

# Be fair – allow Israeli speakers on campus, university is urged

BY ADAM CAILLER



HERITAGE: Centre director Emma King, Heinz Skyte and Simon Jackson

## This history is my life, says Heinz

HOLOCAUST survivor Heinz Skyte has lent his letters, photographs and documents to the new Holocaust Heritage and Learning Centre, which will open next year.

Based at the University of Huddersfield, the story of the Shoah will be told through an exhibition featuring historical artefacts and the stories of those who experienced it.

Mr Skyte, 97, narrowly escaped Kristallnacht and saw his father sent to Dachau concentration camp.

Mr Skyte said: "To the visitors who come here this is perhaps just history, but to me it is my life.

"It is important for me to share these items with the centre, as they are evidence for the events of the Holocaust.

"Everybody thought the Holocaust was unique and everybody said 'never again', but it's still happening.

"We still have ethnic cleansing and that's why it is important that British youngsters know about what happened and that, by learning from it, generations to come will prevent it from ever happening again."

The centre has already received support from a host of benefactors, including funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund of more than £600,000.

The scheme, backed by the University of Huddersfield, Pears Foundation and the Association of Jewish Refugees, has also received support from regional businesses.

## Students pitch in

THE Board of Deputies and World Jewish Congress have launched the Campus Pitch project, in association with the Union of Jewish Students.

It will see teams of students pitch for £5,000 investment in a project they will run to benefit their Jewish community.

Submissions can be made at [London.campuspitch.org](http://London.campuspitch.org)

## NORTH West Friends of Israel has called on Manchester University to be "consistent" in allowing Israeli speakers on campus.

The call came after the former vice-chairman of Labour splinter group Momentum, Jackie Walker, took her one-woman show *The Lynching* to the Oxford Road-based campus.

In the show, Ms Walker, who is currently suspended from the party, talks about her experiences as a black "Jewish woman in Labour" as well as the "struggle to bring the Palestinian narrative into the mainstream and fight openly for Palestinian rights".

The show has been criticised for belittling antisemitism within the party.

But a university spokesman told the *Jewish Telegraph* that the event was reviewed under the "Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech" and allowed to go ahead, although controls such as ticketing for students only was agreed before the event could take place.

He said: "The university recognises that freedom of speech and expression within the law is of fundamental importance for universities."

Vice-chairman of NWFOI Stuart Ailion told the *JT*: "Jackie Walker has fre-



WALKER: 'Abhorrent remarks deeply offensive'

quently made abhorrent remarks that are grossly offensive to the Jewish community.

"She has accused Jewish people of being 'financiers of the sugar and slave trade', she has questioned government-accepted definitions of antisemitism and made disparaging remarks about Holocaust Memorial Day.

"She also attempts to hide alleged antisemitism by referencing her partial Jewish lineage.

"However, NWFOI does not agree to curtailing the rights of free speech in

an open and democratic society.

"We sincerely hope that the university applies its legal obligations consistently when Israeli speakers are invited on campus."

He added: "It is our view that Jackie Walker faces robust challenge in debate and we are sure that any Jewish students registered to attend the event expressed their opposition to her vitriol in the appropriate manner."

A spokesman for the Union of Jewish Students told the *JT* that they had been working with the Jewish students on campus to ensure they feel safe.

He said: "Jackie Walker is currently suspended by a major UK political party.

"UJS' priority is to ensure that Jewish students feel safe on their campuses and we have therefore been supporting Manchester J-Soc, working with them as well as the Students' Union and the university.

"Together we have ensured that the appropriate provisions — including venue and ticketing arrangements — were in place for this event."

Labour MP John Mann slammed her performance of the show during last month's Labour Party conference as a "sad and miserable way of hiding from antisemitism".

And he said she was ignoring the "vicious and persistent attacks on Jewish MPs and on young Jewish Labour Party members".

## Poll finds Israel is important ally

THE level of warmth of British people towards Israel is at its highest level for seven years, a new poll has found.

Half of the 2,021 people surveyed by the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre and Pupulus agreed Israel is an important British ally in the fight against terror — more than for every other Middle Eastern country in the survey.

Israel is now considered, according to the poll, to be the fourth most important trading partner after Brexit, with only Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey considered more important.

The survey recorded the lowest level of support for boycotts since 2014, at 11 per cent, while 48 per cent of respondents "do not support boycotts of Israel and find it difficult to understand how others do given everything else that is going on in the world".

Around 48 per cent of those surveyed believe that "hating Israel and questioning its right to exist" is antisemitic.



## BBC man: Don't feel besieged

THE BBC'S Nick Robinson, above, told guests at Reform Judaism's annual dinner "do not feel besieged".

Referring to a recent report by the Community Security Trust and Jewish Policy Research, the BBC's former political editor noted that Britain is "one of the least antisemitic countries in the world" and that we must recognise that "hatred, anger and fear affects many, many people beyond the Jewish community".

He also paid tribute to his German Jewish refugee grandparents, noting that his Jewish heritage is something that is becoming more important to him as he grows older.

**LABOUR MP Ivan Lewis received praise from Foreign Office Middle East minister Alistair Burt during a Commons debate on the Balfour Declaration, writes JERRY LEWIS.**

**The Bury South MP strongly attacked those in the Labour Party who questioned Israel and its policies.**

**Mr Burt said Britain was proud to mark the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, though it was tinged with a "degree of sadness" that the issues between Israel and the Palestinians**

## Minister's praise for Labour MP

**remain "unresolved". ■ A WOMAN has been found guilty of helping her husband to plan a terror attack in Birmingham, including on the city's Central Synagogue.**

**Madinah Taheer bought a combat knife for husband Ummariyat Mirza.**

**They will be sentenced next week.**

## Pupils' parents need to understand legal rationale for claiming any gift aid

BY RABBI DAVID MEYER,

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS FOR JEWISH SCHOOLS

OVER the last few years, a group of professionals have been working behind the scenes to ensure that our Jewish state schools — and parents — are able to continue to claim gift aid relief on voluntary donations/contributions.

This has been an important campaign for the community, despite the fact that this is not just an issue affecting Jewish state schools.

Over the past few years, with increasingly challenging financial constraints on all UK state schools nationwide, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, faith or non-faith, more and more of them have looked to the parents for financial support.

The ability to claim gift aid on these voluntary donations has been of immense value to all state schools in this situation.

It is important for everyone to understand the legal rationale for claiming gift aid and to ensure that schools remain compliant.

While HMRC has removed its objections at the present time, it will be no doubt looking to see that individual schools are following the gift aid rules precisely, so it is essential that these guidelines are strictly adhered to.

In an ideal world, the government would provide sufficient funding for our schools.

However, in reality, especially given the cost of technological advances, this is become increasingly difficult.

I once met a parent who was reason-

ably wealthy and although he gave a donation to his son's school, he told me he refused to give a more significant donation as he was unhappy with the education his son was receiving.

He was, however, donating to other good causes across the community.

What he needed to fully understand is that if we want better provision for our children then, as a community, we need to support our schools.

At the forefront must be the parents, who have the primary responsibility to educate their children and rely on the school to deliver this.

We are blessed to be living in a country that values education and provides good quality state-funded education for all children.

However, this can be a double-edged sword and there is a danger that parents will have a sense of expectation that will offset their parental responsibilities to the school.

There is no doubt that parents play a key role in the educational success of their children. However, this support cannot be limited to the home.

We need to be active partners, supporting our schools. Indeed, it should be a badge of honour, showing that we care about our future and are willing to invest in it.

[www.pajes.org.uk](http://www.pajes.org.uk)