Political Affairs Digest
A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Home Affairs

House of Lords Written Answers

Radicalism

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL9705] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Sharpe of Epsom on 27 June (HL8551), what criteria are used to determine whether groups or individuals have a “far right outlook”.

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Intelligence & Security Committee's 2022 report on Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism (ERWT) considers “far-right political outlook” as “views that Western civilisations are under threat from ‘non-native’ people and ideas.”

The report categorises ERWT as ‘Cultural Nationalism’, ‘White Nationalism’ and ‘White Supremacism’.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-25/hl9705

The answer referred to above can be read at
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-15/hl8551

The report referred to above can be read at

Schools and Teachers: Harassment

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL9702] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Barran on 13 July (HL8942), how many incidents of bomb threats to schools or death threats to teachers there have been in the past 10 years; and how many of those threats were made by Islamist individuals or groups.

Baroness Barran: The department is unable to comment on individual cases as the police are responsible for investigating such incidents and will take action where they deem appropriate.

Where the department is made aware of incidents of this nature, the local authority and the police will be engaged where appropriate to seek assurances and offer support to schools.
The department’s school and college security guidance provides advice and support to the sector including how to deal with bomb threats. The guidance is available at:

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-25/hl9702

The answer referred to above can be read at
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-29/hl8942

Batley Grammar School: Harassment

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL9703] To ask His Majesty’s Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Sharpe of Epsom on 13 July (HL8940), whether they have taken any action to protect teachers from any threats to their safety made by Islamist groups.

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Government remains focused on supporting those who stand up to extremism.

We keep our response to extremism under constant review to ensure it is best placed to tackle the evolving threat. Alongside the police, we regularly review potential threats to ensure as are doing everything we can to protect our communities.

Advice on the safety of individuals is a matter for the police.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-25/hl9703

The answer referred to above can be read at
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-29/hl8940

Holocaust

Council of Europe

European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day:
Statement by Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić

... Today, we commemorate European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day and pay tribute to the 3,000 Roma – mainly women and children – who were ruthlessly murdered in the dark of the night at Auschwitz-Birkenau. We must never forget how hatred, exploitation and stigmatisation led to this mass killing 79 years ago today. Remembrance serves to restore dignity and justice to victims and to the community.

The Council of Europe is committed to ensuring Roma inclusion and supporting its member states to establish and maintain safeguards for Roma communities.

Last year, our member States adopted a Recommendation on combating hate speech, which provides guidance to national authorities and key actors on how to put in place an overarching set of legal and non-legal measures to address this challenge. …

"History teaching and Roma Holocaust remembrance not only strengthen the identity of the Roma, but also provide essential context that can help to learn from the past.

"Roma have a right that all of us must defend: the right to remember."

To read the full statement see
https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/europ
Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

By honouring the memory of Roma genocide victims we help fight discrimination today, OSCE human rights head says

... “Today we remember the Roma and Sinti who were vilified, targeted, and murdered by the Nazi regime simply for who they were,” said ODIHR Director Matteo Mecacci. “By commemorating the victims of the Roma genocide, we do not only honour their memory, but stand against the discrimination and hatred that many Roma face to this day.”

It was on 2 August 1944 that 4,300 Sinti and Roma were murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau. …

ODIHR recently joined other international organisations including the United Nations and the European Commission in #ProtectTheFacts. This global campaign to combat Holocaust distortion was developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, and emphasises that downplaying any crimes of the Nazi regime and its collaborators is an insult both to victims and survivors. …

To read the full press release see https://www.osce.org/odihr/549346

Israel

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL9334] To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Israel about the proportionality of the Israeli forces air strikes and ground operations in Jenin on 3 and 4 July; and what steps they have taken to urge an immediate de-escalation on both sides in the current cycle of violence between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: In his discussion with Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen on 5 July, the Foreign Secretary urged the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to act with discipline and restraint and he urged the Government of Israel to ensure the protection of Palestinian civilians. He also expressed concern about reports of an attack on civilian infrastructure and said that these should be publicly investigated. The Foreign Secretary also discussed the importance of de-escalating recent violence in the West Bank in his call with Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh later that same day. Israeli armed forces' conduct must always be in line with international humanitarian law, including the principles of proportionality, distinction and necessity.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-13/hl9334

Jerusalem: Evictions

Baronetess Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL9454] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement made by the UN on 12 July that: "The forced eviction and displacement of the Ghaith-Sub Laban family and many other Palestinian families in east Jerusalem may amount to a war crime of forcible transfer".

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and evictions are contrary to international humanitarian law. As David Rutley, Minister of State for the Americas and the Caribbean said in Parliament on 18 July, the practice causes unnecessary suffering and is harmful to efforts to promote peace. The UK is appalled by the eviction of the Ghaith-Sub
Laban family from their home of over 70 years in the Old City of Jerusalem. Any judgment on whether serious crimes under international law have occurred is a matter for judicial decision, rather than for governments or non-judicial bodies.


The Minister's comments referred to above can be read at https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-07-18/debates/CAE81580-310A-4884-991D-68ABC4CA687B/IsraelAndTheOccupiedPalestinianTerritories#contribution-4A858351-E210-42B1-ADF46-010D729D871C

Occupied Territories

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL9457] To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to monitor, and (2) to support, investigations into all potential serious violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; and what discussions they have had with government of Israel about the consequences of further violations.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law, and we have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation. As the occupying power, we urge Israel to fulfil its responsibilities, including ensuring the protection of the civilian population. I [Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister of State for the Middle East] made this clear most recently in a meeting with the Israeli chargé d'affaires on July 4.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-18/hl9457

The following two questions both received the same answer

Occupied Territories: Health Services

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL9455] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessments they have made of the reported attacks on healthcare facilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL9456] To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, in partnership with the international community, to protect Palestinian civilians and healthcare personnel.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The work of healthcare workers across the globe is vital and they must be protected when carrying out their critical work. During his call on 4 July with the Israeli chargé d'affaires in London, the Minister of State for the Middle East, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, urged Israel to safeguard access to healthcare and take proactive steps to guarantee the safety of civilians during Israeli operations in the West Bank. When the Foreign Secretary spoke with Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen on July 5, he raised the UK's concerns about attacks on civilian infrastructure during their recent operation in Jenin.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-18/hl9455
and
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-18/hl9456
**Relevant Legislation** ** new or updated today**

**UK Parliament**

- **Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3475](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3475)

- **Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3186](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3186)

- **Holocaust Memorial Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421)

- **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3325](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3325)

- **Online Safety Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137)

- **Nakba Commemoration Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3461](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3461)

- **Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3217](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3217)

- **Private Burial Grounds and Cemeteries Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3188](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3188)

- **Same Sex Marriage (Church of England)**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3438](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3438)

- **Schools Bill**
  [https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156)
The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438

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

**Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill**
[https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163)

**Universal Jurisdiction (Extension)**
[https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3454](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3454)

**Scottish Parliament**

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

**Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill**

**Consultations**

**Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill** (closing date not specified – no later than 14 September 2023 but may be earlier)

**UK international development white paper** (closing date 16 September 2023)

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

**The future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales** (closing date 26 October 2023)
[https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/](https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/)