation so that the Government would negotiate to continue the family reunion provision after we left the EU. That was passed by this House on a vote, it was eventually accepted by the Government in the Commons and it became the law of the land. Then came the 2019 legislation and the Government took the provision out again, for reasons we never understood. Many of us were alarmed that something that had been passed could just be reversed, as it were, by other legislation. ...

We have seen a dramatic decline in the ability of young people on the continent to join their relatives here on the basis of refugee status. ...

col 869 Lord Alton of Liverpool: ... Amendment 51 has its origins in northern Iraq, where on 3 August 2014 ISIS attacked Sinjar, killing thousands of Yazidis, abducting thousands of women and girls, and forcing the rest to flee. ...

To hold to account those responsible for atrocity crimes, the 1948 convention on the crime of genocide lays a duty on us to protect, prevent, punish and—since the Bosnian genocide—act from the moment it is believed that this ultimate crime of crimes is being perpetrated. ...

... we have again argued that our asylum procedures should create a specific category to help those judged to be at immediate risk of genocide. This amendment would leave the adjudication of whether a genocide was under way to a judge of the High Court of England and Wales ...

Genocide is defined in Article 2 of the 1948 convention on the crime of genocide. Winston Churchill said that the horrific nature of the genocide of the European Jews, the Holocaust,

was a crime so unimaginably monstrous that it did not have a name; a Jewish Polish lawyer, who lost over 40 members of his family in the Holocaust, gave it one. Despite the term being named and defined, we nevertheless refused to empower a United Kingdom court to pronounce on it, while knowing that routes to the International Criminal Court are invariably blocked by vetoes. ...

col 870 This amendment is modest: it will not be able to help the millions of people caught up in the pestilential nature of persecution, demonisation, scapegoating and hateful prejudice evident in the recent genocides in Iraq and Syria, the razed villages of Rohingyas in Burma/Myanmar, or the concentration camps of Xinjiang. It will not in itself stop the hauntingly cruel elimination of innocent humans being murdered because of their religious, ethnic or other identity. This amendment will also not be able to save every life—but it will save some. ...

col 881 **Baroness Williams of Trafford:** ... I have been very clear that we will not consider a more favourable approach to family reunion in the Immigration Rules for those in the EU, including unaccompanied children, as opposed to those in the rest of the world who want to join family here in the UK. A single global approach to family reunion—as taken by our current refugee family reunion policy—is fair and does not encourage what are often dangerous journeys into Europe, facilitated by smugglers and traffickers. ...

col 882 On the wider point about genocide, this strays into some of the FCDO equities. ... We are utterly committed to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Our approach to genocide determination does not prevent, and has not prevented us, taking action to address atrocities. Whether or not a determination of genocide is made, the UK is committed to seeking an end to serious violations of international human rights law—and, where appropriate, international humanitarian law—preventing the escalation of any such violations and alleviating the suffering of those affected.

The amendment would represent a significant departure from the Government's long-standing policy of not assessing asylum claims from abroad. Therefore, we cannot support it. ...

Division on Amendment 51

Content: 172

Not Content: 120

Amendment 51 agreed. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-03-02/debates/BF355885-5180-4040-B7CD-6C36B060C6FB/NationalityAndBordersBill>

House of Commons Written Answer

Hate Crime

Wera Hobhouse (Liberal Democrat) [129212] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many hate crime (a) allegations and (b) arrests were made in (i) 2016, (ii) 2017, (iii) 2018, (iv) 2019, (v) 2020 and (vi) 2021.

Kit Malthouse: The Home Office collects and publishes information on the number of hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales. Information is not held on the number of hate crime allegations or arrests.

Information on the number of hate crime offences recorded by the police can be found in the Home Office statistical bulletin '[Hate crime, England and Wales, 2020 to 2021](#)'

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-24/129212>

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

White supremacist jailed over antisemitic COVID claims

A white supremacist who stirred up racial hatred by printing and delivering leaflets, and posting online false claims that Jewish people were behind a Coronavirus hoax, controlled the media and were evil, has been sentenced to more than eight years' imprisonment, with an extended four-year licence.

Neo-Nazi Matthew Henegan, 36, was convicted of the antisemitic crimes after a trial at the Old Bailey in November. He was sentenced today to an eight year and one month prison term with an extended licence period of four years. He was also made subject to a notification order lasting 30 years.

He had posted the offensive leaflets through the doors of residents of St Neots in Cambridgeshire in March 2020. When police investigated they also found the website with similar racially inflammatory content, swastikas and evidence suggesting he admired Adolf Hitler, describing him as a saviour.

They also found a document entitled 'how to make armor piercing ammo'. Those bullets would have been useful for a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism.

Nick Price, head of the CPS Counter Terrorism Division, said: "The vile and insulting language Matthew Henegan used showed the jury his desire to incite others towards the warped racial and antisemitic views he holds.

"Hate crimes - including antisemitism - have a corrosive effect on society. We will always prosecute where there is sufficient evidence to do so." ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/white-supremacist-jailed-over-antisemitic-covid-claims>

Scottish Government

Updated Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): safe use of places of worship

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-places-of-worship/>

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Holocaust

See the extract from the House of Lords Report Stage debate on the Nationality and Borders Bill, which is included in the Home Affairs section above.

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Overseas Trade: Israel

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [128240] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps her Department is taking to increase trade with Israel.

Ranil Jayawardena: Israel is an important trading partner, with bilateral trade worth £4.8 billion a year. My Rt Hon. Friend the Prime Minister has committed to enhancing the trading relationship through an upgraded trade deal, building on the trade agreement we have in place today.

My Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade travelled to Israel in early February to meet her counterpart, Orna Barbivai, and discussed the mutual benefit of an upgraded deal focusing on services, digital and innovation. We have launched our consultation on such a deal; formal negotiations cannot begin until the consultation has concluded and the responses fully analysed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-23/128240>

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Foreign Affairs

House of Commons Written Answers

Freedom of Religion or Belief Summit

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [127303] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking with the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief to ensure the success of the Freedom of Religion or Belief Summit in July 2022.

Vicky Ford: The UK-hosted International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in July 2022 will drive international efforts in defending FoRB for all and look at ways different religious or belief communities around the world can work together, and with governments and civil society. This conference will allow us to use our global influence and convening power to promote and protect freedom of religion or belief for all internationally.

Preparations for the conference are underway, including consultations with our international and domestic partners to consider possible themes and outcomes. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is working closely with the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB, Fiona Bruce MP, on this and wider conference planning.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-22/127303>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Gender Based Violence: Religion

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [127304] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to prevent sexual violence against women because of their religion or belief.

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [127305] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to integrate support for victims of sexual violence as a result of their religion or belief within UK foreign and development policy.

Vicky Ford: The Foreign Secretary has put ending violence against women and girls at the heart of UK foreign and development policy. Through our £67.5 million investment to the What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale programme, we are scaling up proven violence prevention approaches globally, including sexual violence, for the most at-risk groups of women and girls.

In 2020, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for Human Rights, launched the Declaration of Humanity, which unites multiple faiths and beliefs to challenge damaging societal norms and calls for support for survivors of sexual violence internationally.

Bilaterally, Ministers and officials regularly raise specific cases of concern, and

discuss practices and laws that discriminate on the basis of religion or belief.
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-22/127304>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-22/127305>

Information about the programme referred to above can be read at

<https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-300606/documents>

The Declaration referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/declaration-of-humanity-by-leaders-of-faith-and-leaders-of-belief/declaration-of-humanity-by-leaders-of-faith-and-leaders-of-belief>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2867>

Assisted Dying Bill

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

Education (Assemblies) Bill

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

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

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

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>

Report Stage, House of Lords

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-03-02/debates/BF355885-5180-4040-B7CD-6C36B060C6FB/NationalityAndBordersBill>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-03-02/debates/FBBC7E35-9F0F-4E60-8ED5-A3046EC4109A/NationalityAndBordersBill>

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 in 5 days

Human Rights Act Reform: A Modern Bill of Rights (closing date 8 March 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights>

Hate Crime Legislation in Northern Ireland (closing date 28 March 2022)

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-hate-crime-legislation-northern-ireland>

Trade with Israel (closing date 30 March 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/trade-with-israel-call-for-input>

CPS: Public interest guidance for suicide pact and 'mercy killing' type cases

(closing date 9 April 2022)

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/consultation/consultation-public-interest-guidance-suicide-pact-and-mercy-killing-type-cases-0>

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