



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answer

NHS: Ministers of Religion

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [126723] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of chaplain services in the NHS; and whether the provision of such services are considered to be an essential part of someone's care provided by the NHS.

Maria Caulfield: Chaplaincy and faith services are funded and commissioned locally, in response to the needs of individual patient populations and workforce. When commissioning chaplaincy and faith services, the NHS Standard Contract requires providers to take account of the spiritual, religious, pastoral and cultural needs of service users.

NHS England recognises the important role of chaplaincy services in supporting pastoral, spiritual and religious needs and has produced NHS Chaplaincy Guidelines. These guidelines are currently being updated to support National Health Service organisations in delivering high quality and inclusive pastoral, spiritual and religious care services for all. The revised guidelines will be published in 2023.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126723>

The guidelines referred to above can be read at

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/nhs-chaplaincy-guidelines-2015.pdf>

House of Lords Written Answer

Prisons: Islam

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL4672] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Bellamy on 10 January (HL Deb, col 1296), what research they have conducted on the impact of Muslim chaplains on (1) Islamism, and (2) non-Muslims, in prisons.

Lord Bellamy: Muslim Chaplains in prison play a central role in challenging Islamism through the delivery of HM Prison and Probation Service's Tarbiyah programme. This has been independently peer-reviewed and provides prisoners with a nuanced and holistic understanding of the faith and is therefore a crucial protective factor against Islamist extremism. In addition, the Home Office commissioned an independent evaluation of the Desistance and Disengagement Programme (which includes a Theological and Ideological Intervention), which is expected to conclude this year. No research has been undertaken on the impact of Muslim Chaplains on non-Muslims in prison.

Our Muslim Chaplains work closely with chaplains of all other faiths and beliefs in delivering HMPPS' multi-faith model of chaplaincy support which includes the provision of non-religious pastoral care to prisoners and staff of all faiths and none. As set out in Prison Service Instruction 5/2016 (Faith and Pastoral Care of Prisoners) a prisoner or staff member may request support from a chaplain of a specific faith or belief if not the same as the duty chaplain which will be arranged as soon as possible if a chaplain of that denomination is not on duty at the time of request.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-11/hl4672>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-01-10/debates/2E4D3BD4-3EDB-49B5-ACB1-20415D4C9FFC/PrisonsChaplaincyService#contribution-419D0B39-0AC1-4471-8251-9A600037733C>

The Instruction referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1120809/psi-05-2016-faith-and-pastoral-care-for-prisoners.pdf

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Kirsten Oswald (SNP) [786] Farewell service for the Newton Mearns Synagogue – That this House notes that there is to be a farewell service for the Newton Mearns Synagogue in the Synagogue at Larchfield Court, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire on 22 January 2023; understands that this is a notable event, which will be marked by the attendance of Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis for this special service at the Synagogue; thanks all those whose hard work and dedication has been instrumental to the work of this Synagogue over the years; appreciates the very important place which this Synagogue has held at the heart of the local community and notes that there will be fondly held memories as farewells are said; understands that whilst the farewell service will represent the closing of one chapter, it heralds a new beginning too, with the merger of the Newton Mearns Synagogue and Giffnock Synagogue forming the new Giffnock Newton Mearns Synagogue; and wishes congregations of the Newton Mearns Synagogue and the newly formed Giffnock Newton Mearns Synagogue well for the future, playing a key role at the heart of the East Renfrewshire community.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/60507>

Scottish Government

An updated study into the characteristics of police recorded hate crime in Scotland

<https://tinyurl.com/nhjk8dhv>

Holocaust

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Foreign Secretary leads calls to remember victims of the Holocaust

The Foreign Secretary James Cleverly and the Israeli Embassy host Holocaust Memorial Day event at Foreign Office ...

The Foreign Secretary gave a speech to attendees reflecting on his own visit, last year, to Radegast station in Lodz in Poland where 200,000 Jewish men, women and children were transported to Nazi death camps. ...

Stutthof Concentration Camp survivor, Manfred Goldberg BEM, also shared his testimony with guests at the ceremony, including representatives from the Jewish community, diplomatic community, civil society, Parliamentarians, and other communal leaders. ...

The Rt Hon. the Lord Pickles, the UK's Special Envoy for post-Holocaust issues and Co-Chair of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation, said: Sadly, the number of direct witnesses to the Holocaust are dwindling and that is why we must ensure that what they endured, what they witnessed is never forgotten. We should make it our mission to ensure that no one questions the basic facts of the Holocaust.

The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million European Jews by the Nazi German regime and its allies and collaborators.

We owe it to the six million Jewish men, women and children who were murdered during the Holocaust, survivors, and refugees to reclaim their rights, their history, their cultural heritage and traditions, and their dignity.

Both the Embassy of Israel and the FCDO will mark Holocaust Memorial Day on Friday 27th January 2023, by lighting up their respective buildings in purple, in honour of all victims of genocide.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-leads-calls-to-remember-victims-of-the-holocaust>

Foreign Secretary's speech at Holocaust Memorial Day reception

... Last year, on a winter evening, I stood on a concrete platform of the disused Radegast station in Lodz in Poland.

From this nondescript and functional building, 200,000 Jewish men, women and children were transported to Nazi death camps.

I reflected that there were countless unused buildings like this, scattered across occupied Europe, all being used, to send human beings to be murdered.

Radegast was where the Jews of Lodz ghetto were transported to Chelmno and Auschwitz-Birkenau.

I stood where they would have stood, and I saw what they saw; the crude wooden cattle trucks, drawn up by the platform.

Inside the station building, I turned over page after page of neatly typewritten names of the people who were forced at gunpoint onto those trucks.

One of those who was deported to Auschwitz, in her case from Romania, was Olga Lengyel, who lost her parents, lost her husband, and lost her two sons.

She wrote ... "At night the glow of the flames from the chimneys...showed through the crevices in the walls. The shrieks of the sick or the wounded, crowded together in trucks

bound for some unknown destination, grated on our nerves.

“Sometimes we heard revolver shots, for the SS guards used their guns freely. Above these noises came orders barked in overbearing voices. Nothing would let us forget our slavery.”

And then Olga Lengyel asks: “Could such conditions really exist in Europe in the twentieth century?”

Today, every one of us shares a solemn duty to remember that those conditions did indeed exist in Europe in the 20th century, that six million men, women and children were consumed by the Holocaust,

Now our only possible response is to mean it, heart and soul, when we say the words “never again”.

But there were, at the time, some ordinary people who meant it when they said to themselves that they would not stand by, and they would not watch others being transported to their deaths.

It remains an extraordinary and uplifting fact that ordinary people in Denmark managed to save almost all of their country’s Jews.

They were hidden in churches, in hospitals and in family homes, and spirited to coastal towns, from where they were taken to safety in Sweden, on board fishing boats or kayaks or motorboats. ...

They knew full well that they were risking their own lives. ...

But the hard truth is that when the moment came, there were never enough people like them.

If almost every Jew could be saved in Denmark, why not elsewhere?

Today, we must all silently ask ourselves the difficult and searching question, what would I have done?

Would I have taken that risk, not just for myself but for my family?

And as we answer that profoundly difficult and necessary question in our hearts, we owe it to the six million who were not saved to reflect, to learn, to grieve, and above all, to remember.

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretarys-speech-at-holocaust-memorial-day-reception-24-january-2023>

European Parliament

Holocaust Remembrance Day: Israel’s President Herzog to address MEPs

On Thursday 26 January at 10.30, Israel’s President Isaac Herzog will address Parliament during the plenary session in Brussels, to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day. ...

After President Isaac Herzog’s address, MEPs will observe a minute of silence. The ceremony will close with a musical performance by Chen Halevi on clarinet, and Jenő Lisztes on cimbalom of "Kaddish" by Maurice Ravel.

After the ceremony, at around 11.45, Presidents Metsola and Herzog will inaugurate the Holocaust Memorial “The Refugee” by Felix Nussbaum in front of Parliament’s plenary chamber. ...

You can follow the ceremony on Thursday live on Parliament’s [webstreaming](#) and on [EbS+](#).

To read the full press release see

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20230119IPR68201/holocaust-remembrance-day-israel-s-president-herzog-to-address-meps>

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Israel

House of Lords Written Answer

Israeli Settlements

The Lord Bishop of Southwark [HL4595] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the government of Israel's policy on the expansion of existing settlements and the construction of new settlements and outposts in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are clear that settlements are illegal under international law and threaten the viability of a two-state solution. The UK urges the Government of Israel to permanently end its settlement expansion and settlement activity in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israeli outposts in the West Bank are also illegal under international and Israeli law, and should be removed entirely. I reinforced this message during a visit to a UK donor funded school facing demolition on 12 January, in Masafer Yatta.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4595>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Change of His Majesty's Ambassador to Israel: Simon Walters

Mr Simon Walters has been appointed His Majesty's Ambassador to the State of Israel in succession to Mr Neil Wigan OBE who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment.

Mr Walters will take up his appointment during August 2023. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/change-of-her-majestys-ambassador-to-israel-simon-walters>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Bill of Rights Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3227>

Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3186>

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

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

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3325>

Online Safety Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3217>

Private Burial Grounds and Cemeteries Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3188>

Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163>

Schools Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156>

Scottish Parliament

Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/charities-regulation-and-administration-scotland-bill>

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

House of Commons Library Briefing: The Secretary of State's veto and the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9705/CBP-9705.pdf>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 3 days**

NUS UK Antisemitism Action Plan (closing date 27 January 2023)

https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471793/NUS_Antisemitism_Action_Plan_Jan2023.pdf

Equality and Human Rights Commission Statutory Review (closing date 1 March 2023)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-statutory-review>

Draft guidance: charities use of social media (closing date 14 March 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-guidance-charities-use-of-social-media>

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