

# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

## Contents

Home Affairs

Holocaust

Israel

Foreign Affairs

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Oral Answers

#### Prime Minister's Questions

*col 308* **The Prime Minister:** ... If [Jeremy Corbyn] is really interested in tackling injustices, let me tell him that the biggest injustice he should tackle is in his own Labour party—he should deal with antisemitism.

**Jeremy Corbyn:** My party is totally committed to eliminating racism in any form and antisemitism in any form. While the Prime Minister is about the lecturing, how about the investigation into Islamophobia in her party? ...

*col 309* **The Prime Minister:** ... The way the right hon. Gentleman talks, we would think he was a man of principle, but what do we actually see from him? Labour policy is to ban non-disclosure agreements, but his staff have to sign them. He was an anti-racist; now he ignores antisemitism. ...

**Jeremy Corbyn:** Coming from the Prime Minister who created the hostile environment that brought about the Windrush scandal, who ordered “Go home” vans to drive around London, who refuses to acknowledge Islamophobia in her own party, and whose party consorts with racists and antisemites in the European Parliament and sucks up to those Governments across Europe, we do not need those kinds of lectures. ...

**The Prime Minister:** The right hon. Gentleman may do his best to ignore the antisemitism in his party, but I think—[Hon. Members: “Answer the question!”] I think he should listen to the words of the former Labour party general secretary, the noble Lord Triesman, who said: “We may one day be the party of anti-racism once again but it certainly isn’t today.” ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-07-10/debates/08BBDD0D-1A31-4BAD-8FC9-FC175B1D2081/Engagements#contribution-246B7DE4-CDA0-467C-B0BD-F1F00759B2C6>

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Higher Education: Antisemitism

**Wes Streeting (Labour)** [272895] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many

and which higher education institutions have adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

**Chris Skidmore:** On 16 May 2019, I wrote to all higher education institutions to urge them to consider adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. I set out my view that this is a useful tool, which will help front-line services better understand and recognise instances of antisemitism.

The government believes that adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism sends a clear message that antisemitic behaviour will not be tolerated, and that any instances of antisemitism will be taken very seriously.

Higher education providers are autonomous organisations who are independent from the government and individually responsible for deciding whether to adopt the IHRA definition and this information is therefore not held centrally.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-03/272895/>

## House of Lords Oral Answers

### Universities: Racism

**Lord Bassam of Brighton (Labour):** To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they intend to take to ensure that universities properly investigate allegations of racism by students, lecturers and staff; and what role the Office for Students will have in any such investigations.

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** My Lords, the Government take all forms of racism extremely seriously and expect providers to act swiftly to investigate and address reports of racist incidents. The Government are working closely with Universities UK and the Office for Students to support work to address racism and other forms of harassment in higher education, including the implementation of UUK's task force recommendations. The Government tasked the OFS to support this, and over £2 million has been invested in projects tackling hatred and harassment.

**Lord Bassam of Brighton:** My Lords, universities have a responsibility to ensure that they provide a safe, inclusive learning requirement but fail in some cases to treat racism seriously. Twenty-five per cent of universities surveyed admitted that they lacked central records of racist complaints, some did not specifically record racist incidents, and just five said that staff who investigated complaints received specific anti-racism training. Does the Minister share my concern that without concerted action, the widened access a diverse intake brings is threatened, and that there are few mechanisms and fewer trained staff able to deal with racism at our universities?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** My Lords, we are concerned, and there is no place in our society, including within higher education, for hatred or any form of harassment, discrimination or racism. Higher education providers have clear responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, and should discharge their responsibilities fully and have robust policies and procedures in place to comply with the law to investigate and swiftly address incidents reported to them—by the way, this includes having enough resources, especially staff. The Office for Students was set up to champion students, and it is right that it works closely with universities to fund them to tackle this important issue.

**Lord Leigh of Hurley (Conservative):** Yesterday, the United States special envoy on global anti-Semitism came to this House. He told us that global anti-Semitism has risen, in part due to anti-Semitism taking place on campus. The Jewish Leadership Council, of which I am vice-president, met the Minister, Chris Skidmore, a short while ago, and he wrote to every vice-chancellor asking them to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism. Despite that, Jewish students are still

having to pay for security on campus. Has the Minister received a reply from the vice-chancellors, and what steps are being taken to ensure that all universities adopt this definition?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** I am aware of the meeting and the letter which Minister Skidmore wrote—on 16 May, I believe. I can tell my noble friend that there have been some replies, so I believe that the message is getting through. However, I am the first to say that there is more work to be done. King's College London has adopted the IHRA definition, but I believe that that happened before the letter was written. Just to complicate matters, we have to respect institutional autonomy as regards how higher education providers operate, although obviously government has a role.

**Baroness Garden of Frognal (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, last week I was speaking at a sixth-form college where the students were almost entirely black and minority ethnic. They were thrilled when one of their bright girls got a place at Cambridge, and devastated when her father refused to allow her to go on the grounds that she must live at home and go to a local university. What more can be done to encourage ethnic minority communities not to discriminate against girls in this way, and to ensure that they have the opportunities that others have, both before they go to university and afterwards?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The noble Baroness raises an important point. It is important to encourage more females to go to university, when it is right for them, as well as BAME students. I know that a number of universities, including but not exclusively Oxford and Cambridge, are doing a lot of work to try to encourage and improve entries from this particular group, and the work is getting through.

**Lord Morgan (Labour):** My Lords, when I was a vice-chancellor, there were clear regulations about how to handle allegations of racial discrimination or abuse of some kind. One knew exactly what one had to do: procedures would be set up, which I myself would chair. Perhaps these serious allegations that my noble friend has alluded to arise from the fact that vice-chancellors may be turning their attentions to other managerial matters and not to their fundamental responsibility, which is the welfare and well-being of students and staff.

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The noble Lord is right that the welfare of students has to be paramount, and the OfS is tasked with that. However, there is more to it than that; the House may note that the EHRC is conducting an inquiry into racial harassment in higher education, which we welcome. Minister Skidmore wrote to the EHRC on 7 January regarding its inquiry to set out the importance of our understanding of these issues and how they are addressed by providers. Therefore, we very much want to follow through and are on the front foot as regards trying to understand more where the problems are and address them.

**Baroness Hussein-Ece (Liberal Democrat):** Has the Minister seen the report on the research by Dr Katy Sian on the racism and the lack of career progress that black, Asian and minority ethnic academics are facing in universities? The figures are woeful, and demonstrate, as she puts it, 'institutional racism' rather than meritocracy. Does the Minister agree with the recommendation that there should be far more transparency in terms of an audit, a statutory requirement for universities to report on the ethnic make-up of their senior academic staff and the progress they intend to make to change that picture?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** Indeed, that is what they are tasked to do, through changes we have made in the transparency requirements of the Higher Education and Research Act. There is more to it: £1.8 million has been given for 45 projects. They are looking not only at online harassment—£480,000 has been given for 11 projects to tackle religious harassment. There are a number of strands in progress to make sure we are doing the maximum possible in this area.

**Lord Lexden (Conservative):** My Lords, following the question of the noble Lord, Lord Morgan, will the Minister make inquiries to establish whether the guidance the noble Lord

referred to is still in place and available to vice-chancellors and principals? It is clearly very important that, having been provided, it should be retained.

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** I will certainly check that, but I have no doubt that the guidance is there. The big question is whether we should be updating it. That will certainly come in the autumn, when the EHRC is due to report, so this is very much a work in progress.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-07-10/debates/3714CF1B-B09A-4161-B01D-5AD67AF7FBC0/UniversitiesRacism>

*The report referred to above is not available online.*

## UK Parliament Home Affairs Committee

### Evidence session: Inquiry into the Macpherson Report: twenty years on

*Second panel*

**Q330 Chair:** ... Will you tell us what percentage of complaints that you deal with involve complaints of racism or discrimination?

**Michael Lockwood (Director General, Independent Office for Police Conduct):** ... we deal with 650 to 750 complaints. They are dealt with through a process, and our operations staff designate whether they involve allegations of discrimination or not. In 2017-18, of the 650 to 750 cases we looked at which were most serious and sensitive, we served notices on 115 officers with a factor of discrimination in their case. The discrimination factor might not have caused the cases to be serious and sensitive, but it was a factor in the investigation.

Of the notices served, 55% were assessed as potential gross misconduct, and 26%—a quarter—were assessed as potential misconduct. In terms of discrimination, roughly one in two were considered to have a case to answer for discrimination.

**Q331 Chair:** Of those, what proportion were racism? Or were those discrimination figures only about race discrimination?

**Michael Lockwood:** That was racism.

**Q332 Chair:** You did a review of cases that had been investigated internally by Greater Manchester police, West Yorkshire police and the West Midlands police in 2017. You concluded that in the majority of cases, they did not go far enough in dealing with discrimination allegations. What did you do as a result of that, and what follow-up has there been?

**Michael Lockwood:** ... We looked at potential allegations of discrimination in those cases ... Basically, this piece of work showed that two thirds of those cases were deemed to be unsatisfactory, and that covered a number of elements. First, we felt that the forces were not sufficiently assessing the seriousness of the cases—of the ones we looked at where the force had assessed that there was no misconduct, our view was that there were misconduct issues. ...

Secondly, we felt that some interviews of individuals were not of the right level. There was an absence of what are called auditable accounts on the files.

**Q333 Chair:** I am specifically interested in issues around race discrimination, and whether you took follow-up action having identified problems around that.

**Michael Lockwood:** As a result of that report, we went back to the forces to talk to them about the fact that we did not feel that they had followed the guidelines that we had submitted and to understand what action they were going to take on those, and we shared the general findings and concerns that we have more widely about what we felt were shortcomings in the way that these investigations were done. ...

**Q334 Chair:** Do you think they have taken further action since then that has solved the

problem?

**Michael Lockwood:** We have shared with them the things that we needed to. I think it will be right if we go back and check if that is done.

**Q335 Chair:** The inspectorate published a report in 2015 looking at 11,000 internal misconduct cases against different officers. I am interested in the complaints against BME officers, and whether there is disproportionality. That 2015 report, looking at 11,000 cases, found that 18% of white officers and staff with a case to answer were required to attend misconduct hearings, compared with 33% of BME officers and staff. It further found that 40% of white officers and staff who attended hearings were dismissed, compared with 52% of BME officers. ...

**Michael Lockwood:** In terms of public complaints, we are usually able to get the ethnicity issues from the forces. However, if we look at our investigations in the round, we haven't captured ethnicity in the way I feel that we should ...

**Q336 Chair:** So of those 650 cases that you have taken up, you don't know how many involved BME officers and staff?

**Michael Lockwood:** We do from the public complaints bit, but we don't know from all of them. ...

**Q337 Chair:** ... If you are not monitoring the diversity and ethnicity of the officers and staff that you are making judgments on, when we know that there is evidence of disproportionality elsewhere in the system, that sounds pretty serious.

**Michael Lockwood:** ... in terms of the training, the equality and diversity awareness, the training we offer, the use of our networks, the unconscious bias work we do, I feel that the investigators are very conscious of equality and diversity issues in the way they investigate.

**Q338 Matt Parr (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services):** ... The latest figures are that 4.6 BAME officers per 1000 are dismissed from the police service. The figure for white officers is 1.5 per 1000, so just under a third of the figure. ...

**Q339 Matt Parr:** ... It is not something that is easily eradicated; it is prevalent in other professions as well. ...

**Q340 Matt Parr:** ... we have not done a single report about this as a theme since 2015.

**Q342 Chair:** Isn't that part of the problem? You have not looked at it. ... There is not enough sense that forces are taking this seriously enough, but also not that much evidence that you are taking it seriously enough, as an inspectorate, to make sure this is sorted out. ...

**Matt Parr:** First of all, it is not our responsibility to sort it out: we are an inspectorate, not a regulator. ... To say that we are not taking it seriously is wrong. It is something that we have looked at quite closely and continue to. ...

**Q343 Chair:** But 20 years ago the Macpherson report made some very strong recommendations about problems around policing diversity, problems around the police relationship with BAME communities and also the undermining of trust.

We have heard very considerable evidence in the course of this inquiry that there are still persistent problems here, in terms of police force diversity, recruitment and, particularly, retention and disciplinary issues. It looks as though all three of your organisations, frankly, which have really important leadership roles to play, 20 years on, are not really on top of this. Why have you not done an inquiry into these disciplinary issues and the issue of diversity and fully enforce it?

**Matt Parr:** I don't want to give a flippant answer, but it is because we have lots of other things. It is a priority, but it is not the only priority in policing. ...

**Q346 Chair:** Is the truth not that when you look at issues around race, either in terms of

the relationship between forces and communities, or in terms of what is happening within forces, you only look at them in a glancing way, and you have only looked at them in a glancing way for very many years? ...

**Matt Parr:** ... I do not accept your argument that what we do is a glancing look at it. It is much more detailed than that. We examine many thousands of records and grievance cases every time we do an inspection. "Glancing" is just not fair. ...

**Q347 Chair:** ... Is it not also a concern that you are not even recognising it as a problem? If you sat there and said, "Do you know, you're right? Actually, there are some really important issues we're going to have to look further at", that would perhaps be more reassuring than your saying, "Do you know, it's not a problem because we've looked at it all."

**Matt Parr:** I did not say it is not a problem and that we have looked at it all. ... We absolutely understand—and, to be fair, the leadership of the police understands—that the police have to solve and deal with some of these issues if they are to maintain the legitimacy that they require to do their job effectively. I absolutely reject your idea that it is not something we are taking seriously: we evidently do. ...

**Q349 Chair:** If you search on your website just for the term "race", you will find that remarkably few references come up. ...

What is the College of Policing doing about this? To us, it looks as though there are significant problems. ...

**Jo Noakes (Director of Workforce Development (temporary), College of Policing):** We absolutely recognise there is an issue. ... Now is a good time for us to reset the dial around what the college's role is in diversity. Currently, we are looking at new priorities around professional development, diversity and wellbeing. ...

... this year, we launched new entry routes into policing. There are now three new entry routes. Previously, you could only enter the police force through one route. Early evidence and research led by the Met on the new entry routes show a significantly greater likelihood that people from black and Asian communities will apply now that they are aware of the new entry routes. ...

**Q351 Chair:** What about tackling the unconscious bias among officers that might then be having an impact on decisions that they are taking ...?

**Jo Noakes:** That requires significant effort across the board in terms of how people are recruited, trained and developed, and in terms of the culture of the organisations. ... There is never a point at which you can say that the job is done. It needs to be reviewed all the time, and unconscious bias is part of that. ...

**Q354 Rehman Chishti (Conservative):** One final clarification point on that: have you yourself ever had the breaches in relation to the code on racial equality drawn to your attention?

**Jo Noakes:** No.

**Q356 Kate Green:** ... Could you first of all explain to us what specific training on race is available from the college, how you ensure that its impact is sustained and what follow-up monitoring you undertake on its effects?

**Jo Noakes:** ... Although, as the College of Policing, we deliver some training, for the most part we set the standards and the curriculum. Everybody coming into policing has diversity training at the heart of their initial training and it will be embedded throughout any training they undertake at various points. ...

Diversity is an important part of all the processes, policies and procedures. It is about ensuring that there are not any unintended barriers as part of those. And it is about culture change, so it is not about a one hit of training having an impact. That has to be part of the whole system. ...

**Q361 Michael Lockwood:** ... There is a training element that we talked about, which is

the more mechanical bit to me—the race and equality training and discrimination training and so on. ...

The bit for me is culture. Pervading training is culture in an organisation. It is about a culture where you have the ability to put your hand up when something has gone wrong and challenge something. ...

The second issue is an organisation that reflects the community it serves. ... if you are in an organisation that has different communities and different BAME backgrounds, it pervades a different culture. You can ask different questions. You can talk about things you would not normally talk about. ...

An organisation that reflects the community it serves is able to have a culture that is more inclusive, discusses the right issues, asks the right questions. ...

**Q368 Janet Daby (Labour):** ... how are the training programmes on race and racial justice monitored and evaluated? Within that, are black, Asian and minority ethnic people involved in that evaluation process in some way?

**Jo Noakes:** For the programmes that are not delivered by us, which is most of our training, it will be down to forces to evaluate and monitor. We evaluate anything that is delivered by us. In terms of people from black and Asian communities being involved in the development of training, we do that for some of our programmes. ...

**Q370 Janet Daby:** If there are issues with line managers and there is a performance-related issue, is it referred back to you for people to undertake that racial diversity and equality training?

**Jo Noakes:** That is not something we would be involved in. ...

**Q372 Jo Noakes:** That would be delivered by the force. ...

**Matt Parr:** Again, in our experience, that is relatively patchy and not a consistent standard across the country. You will see in some forces excellent training in communication skills, by which I mean how to interact with people when you are out—particularly with ethnic minorities when you are out doing police work on the street. In some cases, it's considered almost as part of an exercise in de-escalation and conflict management, rather than generally how to communicate. ... there is not a national standard and there is not a common practice across the country as to how those sorts of things are addressed. ...

**Q374 Toby Perkins (Labour):** Why do you believe that more BAME officers than white officers are leaving the police service, both voluntarily and through dismissal?

**Matt Parr:** ... many of the same factors with retention and progression are as prevalent as they are with complaints. There is sometimes a vicious circle, I think, of people expecting that they are not going to be treated very well and getting staff associations or unions involved ...

**Q375 Toby Perkins:** You might think that that would discourage them from joining in the first place, but once they have made the decision, despite having read what we are talking about here, despite knowing that black and ethnic minority police officers are much more likely to be at the lowest level than at the highest level, despite knowing that they are more likely to be dismissed, despite knowing that they are less likely to be recruited—despite all those things, they have still joined, yet after all that, they are choosing to leave. That suggests that it is more than just their perception and that it is based on the reality they are experiencing, doesn't it?

**Matt Parr:** ... People make their decisions for a whole range of factors, and it's difficult to put your finger on it. ...

There is one argument, and it's only a theory. It is not something we have evidence for. One argument is that, as police forces have understandably reached out to communities from which they have not traditionally recruited, there is perhaps slightly more of a mismatch between recruits' expectations and the reality of policing. In simple terms, if your dad, your grandfather and your uncle were all police officers and you join the police, you

kind of know what to expect. Some of the things that go along with policing—lost days off, the shift patterns and just the nature of what the work is like—come as no surprise. For some of the harder-to-reach communities, there is perhaps less of that history. ...

**Q378 Michael Lockwood:** ... In terms of BAME officers, there are clearly issues with coming into the organisation, with the make-up, as you said, and in terms of promotion and grievances. Obviously HMIC deals with the internal issues of conduct within an organisation, but what our report did—from a public perspective, which is what we look at—was show that the treatment of officers was different in relation to allegations of discrimination, so yes.

**Q379 Toby Perkins:** We heard that you are three times more likely to be dismissed if you are a black officer than if you are a white officer. So you accept that they are being treated differently?

**Michael Lockwood:** ... Our involvement is on the public side, with public complaints. That was what Macpherson wanted us to do, because that is where we can make the biggest impact and the biggest change. We would get a very small number of the most severe issues, so I think it is a matter that you would have to ask the police forces themselves about. ...

**Q383 Toby Perkins:** Finally, is there anything that any of you on the panel would say needs to be done to call the police to account for their performance on racial justice within the service and operationally?

**Matt Parr:** ... our job is to inspect and report. It is not to regulate and we do not have hard powers to address some of these issues. The body that is responsible for holding police forces to account is its PCC. ...

**Jo Noakes:** I agree with the comment about the role of PCCs ... From what I see, we are absolutely committed to this and that is what I see with police chiefs as well. ...

**Michael Lockwood:** ... On racial justice, it is about having a police service that reflects the community it serves and being more ambitious and quicker in achieving that. I think it will take until 2052 for the police service to reflect the community it serves. That has issues about confidence, approachability and about trust in policing. That needs to be accelerated. ...

The more information that is shared publicly, the more accountability and transparency about some of the tools that police use and their impact and effectiveness, and how they deal with complaints, is put in the public domain, the better. My job is not to change the tools that police have; it is about how those tools are used. So greater transparency about stop and search and how it is used.

The second bit is about the discussion we had with young people on stop and search. It is about how it is used, not the tool itself. They said to me, "Don't do it in a way that humiliates us. Explain why we were stopped. Treat us with respect. Tell me my rights. If I am allowed to have body worn video, let's put that on. Make sure there is a record of the stop and search. If you see I am unhappy, explain what I can do about that. Apologise if you don't find anything." Those comments are quite simplistic. It is not about the tool itself; it is how it is applied. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/the-macpherson-report-twenty-years-on/oral/103657.html>

TOP

# Holocaust

## House of Commons Written Answer

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [272745] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 19 June to Question 263698, whether Big Ideas is contractually required to ensure the impartiality of its public engagement work on the proposed use of Victoria Tower Gardens for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Big Ideas Community Interest Company is contracted via a standard MHCLG grant funding agreement and have always acted in an open and transparent way when it comes to their public engagement work on the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-03/272745/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-06-12/263698/>

## House of Lords Written Answers

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

**Lord Howarth of Newport (Labour)** [HL16807] To ask Her Majesty's Government on what basis they appointed the consultancy Big Ideas to increase public engagement with the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre planning application; what specific remit they gave Big Ideas in undertaking that work; and how much they expect to pay Big Ideas for those services.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** Big Ideas is a community interest company specialising in community engagement and commemoration. We are providing £118,000 funding to encourage local and national conversations on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. This work has included engaging with mother and toddler groups, schools, and clubs for the elderly alongside national engagement with survivors, youth and civic organisations. Portal engagement is only one facet of Big Ideas work.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-01/HL16807/>

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

**Lord Howarth of Newport (Labour)** [HL16808] To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the exact wording of the questions asked by Big Ideas when seeking the views of members of the public about the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** With the consent of Westminster City Council, Big Ideas places on the Council's planning portal both objections and supportive comments relating to the proposed Holocaust Memorial and learning Centre. Big Ideas acts in an open and transparent way. The exact wording of the questions asked is and has always been, since their engagement, in the public domain. They can be viewed here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdO4Ua3NaO6Ge3593pb7vOcaQ7htlFPDvpSEokF5A-eY5IDkA/viewform>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-01/HL16808/>

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

**Lord Howarth of Newport (Labour)** [HL16809] To ask Her Majesty's Government what methodology was used by Big Ideas to select participants in their consultation on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** Big Ideas were asked to encourage debate on the importance of a national Memorial to the Holocaust. This work has included engaging with mother and toddler groups, schools, and clubs for the elderly alongside national engagement with survivors, youth and civic organisations.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-01/HL16809/>

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

**Lord Howarth of Newport (Labour)** [HL16810] To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of respondents to Big Ideas' consultation on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre were (1) resident, and (2) working in Westminster; and, in assessing public views on the planning application for that Centre, what assessment they have made of the relative weight that should be given to the views of (a) local people, and (b) other people whose lives would not be directly affected by that development.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** This is a matter for Westminster City Council to decide.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-01/HL16810/>

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

**Lord Howarth of Newport (Labour)** [HL16811] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the accusation of the Save Victoria Tower Gardens Campaign that they employed Big Ideas to "rig" their own planning application for a UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** Big Ideas is being funded to encourage local and national conversations on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. The planning decision sits with Westminster Council.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-01/HL16811/>

**TOP**

## **Israel**

### **House of Commons Written Answer**

#### **Israeli Settlements: Imports**

**Lisa Nandy (Labour)** [272169] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will take steps to tackle the import to the UK of products from illegal settlements in the Palestinian Occupied Territories.

**Andrew Murrison:** There are currently no plans for UK legislation to ban the import of products from illegal settlements. We do not however recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs), including the settlements, as part of Israel. In order to enable consumers to make a more fully informed decision concerning the products they buy, in December 2009 the UK introduced voluntary guidelines to enable produce from Israeli settlements in the OPTs to be specifically labelled as such. We understand that multiple British retailers who have stocked settlement produce have adopted the labelling policy recommended in the Department for

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs voluntary guidance.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-02/272169/>

## House of Lords Written Answers

### Israel: Palestinians

**The Lord Bishop of Leeds** [HL16761] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will now recognise Palestinian statehood, following the launch of the United States' Prosperity to Peace initiative.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are clear that we want to see the creation of a sovereign, independent, and viable Palestinian state - living in peace and security, side by side with Israel. The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-06-27/HL16761/>

### Israel: Palestinians

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL16850] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister of State for the Middle East on 18 June (HC266244), what assessment they have made of the number of Palestinian children who have been killed or injured as a result of the conflict between Israel and Palestine; and what criteria they use to assess whether the use of self-defence by Israel is legitimate.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While we have not made any assessment on the numbers of Palestinian children killed or injured, we are very concerned by any instance of Palestinian children being killed or injured by Israel Defence Forces in the West Bank and Gaza. We have publicly and privately expressed our longstanding concerns about the use of live ammunition and excessive force by the Israel Defence Forces and encourage independent and transparent investigations when deaths occur. We continue to urge Israel to provide the necessary protections for Palestinian children living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We are also clear that Israel has the legitimate right to self-defence, and the right to defend their citizens from attack. In doing so, it is vital that all actions are proportionate, in line with International Humanitarian Law, and are calibrated to avoid civilian casualties.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-01/HL16850/>

TOP

## Foreign Affairs

### House of Lords Oral Answers

#### Commemoration: Victims of Religious Violence

**Baroness Berridge (Conservative):** To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to recognise the newly designated United Nations Day for commemorating the victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief on 22 August. ...

**Baroness Goldie:** My Lords, the Government are deeply concerned at both the scale and severity of acts of violence based on religion or belief. We very much

welcome the newly established United Nations Day for commemorating the victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief. The United Kingdom was proud to co-sponsor the resolution establishing this day. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office will issue guidance to posts suggesting ways in which they may wish to mark 22 August, and my noble friend Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon will attend a parliamentary event later this month to mark the day.

**Baroness Berridge:** ... as the day has only recently been designated, it is quite tricky in relation to 22 August this year. However, next year is also the 400th anniversary of the embarkation of the “Mayflower” during the late summer of 1620, so would it not be appropriate for Her Majesty’s Government to use this anniversary of victims of religious intolerance fleeing England to devote resources to drawing attention to today’s victims of acts of violence against religion or belief on this newly designated day?

**Baroness Goldie:** My Lords, my noble friend makes a most interesting suggestion that merits exploration. There is a symmetry in fact that nearly 400 years ago pilgrims left this country for the new world to practise their faith freely, and today we celebrate freedom of religion or belief proudly and with passion—not least because the newly designated United Nations Day of 22 August firmly places this issue on the global radar screen.

**Lord Collins of Highbury (Labour):** My Lords, it is a sad fact that tomorrow, 11 July, marks the day in 1995 when more than 8,500 men and young boys were massacred in Srebrenica. Will the Minister say what we are going to do tomorrow to commemorate those victims of such a terrible crime?

**Baroness Goldie:** I thank the noble Lord, who refers to a tragic and deeply distressing incident from that past time. The United Nations designated day for commemorating the victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief on 22 August of this year is one way, along with others, of remembering where such atrocities occurred. It is the case that, as I said earlier, the United Kingdom was one of the co-sponsors of the resolution establishing that day, and certainly we look forward to working with our global partners as we commemorate and remember these terrible acts of violence.

**Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench):** My Lords, has the Minister noted that the independent inquiry report, commissioned by the Foreign Secretary and published on Monday, stated that the persecution of 250 million people was, “the most shocking abuse of human rights in the modern era”.

Will the Minister tell us whether special attention will be paid to the inquiry’s recommendation that a Foreign and Commonwealth Office review should take place of the way in which people are held to account and brought to justice for persecution, crimes against humanity and genocide?

**Baroness Goldie:** First of all, in relation to the independent review, we are very grateful to the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Truro for that hard-hitting report—and it is hard hitting—and for its ambitious recommendations. As the noble Lord will be aware, a number of the recommendations reach beyond the FCO and across government departments. I can reassure him that we are working across government to agree a formal, collective response as soon as possible.

**The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford:** My Lords, perhaps I may say that, on behalf of many of us, we welcome the Government’s support for this day, although we hugely grieve for the fact that such a day is necessary. One of the best ways that we will tackle continuing violence, based on religion or belief, in the long run will be through education. I wonder whether Her Majesty’s Government are planning or investing in the training of educators and religious leaders from countries where there are high levels of freedom of religion or belief violations, so that we can promote respect and peaceful coexistence. This would be a very profitable investment.

**Baroness Goldie:** I thank the right reverend Prelate, who makes an extremely

important point. To reassure him, the Government agree with his assessment. Indeed, education is key to our work on freedom of religion or belief. ...

**Lord Beith (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, among the recommendations made specifically to the Foreign Office by the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Truro in his report were that there should be a spreading of real understanding about the role of religion within the department—and indeed, in some other departments—and that overseas posts should not confine themselves to talking to the establishment religious leaders but should seek out those who are vulnerable because of their religious faith and make sure that they are communicating with them. Are those the sorts of things the Foreign Office will do?

**Baroness Goldie:** That encapsulates the general concept of training, and the noble Lord is absolutely right that training is vital in how we address issues in these difficult and sensitive situations. The FCO has been extending training on the influence of faith in foreign policy, and we have commissioned the LSE Faith Centre to deliver a training course on religious literacy and we are introducing a series of regular seminars. We also invite other government departments, including DfID, to join this training.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-07-10/debates/41C7EAFD-D4C1-41BE-9234-62DF44E7F2BD/CommemorationVictimsOfReligiousViolence>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://christianpersecutionreview.org.uk/storage/2019/07/final-report-and-recommendations.pdf>

TOP

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

### UK Parliament

#### **\*\* Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/divorcedissolutionandseparation.html>

House of Commons Library briefing paper

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8594/CBP-8594.pdf>

House of Commons Library briefing paper: Committee Stage Report

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8618/CBP-8618.pdf>

#### **International Development Assistance (Palestinian National Authority Schools) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/internationaldevelopmentassistancepalestiniannationalauthoritieschools.html>

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

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

#### **Online Forums Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.html>

#### **Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/palestinianstatehoodrecognition.html>

TOP

## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**Opt-out organ donation: organs and tissues excluded from the new system** (closing date 22 July 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/opt-out-organ-donation-organs-and-tissues-excluded-from-the-new-system>

**Civil Partnerships: Next Steps Conversion** (closing date 20 August 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/civil-partnerships-next-steps-and-consultation-on-conversion>

**Regulation of pre-paid funeral plans** (closing date 25 August 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/regulation-of-pre-paid-funeral-plans-consultation-on-a-policy-proposal>

**Islamophobia in Scotland** (closing date 26 August 2019)

<https://forms.ncl.ac.uk/view.php?id=13027>

TOP

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