



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

#### Legal Age of Marriage

**Claire Baker (Labour)** [S6O-02437] To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on any meetings that it has had with stakeholders regarding the legal age of marriage.

**The Minister for Victims and Community Safety (Siobhian Brown):** We have now spoken to around 25 organisations representing a number of interests including ending forced marriage and violence against women and girls. There is a range of views. Increasing the minimum age could be argued to increase safeguards, but it could also be seen as removing young people's right to marry or to enter into a civil partnership. We also need to consider the fact that young people acquire a number of important rights at the age of 16. I am meeting Pauline Latham MP after the summer. As Claire Baker may know, she promoted legislation at Westminster to raise the age of marriage in England and Wales.

**Claire Baker:** I thank the minister for that response, and I welcome the meetings that are taking place, but I am unclear as to why the Scottish Government is not prepared to undertake a full public consultation on the issue. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child is clear that the age of marriage should be raised to 18. Under the UN sustainable development goals, member states around the world, including the United Kingdom, have pledged to end all marriage under 18 by 2030. As the minister has recognised, the change in the law in England and Wales came into force in February. In Northern Ireland, following a public consultation, the overwhelming majority of respondents were in favour of raising the age to 18, and the intention is to introduce legislation there once Stormont is fully operational. Is the Scottish Government really willing to remain out of step with other western countries and to ignore the international conventions on women's rights and on children by failing to take action on raising the age in Scotland to 18?

**Siobhian Brown:** The UN committee's recommendation will be fully taken into account as we gather views from stakeholders and consider our next steps. Our approach will help ensure that we properly assess the potential impacts of any

changes, as the Parliament would expect. If we proceed with a full public consultation, we want that to include robust evidence. If we decide to issue a public consultation, the earliest that that could be done is 2024. Clearly, any legislation after that would depend on the results of the consultation and the availability of time in the Parliament.

**Ruth Maguire (SNP):** One concern with the legal age of marriage is around the potential vulnerability of young people to forced marriage. What protections and safeguards are currently in place for those who may be vulnerable to or at risk of forced marriage?

**Siobhian Brown:** Forced marriage has a devastating impact on people who are affected by it and can be a form of honour-based violence. There are protections in both criminal and civil law, and forcing someone into marriage is a criminal offence. Forced marriage protection orders can also be sought from the civil court, and breach of an order is a criminal offence. From 30 November, those protections will extend to forced civil partnerships. No one should have to endure forced marriage. We fund the national Scottish domestic abuse and forced marriage helpline to provide advice and support, and help is available 24 hours a day on 0800 027 1234.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15400&i=131366#ScotParlOR>

TOP

## Holocaust

### House of Commons Prime Minister's Questions

**The Prime Minister (Rishi Sunak):** Today, we will have the Second Reading of the Holocaust Memorial Bill. For decades, survivors such as the late Sir Ben Helfgott showed extraordinary courage in sharing their testimonies so that we would never forget. I hope the whole House will unite today to get this Bill through and put those testimonies at the heart of our democracy for generations to come. ...

**Keir Starmer (Labour):** ... I also join the Prime Minister in his comments about the holocaust memorial. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/B3921982-9BC9-4B4B-8FDD-47B283AE4328/Engagements#contribution-0136505A-800E-4E5A-8CA7-4E98B3B33E8E>

### House of Commons Point of Order

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative):** On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. In but 10 minutes time, we will move on to consideration of the Holocaust Memorial Bill. It is very important in my view that the Minister and the House should have available on the Table the "National Memorial and Learning Centre: Search for a Central London site" document issued by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation in September 2015. May I ask you to convey that to those on the Treasury Bench so that that document is available to Ministers and the House?

**Madam Deputy Speaker (Eleanor Laing):** I am grateful to the Father of the House for his point of order and for giving me notice of it. I have paid careful attention to the point that he made. I can assure him that the Vote Office has printed from the internet and prepared copies of the document that he mentions. I entirely agree with him that it is important that the House be well educated on the facts of the matter that we are about to discuss, so I have myself obtained some copies. I will

give one forthwith to the Whip to give to the Minister, and one to the Labour Whip to give to the shadow Minister. I hope that the Father of the House will thus be satisfied that the document that he considers very important is fully available. I do not have copies here for everyone, but they are available in the Vote Office.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/6BB59EBA-2133-47C8-9356-80EFDEAC851A/PointsOfOrder>

*The document referred to above can be read at*

[https://www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/14.6\\_national\\_memorial\\_and\\_learning\\_centre.pdf](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/14.6_national_memorial_and_learning_centre.pdf)

## House of Commons Debates

### Holocaust Memorial Bill: Second Reading

**col 321 The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Michael Gove):** ... This short Bill serves a vital purpose. It ensures that the undertaking that this Government have given, supported by the official Opposition and all parties in this House, is honoured, and that a fitting, Government-led national memorial and learning centre to honour the 6 million who died in the holocaust is established in a suitable, prominent centre at the heart of our capital city.

I know that everyone in this House recognises that the holocaust was a unique evil. Genocide—the greatest crime that humanity can inflict on other human beings—has been a dark feature of our shared history since the dawn of time, but the holocaust stands out in scale and in horror. It was a unique desire on the part of a nation to wipe out an entire people. Mechanised cruelty executed on a scale that could never have been imagined beforehand meant that, from the Pyrenees to the Urals, the Nazi war machine was bent on the elimination of an entire race. I think all of us, whatever our views on the Bill and all of the inevitable details that follow in making sure that an appropriate memorial is sited, will share a desire to ensure that the commitment “Never again” is in all our hearts.

**John Baron (Conservative):** I fully concur ...and I am fully supportive of a national holocaust memorial, but the reason I will not be supporting the Government in the passing of this Bill this evening—if it is passed—is that there appears to have been a complete lack of public consultation. Westminster City Council was against it, and it seems to me as though this has been imposed from above by Government. That is not what we do in this country: we need a much wider consultation. That is why many prominent Jews, including Malcolm Rifkind, former rabbis and so forth, have signed the open letter arguing against the siting of the memorial in Victoria Tower gardens.

**Michael Gove:** ... There has been controversy and there has been opposition to the site of the memorial, but it is only fair to say that the decision to site it in Victoria Tower gardens has followed consultation. ...

**col 322 Peter Bottomley (Conservative):** ... when the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation put out its specification in September 2015 ... between September 2015 and January 2016, there was no public consultation about the site at all. ...

**Michael Gove:** The consultation was undertaken after the announcement of the winning design ... Of course, as the Father of the House will know, there was a planning inquiry, and during that inquiry extensive material about the memorial and the learning centre was published and shared. Interested parties were given an opportunity to raise concerns and objections, and objectors had the opportunity to make their case to the independent planning inspector at that point.

However, I stress that the decision on the site was not taken by Government Ministers, and ... it was not imposed by the Government themselves. The decision was arrived at by the independent Holocaust Memorial Foundation, with representations from different

political traditions, including the right hon. Ed Balls and the right hon. Lord Pickles; the Chief Rabbi; the very distinguished president of the Community Security Trust, Gerald Ronson; and a host of others from civil society. While my hon. Friend is right to say that some people within the Jewish community have expressed concerns, the overwhelming view of the Jewish community and its representative organisations is that this is the right memorial in the right location ...

Victoria Tower gardens will continue to be a park with public access—only some 7.5% of the location of the park will be occupied by the memorial. ...

**Andrea Leadsom (Conservative):** ... I received so many representations personally from people who made the case that there are now so few holocaust survivors still living that we simply have to get on with this. ...

*col 323* **Michael Gove:** ... Just a fortnight ago, Ben Helfgott, an ambassador for the Holocaust Educational Trust, sadly passed away. ... there is nothing as powerful as hearing from those who lived through and survived the hell of the holocaust. As Ben and other survivors pass on, it is our duty and our responsibility to move as quickly as we can to ensure that the memorial they fought for and wished to see is established suitably.

Of course, one of the other reasons why it is so important that we move quickly and show resolution is that not only are voices fading, but antisemitism is rising. In 2022, the last year for which we have figures, the Community Security Trust recorded 1,652 antisemitic incidents. In the year before that, the number of antisemitic incidents in this country had reached a record high. As Jonathan Sacks reminded us, antisemitism is a virus that mutates. We need to be vigilant, always and everywhere, against hate and prejudice, and the memorial and learning centre will establish a means of doing so for generations to come. ...

The Government also support the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust. ... I was proud as the Education Secretary to ...[make] sure that holocaust education was a critical part of the history that every child learns in our schools. ...

*col 324* This Bill seeks specifically to change the London County Council (Improvements) Act 1900, which governs public parks. ... We wish to ensure that it is the clear will of Parliament ... that the memorial goes ahead, while also continuing to respect free access to Victoria Tower gardens, respecting its position as a public park, and making sure that those green spaces are accessible to all and that the existing memorials there are respected as well.

As I have mentioned, the choice of venue has attracted some controversy, but I can put it no better than the Chief Rabbi himself. When questioned about why, he said that this “is an inspirational choice of venue... this is a most wonderful location because it is in a prime place of great prominence and it is at the heart of our democracy... we don’t want to tuck the Holocaust away somewhere—similar to...a tiny monument in Hyde Park, that most people have never heard of. We want all of British society to be aware...for the sake of the whole country and its future.” ...

**Stephen Crabb (Conservative):** ... Does he agree with me that, when we talk about the holocaust and the horrors of the past, it is not just something that happened to other people over there; it is actually part of our story and our history as well? ...

**Michael Gove:** I could not agree more. ... This is about recognising the intimate links between this country and that crime, and the fact that distinguished figures such as those responsible for the Kindertransport played an heroic role in helping people fleeing persecution to come to this country. However, it is also the case that all history is complex, and there are mistakes that this nation and some of its leaders or leading politicians made at that time that we also need to remember, if we are to ensure that “never again” is a phrase that resonates with meaning rather than being simply an empty repeated platitude. ...

*col 325* **Bob Blackman (Conservative):** ... Does he agree with me that the principal

reason why some Jewish people and Jewish leaders are raising objections is the sheer length of time this whole process is taking? ...

**Michael Gove:** ... From the meetings I have had with the commission and the conversations I have had with people in the Jewish community and beyond, I know they want us to proceed. ...

I would like to close by reflecting on the words of Mala Tribich MBE, who is now 92 years old, and a holocaust survivor herself. As she says: "As the Holocaust moves further into history and we survivors become less able to share our testimonies this Memorial and Learning Centre will be a lasting legacy so that future generations will understand why it is important for people to remember the Holocaust, to learn from the past and stand up against injustice. The memory of the Holocaust cannot be left to fade when us eyewitnesses are no longer able to share our memories." ...

**Lisa Nandy (Labour):** I want to start by saying that Labour strongly supports this Bill ... We agree very much ... that the sooner and more swiftly we are able to make progress with this, the better. ...

*col 326* The holocaust is undeniably the greatest crime of the last century. People were taken from their homes, stripped of their possessions and subjected to the horror of the concentration camps, forced labour camps and ghettos just, in many cases, because they were Jewish. The murder of 6 million Jews and so many others by the Nazis must never ever be forgotten.

I was in my early 20s when I first visited Auschwitz, and it is something I will never forget. I knew it would make an impression, but I do not think I had any real comprehension of what a deep and lasting impression it would leave on me to this very day. ...

For my generation, whose grandparents lived through and, in my grandfather's case, fought in the war and fought for the establishment of the state of Israel as somewhere where Jewish people could find a natural home and where they were safe—where they would always be safe—this is not just history. ...

**Ashley Dalton (Labour):** ... does my hon. Friend agree that this memorial and education centre is more important than ever before in telling the truths of the holocaust, and in remembering the 6 million lives lost to it, so that we learn those lessons and people never have to go through that kind of thing again?

**Lisa Nandy:** I am grateful to my hon. Friend. Like me, she will have had the experience of going into schools and colleges in our constituencies, and had the privilege of meeting survivors of the holocaust, and watching the faces of young people as comprehension dawns of the true horror of what happened, with resolve forming in them that never again should that be allowed to happen. ...

*col 327* **Christian Wakeford (Labour):** ... An institution and a museum, and more importantly an educational facility such as this, is intrinsic to us not only learning those lessons, but to making sure such things are never repeated. ...

**Lisa Nandy:** ... With the march of time and the continued loss of survivors, the holocaust is moving from being part of lived experience to being part of history. As we begin to approach that moment, our generation should commit to teaching the next about the horrors in our past, and the lessons for the future. That is what this new, purpose built memorial in the heart of London is. It is a commitment to arm future generations against the horrors of the past, so that when we say "never again", they can be sure we mean it. ... As Karen Pollock, the inimitable chief executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust, said yesterday: "It is crucial to remember that the Holocaust Memorial—and remembering the Holocaust in general—is not about planning permission, or square footage, or underground pipes. What these discussions are about at their heart, is people. People who were subjected to unimaginable suffering, simply because they were Jewish." ...

*col 328* Antisemitism did not die at the end of the holocaust. ... Last year, anti-Jewish hate hit a record high in the United Kingdom, with abuse, threats and violent assaults levelled



at Jewish children, women and men on the streets of Britain. The Jewish Leadership Council and the Community Security Trust ... have reminded me so often of the human cost of this, often with heartbreaking stories about the impact on their own families and children—children who go to school behind locked gates; security guards at the doors of synagogues. It shames our nation. This group accounts for less than 1% of the total religious population in the UK, but antisemitic hate crimes account for a staggering 23% of all religious hate crimes. ...

**Margaret Hodge (Labour):** ... the argument about the location has just got to stop? The location that has been chosen puts the memorial in the centre of London where it will be visible and accessible to the largest number of people. ...

**Lisa Nandy:** ... Labour Members share the Government's view that it is now time to move forwards with a memorial that is incredibly important to every single person in our country, but holds particular significance for our Jewish community here in the United Kingdom.

**James Duddridge (Conservative):** ... If Second Reading is passed this evening, motion No.8 on the Order Paper is about paying a Select Committee Chair to come and do a job. That is normally done ... when something is going to take a long time. ... That indicates to me that this is going to be a long process.

**Lisa Nandy:** ... We believe that it is important that the hybrid process is followed ... We cannot make that process any quicker, but we can remove any unnecessary obstacles and delay. ...

*col/ 330* We believe that the symbolic siting of the memorial next to this House is a demonstration that the British Government, the official Opposition, our Parliament and our nation are committed to remembering the horrors of the past and ensuring that we do not repeat them. ...

**Peter Bottomley:** I beg to move an amendment, to leave out from "That" to the end of the Question and add: "this House, while accepting the value of a national Holocaust memorial, declines to give a Second Reading to the Holocaust Memorial Bill because no adequate reason has been given for seeking to build the memorial and learning centre in a long-established small public park, thereby contradicting the Government's own policies on environmental and green space protection; because the Government has not implemented its 2015 promise to establish an endowment fund for Holocaust education, which would have spread the benefits of the learning centre around the country; because the proposed site is opposed by many in the Jewish community, including many Holocaust survivors; because there was no public consultation on the choice of site; and because there has been no consideration of alternatives to Victoria Tower Gardens since the criteria declared in September 2015 were set aside." ...

... Margot and Anne Frank caught typhus in Bergen-Belsen. They died early in 1945. In April 1945, my father's cousin ... Dr George Woodwork was one of the Westminster medical students who went to Bergen-Belsen to try to save as many lives as they could. ... When I heard directly from George what it was like, I was as moved as I was when I first read reports of the concentration camps, the death camps and the treatment of Jews. That feeling is only reinforced when I go to the Imperial War Museum's holocaust galleries. ... One only need go there, or look at the online material on the education side, to be reminded that the purpose is, as set out by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation, that we should know what was happening when those who survived are no longer with us. There was no intention in the Holocaust Commission report to the Government and there was no intention with the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation in September 2015 that the memorial had to be up before holocaust survivors had died. ...

*col/ 331* ... I have a home here, so people can say I have a vested interest. I have also got a vested interest in having proper education about the holocaust. Since this process started, one of my cousins has established what we knew vaguely, which is that more than 100 of my grandfather's cousins died during the holocaust. ...

The Holocaust Commission recommended, and the then Prime Minister accepted, that there should be an endowment fund for education. In the years since, that has not happened. ...

Page 10 of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation's proposal for a memorial and learning centre illustrates the acceptable area of central London. It goes from the west of Regent's Park to Spitalfields in the east and down to Victoria Tower gardens. ...

col 332 Fifty places were put forward and one person—albeit the then chairman of the Conservative party—wrote to a Conservative Minister to say, "Have you thought about Victoria Tower gardens? ...

If the Government continue with their proposals, they know that there will be a four-year construction programme after permission eventually gets through the Houses of Parliament and the Secretary of State's junior Minister ... makes a decision, independently of the Secretary of State as the applicant. That will take, say, another nine months in Parliament. We are talking five years from now ... for a proposal made in September 2015. If it is important that holocaust survivors can be there for the memorial's opening, we should not be continuing with this process. ...

I make this proposal to the Secretary of State and the Government: why not have a competition for an alternative memorial by itself? The learning centre can come later; survivors do not need to be waiting for the learning centre. ...

col 333 To those who think the way I do, in whole or in part, I commend not voting against Second Reading, but not voting for it. ...

col 334 **Kirsten Oswald (SNP):** I am pleased to speak in this debate to put on the record my party's firm commitment to ensuring that the holocaust and subsequent genocides are not forgotten. ... The particular memorial that the Bill deals with is to be situated in London. I do not have a strong view about where it should be in London, but I have no objection to the Government's proposal, given that I represent East Renfrewshire—a constituency hundreds of miles away in a different country altogether. It is reasonable that I look to those who are closer. ...

**Christine Jardine (Liberal Democrat):** ... I believe there is a great emotional need in this country to do something to recognise the suffering of the holocaust on behalf of those citizens of this country who are survivors of it. ...

**Kirsten Oswald:** ... She is spot-on when she talks about the emotional, human side of this issue. We are talking about human history—a history of individuals, families and friends—not about some unfathomable number of people who were murdered by the Nazis because of their identity. ... The Chief Rabbi has spoken about the worry that holocaust survivors have expressed to him, describing the panic in their voices as they say that they fear the world will forget in the course of time. Karen Pollock, chief executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust, has said that time is running out; survivors will not be with us forever, and many who dreamed of taking their family to the memorial have, unfortunately, passed away. ...

col 335 We need to move things along and make sure that in doing so, we take into account the views of survivors and the Jewish community. ...

We need to make sure that the voices of those who survived are accessible. I have seen at first hand the profound impact that hearing from survivors, Henry and the late Ingrid Wuga, had on children in my constituency. The holocaust is certainly not the vague memory of some moment in history in the community where I live; it is part of the living memory of many families. ...

I will carry the memory of my visit to Yad Vashem with me forever—seeing the faces of individual people who had been living perfectly ordinary, pedestrian lives before being plunged into unimaginable horror; seeing their shoes and their abandoned spectacles. ...

col 336 These details—these threads of history—cannot be lost. This must go hand in hand with other initiatives that are already doing powerful work, such as the Lessons from

Auschwitz project, which has had such an impact on schools in my area, as have Vision Schools Scotland and the excellent Gathering the Voices programme ...

The Community Security Trust found last year that antisemitic incidents had reached a record high, with a 49% increase in such incidents in the first six months of 2021. Let us be clear: the climate is increasingly intolerant and hateful. Sickening and public displays of antisemitism are increasing both in the UK and overseas. Nowhere is immune, and we now also have to deal with the amplification of holocaust denial and distortion, conspiracy and misinformation in the online space.

To deal with that, the most powerful tool in our arsenal is education, which is why the learning element of the memorial matters so much. ...

**col 337 Nickie Aiken (Conservative):** We are fortunate in this country to have many holocaust survivors who are still willing to share their stories. Sadly, however, this living testimony will not be with us forever, and their stories show us why the memorial is so important. ...

... the Bill would amend the London County Council (Improvements) Act 1900, which preserves the park for the public, and repeal the prohibition on building in the park. ... The centre is not just a simple monument; it would require excavations going down two storeys to fulfil a design that has come under heavy criticism on account of its scale and suitability for the area. ...

I agree that we must remember the holocaust—all holocausts, across the 20th and 21st centuries ... but this is about the location. ...

**col 338** I have spoken to people living on those estates and they fear that losing their local park will mean their children cannot play. Going for a walk or for lunch, or doing a media interview, is one thing, but losing a family park is another thing completely. ...

There is a good argument ... that the presence of ... monuments makes Victoria Tower Gardens an appropriate site for development. However, the proposed design of the holocaust memorial and learning centre is almost triple their size. ...

The Save Victoria Tower Gardens campaign also has legitimate concerns that such extreme development will harm the park itself ... The design is far too large, and it will dominate this public park. ...

**col 339** Local people remain concerned that Victoria Tower Gardens will cease to be a neighbourhood park and will become a civic space, dominated by the holocaust memorial and learning centre and its associated infrastructure and security installations. ...

**Stephen Crabb:** ... My understanding is that the park will remain. It will still be there in perpetuity for local people, but there will be a modest reduction in its size as a result of the memorial being built. We are not talking about the permanent loss of the park ...

**Nickie Aiken:** ... this will change the nature of the park. At the moment, it is a community neighbourhood park. ... The size of the current design will mean that the memorial completely changes the atmosphere of the park. ...

**Peter Bottomley:** ... While the memorial and learning centre's basement box and bronze fins are being constructed, up to two thirds of the park would be unusable for people. As for the estimate that the Government have put forward ... that only about 7% or 8% of the park would be taken—no one else believes that.

**col 340 Nickie Aiken:** ... concerns about the Bill are not a nimby cause whereby the wish is to block all development. Rather, they are rooted in the reality that there is very little support among local people for this memorial being placed in Victoria Tower gardens. ...

**Jon Trickett (Labour):** ... it is slightly unseemly that we are spending so much time talking about such an emotive matter, down to the location of a particular monument. I understand entirely the views of local people, but this is a national—indeed, international—centre of democracy, which has world importance. ...

There is no doubt that a memorial is well overdue, but the Minister may well feel that some of the discussion about location and the nature of the monument is unseemly. ...



In the explanatory notes to the Bill, the Government say the memorial “will help people understand the way the lessons of the Holocaust apply more widely, including to other genocides.”

*col 341* That makes me think of racism, which takes many different forms. For example, the slave trade is a great stain on our nation, and on other nations too. ... I mention it because Members of the House, who may have stood in the very place where I am standing now, fought against slavery, and it was in this House that the anti-slavery legislation was passed. We built an anti-slavery monument. Where did we build it? We built it next to our Parliament, in the very location now proposed. ...

... the sculpture of the Burghers of Calais, an amazing monument to the human spirit, is in the same park, as well as a statue that is a tribute to the suffragettes. Where else would we put a memorial to what happened in the holocaust but alongside our Parliament, in the same place as those other sculptures?

**Peter Bottomley:** ... the holocaust memorial, preferably without the basement box, could be put where the Buxton family memorial was put, which was in Parliament Square. ...

**Jon Trickett:** ... I want to reflect on antisemitism, which was the root of the holocaust, and on my family’s history. I have never spoken about this before, either in public or in private ...

Fascism and the holocaust occurred in Germany, but we must never pretend that antisemitism is solely restricted to that nation. ... My ancestors escaped antisemitic pogroms not in Germany, but in Tsarist Russia. ... In Victorian times, Britain welcomed asylum seekers—Jews escaping the tyranny of the time. ...

*col 342* Let me focus on the Leeds part of the family. They were hard-working cobblers—boot and shoe makers. They worked in a small place next to the synagogue on North Street, Leeds. ... Although it was a tight-knit working class community, I heard many stories of harassment and racism, including violent attacks. ...

My grandmother regularly told me that she lived in fear of the pogroms, from which she, her parents and grandparents had suffered in Russia. She said to me, “Here Jon, I need to tell you something. Whenever anyone unknown knocks on your door, you kid to be daft.” That might not mean much to Members in this place, but what she meant was to pretend to be stupid if somebody in a shirt and tie—a bit like I am dressed today—knocks on the door. In other words, do not comply with the wishes of strangers, especially those who look like they are in authority, because they may well be representatives of a hostile force. That was her experience. ...

Before the second world war, a stereotypical English gentleman who had attended Winchester College, a public school, launched the British fascist party. He was supported by a section of the establishment as well as by people from all sectors of society. ...

I am proud to tell the House that Mosley was refused permission to march through the Jewish areas. He did, however, rally his supporters on Holbeck Moor, in south Leeds, not far from where I came to live. Thirty thousand Jewish people turned out to resist the fascists. Jewish and gentile, socialists and communists, Liberals and Tories, trade unionists and fair-minded citizens, community groups and others rallied against Mosley. There was a battle and Mosley retired injured.

Members of my family were there. My mother and our family talked about that victory, but we did not fool ourselves that antisemitism had been quelled. Then came the second world war and the ghastly news of the concentration camps, which I imagine even today chills the bones of all of us in this House.

*col 343* I do not want to exaggerate. Leeds is a tolerant place. ... I do not mean to say that the school was a bad place at all, but there were antisemitic actions, language and bullying in that school. ...

As I entered my teens, my mother began to say to me, “Let’s get out of here.” She wanted me to go to Israel to be on a kibbutz. ... We decided that I would go to live on a kibbutz, but then the six-day war happened, and in any case we needed me to go out to work and

earn a living at 16. ...

I come now to a distasteful few sentences. When I joined the Labour party in 1969, there were many working-class Jewish socialists in our part of Leeds, and I never witnessed any antisemitism in any of those meetings. However, and I regret to have to record this, when I entered my constituency as the MP, only 12 miles away from Leeds, I was subjected to the most shocking antisemitic comment by a party member. ... Equally, though, I am pleased to record that the individual concerned was confronted by fellow members for his outburst and was told he must never come back to another meeting. ...

I was out canvassing not so long ago in my constituency, which is in the wonderful area of Wakefield, when a man who I knew had a reputation for being a Nazi approached me. He was a man who could not control his emotions, a man with extreme anger, and he told me he was going to fill the streets with “patriots”, as he called them, and that they would eliminate people such as me from the area and from the country. It was a terrifying moment, but the police decided to record it as a hate crime and I am glad to say that he was charged and pled guilty to an antisemitic hate crime in Leeds Crown Court.

I hope that the House will understand that I have spoken in this way in order to condemn with every single fibre in my body all forms of racism and antisemitism. The holocaust is an appalling crime against our common humanity. It is right that we pledge today never to forgive or forget what happened, and never to let down our guard for a moment—because, while antiracism is a powerful force, antisemitism is still there and needs to be resisted. ...

**col 344 Dominic Raab (Conservative):** ... My father fled the holocaust with his mother, father and uncle, who have passed away. My grandmother, who was the living testimony in our family, passed away in 2005. I understand all the planning and site discussions and deliberations, and I hope they can be resolved in Committee, but the longer we talk about the technicalities, important as they are, the more we risk losing that living testimony without having something powerful to replace it. ...

**Jon Trickett:** ... let the memorial stand as a reminder of the need to fight injustice, just as our country did in the second world war. This is not a battle that can be finally won; it is a battle that we need to fight in each generation, and each one of us must stand in witness to what has happened. ...

**Nicola Richards (Conservative):** ... The need for a permanent memorial and learning centre to remember the lives of those who perished in the holocaust has never been more pressing ...

First, as the number of survivors sadly dwindles, our generation has received the baton from those who experienced the atrocities of the holocaust to ensure that the lives lost are never forgotten. Without a physical memorial, that task is not only more difficult but susceptible to being forgotten by successive generations. The placing of a permanent, physical and fitting memorial to the millions of lives lost is the best way to ensure that that does not happen, especially given that the memorial will be right at the heart of the country, adjacent to Parliament. The juxtaposition of the mother of all Parliaments standing next to an ever-lasting memorial immortalising those who perished in one of the world’s worst periods could not be more stark. ...

**col 345** On 16 June, this country and the world lost a true hero: Sir Ben Helfgott. Sir Ben was forced into slave labour at the age of 12, and would go on to survive a Nazi ghetto and a number of concentration camps. Ben’s father, Moishe; mother, Sara; and little sister, Lusia, were all murdered. ...

Sir Ben dedicated most of his life to educating others about the atrocities of the holocaust. It is unfortunate that, although the memorial and learning centre was promised eight years ago, Sir Ben did not have the opportunity to see it for himself. He said that he had hoped to “one day take my family to the new national memorial and learning centre, telling the story of Britain and the holocaust.” ...

The second reason it is essential that the memorial is built is the rise in antisemitism, in

the UK and globally. I speak as the co-chair of the APPG on antisemitism when I say that education is the most effective way to combat the appalling rise in Jew hatred. ...

I would like to end by quoting the Chief Rabbi, who perfectly summed up why we cannot delay the memorial any further. He said of holocaust survivors: "There's a panic in their voices. They are saying one thing to me. Please, world, never forget. They know they cannot live forever. They are asking us to be their ambassadors. They fear the world will forget in the course of time. We have a responsibility to ensure we will remember". ...

**Rosie Duffield (Labour):** ... surely it is right that the memorial be somewhere in close proximity to the heart of Britain's democracy, where we can reflect and remember the most extreme consequences of despotic dictatorships and the atrocities committed by elected and unelected regimes around the world. ...

*col 346* My party in particular has moved considerably in the past few years, but that does not eliminate the need to be open and honest about our shameful record. ... When those of us who did speak up were trolled, hounded and harassed ... we received absolutely no support whatsoever. Indeed, the supporters of our former leader used his name in the written or verbal attacks spat at us across the rooms ...

In March 2018, when the Jewish community felt they had no choice but to gather in protest, they chose Parliament Square and peacefully held placards reading, "Enough is Enough". While many members of our shadow Cabinet and Front-Bench MPs chose to do and say absolutely nothing ... those of us who attended that rally to support our Jewish friends and colleagues were watched by a senior member of the former leader's staff, who stood under the arches as we re-entered through Carriage Gates and wrote down in his notebook the names of all who attended. ...

Decent Jewish women, democratically elected as Members of Parliament, felt that they had no choice but to step away from this place. We must never allow such things to happen again.

For me, a memorial is a reminder to fight antisemitism wherever and whenever we see it, reminding ourselves that in the evil design to create a so-called Aryan master race, Hitler and the Nazis targeted and murdered millions of Jews, Roma and gay people. ...

*col 347* **Priti Patel (Conservative):** ... the commitment to bring the memorial forward—which is absolutely essential—clearly has to be done with a great deal of sympathy for its surroundings. ...

It is so sobering that the reason why the CST exists today is still to protect the Jewish community while they live their lives, day in, day out. I still have parents who live with the Jewish community in a part of Hertfordshire and, when I visit them, we still see local private security firms outside the synagogue, driving up and down our roads to protect the community. We have incredible Jewish schools that are protected, day in, day out ... by private security firms. That is because of the rise of antisemitism, the level of intolerance and the hatred that wrongly exists across society, which is why education is so vital.

*col 348* Of course, the holocaust marked one of the darkest and most sinister moments in the history of humanity. None of us can forget that, and we do not want any future generations to forget it, either. ...

I am afraid that, even in my time as Home Secretary, I witnessed the most abhorrent antisemitism. ...

*col 349* The new memorial and learning centre will be an incredible facility for future generations and young people to come together, yes, to be educated and to learn about the horrors of the past, but also to make sure that such events actually change the way in which we think, for the betterment of humanity and society. ...

The stories of resilience, the inspirational tales and the fortitude have gone on to define the Jewish community's successive generations. They have experienced and survived unimaginable suffering, and I pay tribute to them. ...

It is 78 years since the concentration camps, which were the sites of such horrors, were

liberated ... As each year passes, the number of holocaust survivors, sadly, reduces. ... I say that again within the context of what we see in this modern day, with antisemitism on the rise, social media intolerance, and abuse and trolling ...

That is why I think this Bill is so important.

*col 351* **Stephen Crabb:** ... We have heard tributes to Sir Ben Helfgott, who sadly died on 16 June. He was another remarkable holocaust survivor who devoted so much of his own time and years to holocaust education. Sadly, that generation is departing from us, so the question for us is, how do we preserve and continue their work? ... It is vital to have a memorial here in the heart of our United Kingdom that speaks to those events of the holocaust and to the need to learn from them. ...

I think the memorial can be done sympathetically. I do not know whether it will take up 7.5% of Victoria Tower gardens or a different figure—we have heard three different figures already this afternoon—but my understanding is that it will occupy only a modest space in the park and that the vast majority of it will still be left for local residents. ...

*col 352* **Edward Leigh (Conservative):** ... I have been to the holocaust museums in Berlin and Washington. They are the most comprehensive, moving, enormous edifices. People are taken through a whole series of rooms, explaining exactly how antisemitism originated and the final result of the holocaust. We should have that sort of holocaust museum in London.

The problem is that this site is so constrained that it cannot do justice to the cause and to the issue. We will have to dig down into the park and, while the centre will have two storeys, it will have only a couple of rooms, which will not allow the whole narrative to be developed. That is why the Imperial War Museum, which already has a good holocaust gallery, was quite right to make its offer. There is a lot of space next to that museum, and it was prepared—I am sure that it is prepared—to develop a world-class holocaust museum. ...

I, and I think many others, am perfectly happy with the concept of having a memorial to the holocaust in the park. Such a memorial could be aesthetically pleasing, dynamic and express the whole issue in powerful terms. ...

The trouble with the Ottawa monument, which we are importing, is that it is simply huge. It is a vast mound with great metal spikes sticking out of it. It is frankly hideous, and it would completely or partially block from that end of the park the iconic view of the Palace of Westminster, which is the subject of thousands of photographs and pictures. ... if we had started the process without proposing a totally inadequate underground learning centre and just satisfied ourselves with a monument, that could already have been built. ...

*col 353* There are concerns that if that beautiful space is sacrificed, it would create a precedent that could be repeated in other green spaces under the management of the Royal Parks. ...

The purpose of the memorial is to commemorate victims of this great crime, and to teach current and future generations. That means that we want many people to go there. We hope that it will be well used. There are practical points: the existing pressures on Millbank will only be compounded by traffic related to people accessing the memorial. We have not been informed of any plans to deal with coach traffic and halting, which putting the memorial there would be bound to generate. There are no parking spaces or drop-off zones for coaches. ...

The subterranean nature of the plans for the holocaust memorial add a further layer of complication to using Victoria Tower gardens. This is a riparian location, right on the banks of the River Thames. As recently as June 2016, 50 local properties were flooded from underneath following heavy downpours. ...

The design remit sent out to architecture firms competing to design the memorial included the criterion that the monument must “enhance Victoria Tower Gardens—improving the visual and sensory experience of the green space”.

*col 354* This plan simply does not meet that criterion. ...



There are suitable alternative locations. ... This site at the Imperial War Museum is less than half a mile away from the current proposed site, so it would still be an accessible and prominent central London location. ...

**col/ 355 Bob Blackman:** ... When we talk about the holocaust, it is hard to comprehend how 6 million men, women and children could systematically be murdered. When I was at school in Wembley, half of my class were Jewish and the rest of various other religions, but never ever were we taught about the holocaust. It was not spoken about. Jewish families in our area did not talk about the holocaust; they chose to try to forget it. It is only relatively recently that we have spoken about the holocaust and its horrors. That is why the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust in educating our young people, and the not-so-young, about what actually happened is so important.

**Andy McDonald (Labour):** Does the hon. Gentleman agree that we should be full of admiration for the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust and for the visits to the sites of terrible atrocities across Europe? ...

**Bob Blackman:** ... Like many others, I have been to Auschwitz. ... but today is not the day for remembering Auschwitz-Birkenau or any other camp; it is for dealing with the horrors of antisemitism.

My wife's family fled Germany in the early 20th century; even back then, antisemitism was rife. Also in the early 20th century, way before the great war and before the holocaust started, my family fled France because of antisemitism and programmes in operation in that country. This problem is not confined to one particular country.

Most people would say the holocaust began around 1933, when the Nazis gained power in Germany; although they had a minority of the vote, they were ruthless. ... Civilians had no qualms about turning their backs on Jewish friends or neighbours, and we should remember that. They isolated them from society. The momentum grew, and Jewish businesses were attacked, books were burnt, and stringent regulations restricted the freedom of Jews in the country. ...

In 1938, on the awful "night of broken glass"—more commonly referred to as Kristallnacht—Nazi mobs, SS troops and ordinary citizens torched synagogues throughout Germany. ...

**col/ 356** The conditions undergone by Jewish communities during that time are incomprehensible today. The testimonies of survivors paint a grave picture of what happened in the concentration camps: initially forced labour, then starvation, gas chambers and minimal hope of survival. ...

Even today, those survivors and their families must live with the remnants of their past, to which they were subjected simply because they were Jewish. It is essential that we commemorate the hardships that were undergone, to preserve the extraordinary stories of survival and give our future generations an accurate account of history in order to educate them and prevent such scenarios from ever occurring again. ...

The memorial will serve as a national monument to commemorate the men, women and children lost during the holocaust. Alongside it will be an education and learning centre, an accurate and detailed account of this slice of history with testimonies—this is an important element—from a British perspective. The hon. Member for Hemsworth (Jon Trickett) made a key point about what had happened to his family. As he said, there were undercurrents in this country of what was happening in Nazi Germany. ...

The holocaust is fast moving from living history to just history. ... The longer we take with this project, the fewer survivors will be left to see the finished memorial. ...

**col/ 357** There has been much discussion of the proposed location of the memorial. ... I strongly believe that Victoria Tower Gardens—already home, as has been described, to another memorial—is the perfect location. With its close proximity to Parliament, it will both serve as a reminder to us decision makers to ensure that this never happens again, and



attract large numbers of tourists to visit the site and learn the history. ...

It is right that Parliament should consider whether the unique significance of the holocaust justifies seeking an exception to the protections ... which were put in place by Parliament more than a century ago. ...

*col 358* In response to the many concerns about the environmental impact of the site, I am assured that landscape improvements to Victoria Tower Gardens will ensure that this important and well-used green space is made even more attractive and accessible than ever before. ...

The Father of the House has suggested that the memorial would be better placed at the Imperial War Museum. Contrary to those comments, the Imperial War Museum has said it supports the current plans for the memorial to be situated in Victoria Tower gardens and that it has no wish for the memorial to be built on its site.

I reject the claim that the Jewish community does not want this memorial, which I cannot believe has been put forward and is simply untrue. Of course, as with any community, the Jewish community is not homogeneous—it does not agree on everything—and there will always be a difference of opinion to some degree. But the vast majority are in agreement that the proposals are good and that there is an urgent need to crack on with the project. ...

*col 360* **Matthew Pennycook (Labour):** ... In the eight years that have passed since the idea was first mooted, the case for such a monument and institution has only grown. That is not only because of the alarming rise of anti-Jewish hate in recent years, but because as the number of those who survived the shoah dwindles and those who still remain with us grow ever frailer, it is essential that we as a country do more to preserve the memory of this unique act of evil and those who perished in it.

It is also imperative that we continue to educate future generations about what happened, both as a mark of respect to those who were lost and those who survived, and as a warning about what happens when antisemitism, prejudice and hatred are allowed to flourish unchecked. ...

*col 361* **Peter Bottomley:** When the National Audit Office carried out its report last year, it thought the cost had gone up to £102 million. Since then, we will probably need to add an extra 15%, because of inflation in construction. The expansion at Yad Vashem, which was referred to by hon. Members, was completed for \$100 million, so we will be spending much more for much less. ...

**Matthew Pennycook:** ... We know the concerns that have been raised about the adequacy of historical consultation. While the planning inquiry that took place in October 2022 enabled all interested parties to express their views and to raise these and other concerns and suggestions, the Opposition believe it is important that those with outstanding criticisms and objections have a chance to express them fully and be heard. The hybrid nature of the Bill and the resulting petitioning window that will be provided as a result of its designation will ensure that they are. ...

*col 362* **The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Felicity Buchan):** ... Together we can put our personal politics to one side and get the holocaust memorial built, while there are still holocaust survivors alive to see it.

Regrettably, it is a sombre truth that holocaust survivors who found solace in the United Kingdom are passing away, so we cannot let this opportunity pass us by. We must pass this Bill. We must ensure that future generations remember tomorrow. ...

We are opposing the amendment. Many of these issues were examined in depth at the six-week public inquiry in 2020.

In his overall conclusion, the planning inspector was clear that the significant range of truly civic, educative, social and even moral public benefits that the proposals offer would demonstrably outweigh the identified harms that the proposals have been found to cause. A number of Members ... raised concerns about the park and the environment. I stress

that our proposal is to take only 7.5% of the area of the gardens, with the structure of our learning centre placed underground. ...

It is our full intention that all activities that, at the moment, occur in the park can continue to do so, and we are being very sensitive in our design of the memorial and the learning centre. ... It is important also to note that the Holocaust Memorial Bill itself cannot and will not do anything to alter environmental and green space protections. The Bill will remove the statutory obstacle to building the memorial and learning centre in Victoria Tower gardens, it does not provide any sort of planning permission and other necessary consents. These are contingent on an entirely separate planning permission. ...

col 363 Flooding was also mentioned. A detailed flood-risk assessment prepared as part of the planning application has concluded that Victoria Tower gardens is heavily protected. However, we take the risk of flooding very seriously, The Environment Agency has sought planning conditions relating to the condition of the river wall, which we are happy to comply with.

The Buxton Memorial and the concerns about it being overshadowed were mentioned. ... The memorial will be no higher than the top of the Buxton Memorial and the fins will step down progressively. ...

I reiterate that the Imperial War Museum is very supportive of our proposals and, indeed, the chair sits on the foundation board. There was also mention of the fact that the learning centre was too small, but it is of a comparable size to that of the exhibition space underground in Berlin. ...

col 364 **Peter Bottomley:** I am not going to continue with the reasoned amendment on obvious grounds, which I spoke about earlier. I beg to ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

*Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.*

*Main Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time.*

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/B7DAB8BD-85BF-4C80-B850-B57755C81F34/HolocaustMemorialBill>

### **Holocaust Memorial Bill: Committal**

col 368 **The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Felicity Buchan):** ... The instruction motion, tabled in the name of the Secretary of State, sets out the matters that can properly be considered by the Select Committee when it hears petitions against the Bill. It is a custom of the House, and a well-established part of the process for hybrid Bills, that the Select Committee should not hear petitions that seek to challenge the principle of the Bill. ...

It is familiar practice on hybrid Bills ... that the House should pass a motion giving instructions to the Select Committee on what precisely falls within the principle of the Bill. Such a motion helps to provide clarity for the Committee and, of course, for potential petitioners, so that no time should be wasted seeking to raise matters on the Bill's principle, on which the House has already expressed such a clear view.

In this case, the motion specifies that

“the Committee shall not hear any petition against the Bill to the extent that the petition relates to—

(a) the question of whether or not there should be a memorial commemorating the victims of the Holocaust or a centre for learning relating to the memorial, whether at Victoria Tower Gardens or elsewhere; or

(b) whether or not planning permission and all other necessary consents should be given for the memorial and centre for learning, or the terms and conditions on which they should be given.”

If the House agrees to pass the motion, the Select Committee would still have a good deal of scope to consider matters relating to clause 2 of the Bill—notably, the extent to which the restrictions in section 8 of the London County Council (Improvements) Act 1900 should be removed, and whether there should be any conditions on that removal.

**Edward Leigh (Conservative):** It is accepted that there is a principle to memorial, so what about my point on having an overground memorial—like other memorials—but not an underground learning centre? Will the Committee still be able to consider such a detail?

**Felicity Buchan:** The Committee can consider the extent and any conditions on the memorial in Victoria Tower gardens, so yes, that can be considered.

It will ultimately be a matter for the Select Committee to decide which petitioners to hear and which points in the petitions to consider.

*col 369* **Peter Bottomley:** ... Hybrid Bill procedure exists for a reason: to protect the rights of those who are specifically affected by a Bill and allow them to put their case to a Committee. By making clause 2 the principle of the Bill, as well as clause 1—as I said before, there is no controversy about clause 1—the Government have already spent £17 million or more achieving nothing. They are now proposing to spend an extra £80 million to £100 million achieving not very much. ...

To go back to the hybridity, it is a matter of record that the Government declared in front of the examiners that this was not a hybrid Bill. They were wrong; it is a hybrid Bill. The reason for a hybrid Bill is so that people have the right to petition. The Government tried to stop that. I think that it is fairly clear to anyone who looks at this that the Government are now seeking to achieve the same result by using this instruction. It is up to the Government to decide whether the instruction, as introduced, is an abuse. ...

*col 370* The instruction, as described by the Minister, would make the whole Bill part of the principle of the Bill. That is not common. In fact, I do not know of it happening before. The whole of the Bill cannot be made the principle, because that then makes it impossible for the petitioners to have their cases heard effectively. So I think we need to accept that the petitioners will be heard on nearly everything that is not an abuse. If someone says, “I do not want any money spent on it,” I can understand not allowing that. That is the principle, but the rest of it, I argue, is not. ...

I ask this explicitly: can either the Secretary of State or the Minister stand up and tell me now that, if someone wants to argue in front of the Committee that it would be better to have the basement box somewhere else and just have the memorial, would that petition potentially be heard by the Committee?

**The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Michael Gove):** I think it would be a matter for the Committee.

**Peter Bottomley:** I agree with the Secretary of State that it would be a matter for the Committee, but it is a matter for the Committee under the instructions. ...

This hybrid procedure gives ordinary people a chance to have their voices heard, and it allows the Committee to insert conditions when the Bill comes back to the House. Those conditions, I believe, could include—I am not going to tell the Committee what it has to do, although I volunteer to be a member if anyone wants to put me on it—saying that the Government should, before this Bill comes back for its further stages on the Floor of the House, show the alternatives to the present plans. ...

I believe that the Committee should have the capacity or ability to hear petitions that say, “If the Government say that the memorial only takes up 7.5% of the land in Victoria Tower Gardens, that should be written in as a condition in the Bill.” I believe, notwithstanding the acceptability of paragraph (2)(a) about the money, that the Committee should be able to say that the House can consider the Bill on the condition that the total cost is not more than another £80 million, if we go ahead with the box, or preferably £20 million without the box ...

*col 371* We will not even, in my view, get it within the next four or five years at £120 million,

unless the Government wake up to the fact that this is sticking in a big box that does not do what the original plans wanted in a place where it is not appropriate. ...

**John Baron (Conservative):** ... No one is doubting, as I think we have all made clear in this debate, the need for a holocaust memorial. It is absolutely essential, so that we never forget the horror of the genocide and the holocaust, and a memorial would serve that purpose. My central concern is a twofold absence, the first of which is the absence of a proper consultation as to the memorial's location. ... Proper process has been sadly lacking. After all, we are only having this debate because those pushing for the siting of the memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens were informed by a High Court judge that they could not ride roughshod over an Act of Parliament that said that Victoria Tower Gardens should be preserved for permanent use as a public park. ...

**Peter Bottomley:** ... the Government now say that admission to the memorial will be free in perpetuity. The same words—"in perpetuity"—are used in the London Act that protects the park from this kind of building. Who do we trust?

**John Baron:** ... we are dealing with serious issues of trust here, and the public trusting what we say in this place. ...

col 372 The Bill is trying to say, "We are not going to consider any other alternatives. We are not going to listen at all to any further suggestions as to how we can move this forward." That is wrong, given that the only consultation we have had so far by Westminster City Council has been called in by the Government. ... But here we have an approach that is shoddy, frankly. It lacks transparency, and the process is questionable. ...

col 373 **Felicity Buchan:** ... I clarify the fact that it is a matter for the Committee, ultimately, which petitioners to hear and which points to consider. ...

There was a discussion as to whether clause 2 was within the principle of the Bill. We have to remember that this is a Bill with only three clauses, one of which is about the extent of the Bill, so I would strongly argue that clause 1 and clause 2 are the principles of the Bill. ... There was a concern raised that the planning decision would be made by a Minister in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. I want to reassure the House that we have the strictest processes in place to divide the decision-making principles, so no Minister involved in the Holocaust Memorial Bill will in any way be involved in the planning decision. To use the banking term, there will be the strictest of Chinese walls. ...

*Question put and agreed to.*

Holocaust Memorial Bill: Instruction

*Motion made, and Question proposed,*

That it be an instruction to the Select Committee to which the Holocaust Memorial Bill is committed to deal with the Bill as follows:

(1) That the Committee treats the principle of the Bill, as determined by the House on the Bill's Second Reading, as comprising the matters mentioned in paragraph 2; and those matters shall accordingly not be at issue during proceedings of the Committee.

(2) The matters referred to in paragraph (1) are—

(a) the Secretary of State may incur expenditure for or in connection with (i) a memorial commemorating the victims of the Holocaust, and (ii) a centre for learning relating to the memorial; and

(b) section 8(1) and (8) of the London County Council (Improvements) Act 1900 are not to prevent, restrict or otherwise affect the construction, use, operation, maintenance or improvement of such a memorial and centre for learning at Victoria Tower Gardens in the City of Westminster.

(3) Given paragraph (2) and as the Bill does not remove the need for planning permission and all other necessary consents being obtained in the usual way for the construction, use, operation, maintenance and improvement of the memorial and centre for learning, the Committee shall not hear any petition against the Bill to the extent that the petition relates to—

(a) the question of whether or not there should be a memorial commemorating the victims of the Holocaust or a centre for learning relating to the memorial, whether at Victoria Tower Gardens or elsewhere; or

(b) whether or not planning permission and all other necessary consents should be given for the memorial and centre for learning, or the terms and conditions on which they should be given.

(4) The Committee shall have power to consider any amendments proposed by the member in charge of the Bill which, if the Bill were a private bill, could not be made except upon petition for additional provision.

col 374 (5) Paragraph (4) applies only so far as the amendments proposed by the member in charge of the Bill fall within the principle of the Bill as provided for by paragraphs (1) and (2) above.

That these Orders be Standing Orders of the House.—(*Felicity Buchan.*)

*Amendment proposed:* (a), to leave out from “memorial” in paragraph (2)(a) to the end of paragraph (2)(b).—(*Sir Peter Bottomley.*)

*Question put,* That the amendment be made.

cols 375–7

The House divided:

Ayes 11

Noes 379

Question accordingly negatived. ...

*Amendment proposed to motion 6:* (b), leave out paragraph (3).—(*Sir Peter Bottomley.*)

*Question put,* That the amendment be made.

*Question negatived.*

*Main Question put and agreed to.*

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/58753037-7267-47B9-9E15-1E98B47D4059/HolocaustMemorialBillCommittal>

TOP

## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Israel: Lebanon

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [190312] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of reports that rockets were fired from Lebanon into Israel in April 2023.

**David Rutley:** The UK Government condemned the indiscriminate rocket attacks from southern Lebanon and Gaza at the time they took place. There is no change in UK policy: the UK remains resolute in its commitment to Israel's security and recognises Israel's right to self-defence. We urge all sides to avoid taking actions which make peace more difficult to achieve.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-20/190312>

#### West Bank: Palestinians

**Jonathan Edwards (Independent)** [190801] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the (a) Israeli Defence Force operation and (b) reported use



of a helicopter gunship in Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank on Monday 19 June; and whether he has had recent discussions with (i) his counterparts in the Israeli Government and (ii) the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on this matter.

**David Rutley:** We regularly raise the issue of the numbers of Palestinians killed and injured by Israeli Security Forces in the West Bank with the Israeli authorities. Israel has a right to self-defence, but it is vital that Israel's security operations are in line with international humanitarian law, including the principles of proportionality, distinction and necessity. When there are accusations of excessive use of force, we urge Israeli authorities to carry out swift, transparent and thorough investigations and, if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-22/190801>

## House of Lords Written Answers

### China: Palestinian Authority

**The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative)** [HL8542] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the 'strategic partnership' signed between government of China and the Palestinian Authority during President Mahmoud Abbas' visit to Beijing on 14 June and whether it will affect UK policy in the region; and what assessment they have made of the impact the 'strategic partnership' will have on the role of international mediators in the Middle East peace process, including the UK.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We closely monitor the security situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) and are aware of the strategic partnership signed between China and the Palestinian Authority (PA). The UK continues to urge the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to engage in meaningful dialogue to further the cause of peace at every opportunity. I, as Minister for the Middle East, met with Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Riad Malki on 5 May. I reaffirmed the UK's commitment to the Middle East peace process and the two state solution. The UK engages with the Palestinian Authority at the highest levels through the British Consulate General Jerusalem and at ministerial level.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-15/hl8542>

### Israel: Palestinians

**The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative)** [HL8545] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Amnesty International public statement, 'Israel/OPT: Investigate Possible War Crimes During Israel's Military Offensive on Gaza in May 2023', issued on 13 June; and what plans they have, if any, to take action with international partners in relation to Amnesty's statement.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK draws on a wide range of sources when assessing human rights issues in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). We regularly raise the issue of the numbers of Palestinians killed and injured by Israeli Defence Forces in the West Bank and Gaza with the Israeli authorities. Whenever there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we raise these matters with the Israeli Government and the need for swift, transparent, and thorough investigations and, if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account. We make it clear to Israel that it is important that the security forces provide appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, particularly the need to protect children, and urge restraint in the use of live fire. The Foreign Secretary contacted his Israeli counterpart at the time of the military action alluded to in the Amnesty report to urge that all actions taken were proportionate, calibrated to avoid civilian casualties, and in line with international humanitarian law. He also called for the facilitation of humanitarian access.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-15/hl8545>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/6848/2023/en/>

## United Nations

### Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the Occupied Palestinian Territory

The Secretary-General condemns Monday's advancement of plans for over 5,500 housing units in Israeli settlements in Area C of the occupied West Bank, including the retroactive regularization, under Israeli law, of three settlement outposts adjacent to the settlement of Eli.

The Secretary-General reiterates that settlements are a flagrant violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. He once again urges the Government of Israel to halt and reverse the expansion of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, to immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and to fully respect its legal obligations in that regard.

Israel's persistent expansion of its settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, deepens humanitarian needs, significantly fuels violence, increases the risk of confrontation, further entrenches the occupation, and undermines the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

These ongoing settlements are eroding the possibility of establishing a contiguous and viable sovereign Palestinian State, based on the pre-1967 lines, thereby impeding the ability to achieve a viable two-State solution, and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2023-06-28/statement-attributable-the-spokesperson-for-the-secretary-general-the-occupied-palestinian-territory>

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

### UK Parliament

#### \*\* Bill of Rights Bill

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

**The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Alex Chalk):** Having carefully considered the Government's legislative programme in the round, I can inform the House that we have decided not to proceed with the Bill of Rights, but the Government remain committed to a human rights framework that is up to date, fit for purpose and works for the British people. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-27/debates/FE807865-51C0-4E01-AE13-42E219714C99/TopicalQuestions#contribution-FB5FC112-9572-4AB5-843B-D1061BC45DDC>

#### Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3475>

#### Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill

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

## **\*\* Holocaust Memorial Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421>

Point of Order

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/6BB59EBA-2133-47C8-9356-80EFDEAC851A/PointsOfOrder>

Second Reading, House of Commons

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/B7DAB8BD-85BF-4C80-B850-B57755C81F34/HolocaustMemorialBill>

Money Motion

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/4969979C-0A92-4199-A328-A362D05DA3DA/HolocaustMemorialBill\(Money\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/4969979C-0A92-4199-A328-A362D05DA3DA/HolocaustMemorialBill(Money))

Committal Debate

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/58753037-7267-47B9-9E15-1E98B47D4059/HolocaustMemorialBillCommittal>

Carry-over

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/4587899F-1ED9-4225-8928-EF907AE064F9/HolocaustMemorialBillCarry-Over>

Forecast Cost

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-28/debates/23062846000013/HolocaustMemorialForecastCost>

Guidance on submitting your petition

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/51952/documents/3720>

Petition Template

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/51953/documents/3721>

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

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

## **\*\* Online Safety Bill**

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

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/51961/documents/3727>

## **Nakba Commemoration Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3461>

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

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

## **Private Burial Grounds and Cemeteries Bill**

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

## **Same Sex Marriage (Church of England)**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3438>

## **Schools Bill**

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

## **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-draft-bill-overarching-documents>

## **Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill**

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

## **Universal Jurisdiction (Extension)**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3454>

## **Scottish Parliament**

### **\*\* Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Bill**

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

Stage 3

[#ScotParlOR](https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15400&i=131378)

Stage 3 Debate

[#ScotParlOR](https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15400&i=131379)

*Bill passed*

### **Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill**

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

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

**Charities tax compliance** (closing date 20 July 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/charities-tax-compliance/consultation-charities-tax-compliance>

**A Human Rights Bill for Scotland** (closing date 5 October 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/equality-and-human-rights/a-human-rights-bill-for-scotland-consultation/>

**\*\* The future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales** (closing date 26 October 2023)

<https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/>

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