

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OFFICIAL REPORT  
GENERAL COMMITTEES

Public Bill Committee

## HOLOCAUST (RETURN OF CULTURAL OBJECTS) (AMENDMENT) BILL

*First Sitting*

*Wednesday 27 February 2019*

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### CONTENTS

CLAUSES 1 AND 2 agreed to.  
Bill to be reported, without amendment.

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**Sunday 3 March 2019**

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**The Committee consisted of the following Members:***Chair: SIR DAVID CRAUSBY*

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| † Blackman, Bob ( <i>Harrow East</i> ) (Con)   | † Mann, John ( <i>Bassetlaw</i> ) (Lab)              |
| † Brennan, Kevin ( <i>Cardiff West</i> ) (Lab)   | † Masterton, Paul ( <i>East Renfrewshire</i> ) (Con) |
| † Brown, Lyn ( <i>West Ham</i> ) (Lab)   | † Offord, Dr Matthew ( <i>Hendon</i> ) (Con)         |
| † Cameron, Dr Lisa ( <i>East Kilbride, Strathaven and<br/>Lesmahagow</i> ) (SNP)                             | † Percy, Andrew ( <i>Brigg and Goole</i> ) (Con)     |
| † Caulfield, Maria ( <i>Lewes</i> ) (Con)  | Smeeth, Ruth ( <i>Stoke-on-Trent North</i> ) (Lab)   |
| † Docherty, Leo ( <i>Aldershot</i> ) (Con)   | † Spellar, John ( <i>Warley</i> ) (Lab)              |
| † Ellis, Michael ( <i>Parliamentary Under-Secretary of<br/>State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport</i> ) | † Streeting, Wes ( <i>Ilford North</i> ) (Lab)       |
| † Howell, John ( <i>Henley</i> ) (Con)   | † Villiers, Theresa ( <i>Chipping Barnet</i> ) (Con) |
| † Linden, David ( <i>Glasgow East</i> ) (SNP)  | Adam Mellows-Facer, <i>Committee Clerk</i>           |
|  | † <b>attended the Committee</b>                      |

## Public Bill Committee

Wednesday 27 February 2019

[SIR DAVID CRAUSBY *in the Chair*]

### **Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill**

2.30 pm

**The Chair:** Welcome to the Public Bill Committee on the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill. May I ask that those present switch their electronic devices to silent? I have already done mine.

#### **Clause 1**

HOLOCAUST (RETURN OF CULTURAL OBJECTS) ACT  
2009: REPEAL OF SUNSET PROVISION

*Question proposed,* That the clause stand part of the Bill.

**The Chair:** With this it will be convenient to consider clause 2 stand part.

**Theresa Villiers** (Chipping Barnet) (Con): May I say what a pleasure it is to serve under your chairmanship, Sir David? I thank all Members present for agreeing to serve on the Committee.

This is a simple two-clause Bill with a simple objective: to retain on the statute book the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act 2009. Section 4(7) of that statute is a sunset clause, and means that the legislation will cease to apply after 11 November this year. Clause 1 of the Bill would repeal section 4(7) and thus leave the 2009 Act to continue in operation indefinitely. This private Member's Bill enjoyed strong cross-party support when it was introduced as a ten-minute rule Bill and on Second Reading. No amendments have been tabled.

For the following reasons, I hope the Committee will feel able to support the passage of Bill to Report and Third Reading on Friday 15 March. The 2009 Act was introduced as a private Member's Bill by Andrew Dismore, the then Member of Parliament for Hendon. Mr Dismore was noted for talking out many such Bills, but thankfully on that occasion he was strongly supportive. He was backed by both sides of the House, and by the other place. His legislation allows 17 UK national museums and other institutions listed in section 1 to return cultural property lost, seized or stolen during the Nazi era to its rightful owners. Those institutions include the British Museum, the British Library and the National Galleries of Scotland.

Property can be returned following a recommendation by the Spoliation Advisory Panel, with the agreement of the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. That panel of experts was established in 2000 by the Government to advise on claims for cultural objects lost or stolen during the Nazi era. It formed part of the follow-up to the historic Washington conference, where 44 Governments pledged to redouble and renew their efforts to return cultural property removed during that era, defined as 1933 to 1945.

Until the 2009 Act became law, certain national institutions were unable to give effect to a recommendation to return an object, because their governing legislation prevented them from transferring ownership of items in their collection, except in very narrow, specified circumstances. An example of that kind of legal constraint can be found in section 5 of the British Museum Act 1963.

Clause 2 covers territorial scope and commencement. The 2009 Act and the Bill both extend to England, Wales and Scotland, but not to Northern Ireland. A number of the institutions specified in section 1 of the 2009 Act are located in Scotland. I am pleased to inform the Committee that a legislative consent motion has been passed by the Scottish Parliament in relation to the Bill, and I am very grateful to the devolved Government for their support. None of the institutions covered by the 2009 Act is located in Wales or Northern Ireland, so no legislative consent motion is necessary from those parts of the United Kingdom.

Although much information is available about the items held in our national art collections, research into the provenance of items that changed hands during the Nazi era is ongoing, and potential claimants may still be unaware of the location of objects that used to be in the possession of their families. I also emphasise that the narrow and specific nature of the 2009 Act means that it has not had a destabilising effect on collections held in our national museums, with only a modest number of cases being determined under its provisions, and nor has this narrowly drawn piece of legislation had an impact on wider debates about the potential return of cultural objects to their countries of origin. There is widespread acceptance that the horror of the holocaust and the systematic attempt to wipe out an entire race and its culture make it a unique case that justifies a unique response.

There is significant support for retention of the 2009 Act among the museum community. For example, Sir Nicholas Serota, the former director of the Tate Gallery, has said:

"In recent years, new claims have become less frequent, but there is a strong moral case to remove the 'sunset' clause that provides for a time limit on cases being considered. It is important that potential claimants should not feel that the door is being slammed in their face."

The Government expressed support for keeping the legislation on the statute book at the London spoliation conference in September 2017, and that announcement was warmly received. The Commission for Looted Art in Europe, which does excellent work in this area, has also given its backing to the legislation that is under consideration today.

I hope I have been able to outline clearly how this two-clause Bill will operate and why it should be supported today. In closing, I reflect on Second Reading, when hon. Members spoke movingly about the important reasons they had for supporting the Bill. A number of them made the point that, in addition to the appalling mass murder that took place, the Nazi persecution of Jewish people involved a deliberate and systematic attempt to wipe out all trace of Jewish culture. As my hon. Friend the Member for Torbay (Kevin Foster) put it:

"We must remember that the goal of the Nazis was not just to murder their victims, but to annihilate all trace of them... They did not just murder those who were living; they demolished cemeteries, burned down synagogues and sought to erase the

entire culture from Europe. That is why it is so important that where these artefacts are preserved and retained, they are returned, so that they can be exhibited and be shown by families again as a reminder of what once existed.”—[*Official Report*, 8 February 2019; Vol. 654, c. 562.]

I believe that provides a powerful summary of why this Bill is needed, and I close my remarks, as I did on Second Reading, by quoting a family involved in this type of case. One family seeking restoration of property told the Commission for Looted Art:

“Whether it’s a painting or a book or a porcelain jar, every object represents the life and lives that were lost. Their restitution restores a personal connection, a link with those lives so utterly transformed or destroyed by the Nazis. Hitler’s project was to erase the Jews from history. But by recovering objects and documenting their owners, restitution also returns those people to their families and to the historical record.”

There is no justification for applying an arbitrary time limit to the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act 2009. That legislation has worked well and it is still needed, and I commend this Bill to the Committee.

**Lyn Brown** (West Ham) (Lab): As we all know, the theme of Holocaust Memorial Day this year was being “Torn from home”. In the speech I made that day, I took the opportunity to speak about the way the Nazis’ attacks on Jewish people began slowly and escalated painfully. The attacks on lives were harrowing, because each new law, each new confiscation and each new theft of property was compounded by the awful, awful events that followed. We talked about how being torn from home was about the destruction of a whole way of life and a whole culture.

Of course, what was lost can never really be recovered, but we have a duty to respect, to remember and to understand that history, and to keep those memories alive. That takes a lot of work. Tragically, it is important to say that that work has never been more important than it is today. Each year, we lose more survivors of the holocaust—people of exemplary courage, resilience and moral fortitude who have suffered so much. We lose those who have taught us so much about not only the horrors they were subjected to but the ways in which the disease of antisemitism spreads: through lies and conspiracy, through baseless and manipulative accusations of disloyalty, and through an insidious, creeping and escalating dehumanisation of a people.

In recent years, we have seen a sharp rise in antisemitism across Europe, at home in our communities and, tragically, in our political parties. On the Friday we discussed this excellent Bill, other hon. Members mentioned the Community Security Trust, a group that I admire and thank. It has provided me with so much personal support in the work I have done over the years on community cohesion. The trust has released its report on antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2018, in which it has recorded a massive 1,652 incidents. That is the highest annual figure on record—more than 100 incidents every single month. I can only imagine how scary that must be.

We must all redouble our efforts to reject the politics of fear, division and conspiracy. As the right hon. Member for Chipping Barnet said better than I, that change starts here, and it continues with this Bill. In that spirit, we are expecting to have a new holocaust memorial near Westminster in 2022, and like other hon. Members here today, I hope it will be very near here. The Imperial War Museum is due to open a new permanent holocaust gallery in 2021, which I also warmly welcome.

Returning stolen cultural objects wherever possible is an important part of this project. Returning artworks and cultural objects is not just about undoing the past but about recognising it and, frankly, about justice. Millions of people had their lives and their futures stolen by the holocaust, but we must remember that property was stolen too, and tens of thousands of objects stolen at that time are likely to remain hidden. Ultimately, we do not know how many cultural objects stolen and looted from the Jewish community by the Nazis are still in collections here or how many have not been returned within the lifetime of the 2009 Act so far.

That is why it is absolutely right that the Act is extended by this important Bill. The destruction wielded by the holocaust was intended to destroy a culture, a history and all the rich memories of that culture, that history and that people. For those who have lost family, the testimonies show what an important emotional experience it can be to have possessions returned to them. It is right that the named 17 institutions are able to make these experiences possible, as I am sure they will all want to.

In my final remarks, I pay tribute to the right hon. Member for Chipping Barnet, who has spoken so passionately and articulately about this Bill, for her tireless work on this issue. We must all ensure that what was stolen and can still be returned is returned, and we must create every single chance for some fragments of justice—however small in comparison with the enormous injustice of the holocaust—to be done.

**Paul Masterton** (East Renfrewshire) (Con): I want to speak briefly, partly to put on record my thanks and the thanks of the Jewish community in East Renfrewshire to my right hon. Friend the Member for Chipping Barnet for bringing this Bill forward.

More than 50% of Scotland’s Jewish community live in East Renfrewshire, and I can say without hesitation that this Bill has their unequivocal support. The local Jewish community strongly opposed the sunset clause when it was first introduced, partly for the reasons explored in today’s debate. It is no surprise that claims are still coming forward only sporadically; given that some holocaust survivors have only recently found living family members, it is hardly surprising that it has taken longer and been harder to find objects that were in their families’ possession.

There is a worry that if holocaust survivors or their heirs were prevented from having property restored to them simply because they became aware of an object’s continued existence and location only after several decades, we would be doing a huge disservice to all those who lost their lives in the holocaust. As was explored by the hon. Member for West Ham, a completely arbitrary time bar entrenches one aspect of the holocaust in perpetuity. Property was stolen, expropriated, forced to be sold or transferred under duress, with the sole intention of destroying any memory of the Jews, their culture and their history. Being able to continue to return property is a very small part of what is a hugely important process for our Jewish communities.

2.45 pm

I reiterate my complete support for this Bill, and the thanks of the Jewish community in East Renfrewshire to my right hon. Friend the Member for Chipping Barnet and all Members who have been so supportive of the Bill in its progress through the House.

**David Linden** (Glasgow East) (SNP): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Sir David. Like the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire, I rise briefly to offer my full support for this Bill and to the right hon. Member for Chipping Barnet.

On a day when, sadly, the reputation of this House has once again been brought into disrepute by offensive comments about the Jewish community, we are reminded again of the horrors of the holocaust and its devastating consequences. It is estimated that 20% of Europe's cultural treasures were stolen by the Nazis, most notably from Jewish families, and that over 100,000 of those works are still lost, presumed to be in both private and public collections.

Even though many of the survivors are now passing away, their children and heirs still want the transparency, accountability and justice that was promised, and the restitution of what was taken and never returned. I welcome the fact that Her Majesty's Government and the House have recommitted to this issue, and I am pleased to support the Bill that is before the Committee. I wish it a speedy passage.

**Andrew Percy** (Brigg and Goole) (Con): I will make a small contribution to, of course, support the legislation, but also to pay particular tribute to my right hon. Friend the Member for Chipping Barnet for her work on this issue.

As the hon. Member for West Ham referenced, the Bill offers us an opportunity for further education. At a time when the scale of holocaust denial is rising, both in this country and across Europe and the world, we have an opportunity to once again explain the full horrors of the holocaust, including, of course, the concentration camps and the dehumanisation of people, but also the dispossession of people in such an inhumane way.

While we are on that subject, I pay particular tribute to the Czech Memorial Scrolls Museum at Westminster synagogue—the synagogue that I attend—which demonstrates what that theft of property resulted in. It contains 1,100 scrolls that were stolen by the Nazis and recovered after the war. Those scrolls were preserved for one reason only: so that once the Nazis had concluded their murder and killing of the Jewish community, they could create a sick museum to a wiped-out and eradicated race of people.

That decision by the Nazis was totally disgusting, but those scrolls are now in the possession of the Czech Memorial Scrolls Museum, and they are used for educational purposes. They could not be returned to their communities, because those communities do not exist anymore. Those scrolls are used in services all around the world, and now act as a reminder of the horror, hate and theft undertaken by the Nazis. I encourage all right hon. and hon. Members to visit that museum and to encourage that educational work to continue. This legislation is limited and narrow, but it is so important, and it offers us another opportunity for education.

**Dr Lisa Cameron** (East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow) (SNP): It is a pleasure to rise, albeit briefly, to support this important Bill and to once again thank the right hon. Member for Chipping Barnet for having brought it forward. She has been assiduous in doing so, and in all the other work she does in the

House against antisemitism. The strength of support across parties for her Bill, and also against antisemitism, is a credit to her.

I support the Bill legally, morally and in terms of justice. Justice cannot be time-barred, and remembering the holocaust cannot be time-barred either. It is important that we pass that on to future generations, and that future generations also have the opportunity of restitution. As the hon. Member for Brigg and Goole just said, it is unfortunate that so many people seek to deny the holocaust. It is therefore important that we work together to put in place measures such as this and, collectively, to do all we can, and all that is right, to ensure that it does not happen.

Antisemitism is on the rise in society and in politics, from the left and the right. I have experienced it myself. All party leaders must act—I have said that before, and I say it again. As parliamentarians, it is important that we act. Today, we act together and send out a strong signal that there is collective cross-party support for the Bill, not just in the UK Parliament in Westminster, but in our Scottish Parliament. I wholeheartedly thank everybody who has been involved.

**Kevin Brennan** (Cardiff West) (Lab): I thank everyone who has spoken, including my hon. Friend the Member for West Ham. I also thank my hon. Friends the Members for Bassetlaw and for Ilford North, who are here in support of the Bill and who have done tremendous work themselves in this area over the years.

I congratulate the right hon. Member for Chipping Barnet on bringing this important Bill to Committee. I am happy to confirm that it has the full support of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition. She spoke once again with great force and authority on this issue. In doing so, she does a great service to not only the British Jewish community and the Jewish community throughout the world but humanity as a whole. The Bill says that the sun should never set on justice and righteousness, and that principle, despite its application to the uniquely horrifying episode that was the holocaust, nevertheless carries universal force in its message of human redemption.

I was privileged some years ago to travel with a group of MPs, prominent figures and sixth-formers to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau. It was one of many such visits organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust, led by its inspirational chief executive Karen Pollock and supported by the then Government. I am glad to say that the scheme exists to this day. Anyone who has undertaken that visit could not help but be horrified by the capacity for human depravity exemplified in the industrialisation of death at the Birkenau death camp, or to be moved to renew their pledge to fight antisemitism and oppose the politics of racism and hatred. The Bill is a small practical manifestation of the fulfilment of that duty, and I thank the right hon. Lady for piloting it thus far.

I also pay tribute, as the right hon. Lady did, to the work done by Andrew Dismore, the former Member of Parliament for Hendon and a current London Assembly member. He was rightly praised by the shadow Culture Secretary, my hon. Friend the Member for West Bromwich East (Tom Watson), on Second Reading. Andrew Dismore worked tirelessly to get the original Act, which the Bill seeks to extend, through the House in 2009—even sleeping

on the floor of the Public Bill Office overnight, as one used to have to do, to ensure that he had a high enough place in the ballot to get his Bill heard.

Andrew Dismore also introduced the private Member's Bill that established Holocaust Memorial Day in 2001. I recently attended the Welsh national Holocaust Memorial Day event in Cardiff city hall, and other hon. Members will have attended their own events. We heard from the First Minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford, and from Renate Collins, who was "torn from home", which was the theme of Holocaust Memorial Day, as my hon. Friend the Member for West Ham said. As a child, Renate Collins was evacuated from Prague in 1939, and she came to live in Wales, where she still lives.

As we know, the holocaust was one of the worst events in human history, with millions of lives extinguished and millions more changed forever. The fact that it happened on our continent, in the heart of western civilisation, is a reminder of why we must be constantly vigilant against antisemitism and all forms of racism and remember that genocide starts with casual prejudice—in the dehumanisation of others who are deemed different by virtue of religion, ethnicity, lifestyle or sexuality. That such horror could be perpetrated, not just by those directly involved, but because of the indifference of others in the general population, should make us all reflect on what Hannah Arendt called the banality of evil and on our own roles in actively preventing it from taking root. Let us give thanks to the important work of all organisations that ensure that the world will never forget.

The Bill addresses an extremely important subject: the return of cultural objects looted by the Nazis. During the Nazi reign of terror, millions of precious cultural objects were stolen from the Jewish community. Some have been recovered, but many thousands remain missing. It has been estimated that around 100,000 objects stolen by the Nazis are still missing. We should do everything we can to reunite cultural objects that surface with their rightful owners. More than 70 years from the end of world war two there are still families who have not been reunited with precious artefacts that rightly belong to them.

As many survivors of the holocaust reach the sunset of their lives, it is vital that their descendants have confidence that this Parliament is committed to ensuring that the sun does not set on their ability to recover what is rightfully theirs. The Bill, as we have heard, repeals the sunset clause provision of the 2009 Act, which gave our national museums and galleries the power to return these special cultural objects on the recommendation of the Spoliation Advisory Panel.

Since 2000, 23 cultural objects taken by the Nazis have been returned to their rightful owners, including a John Constable painting, stolen by the Nazis after the invasion of Budapest, which was returned by the Tate in 2015. We must ensure that the panel can continue its vital work. It has carried out its work fairly and delivered justice to the families of those whose precious possessions were stolen. It works in co-operation with our national museums and galleries, the directors of which I addressed at their council meeting at the Science Museum yesterday. They support the panel's work and are in agreement on the urgency and necessity of returning stolen objects to their owners.

This is a carefully targeted, specific piece of legislation that works well. It is particularly important for those whose stolen possessions have, sadly, still not been found. For those who might not even know about this process and might not even harbour a hope of getting back what their families once treasured, the Bill can also give hope.

When I undertook that visit with the Holocaust Educational Trust over a decade ago, the spectre of antisemitism might have seemed, to some, to be on the wane, but it is clearly on the rise again, with antisemitic hate crimes, as my hon. Friend the Member for West Ham mentioned, hitting a record number in 2018. That should anger us all, and we must do everything in our power to face it down, including by supporting honourable colleagues from all parties who have been the subject of death threats, racist and misogynistic abuse, bullying and antisemitism. I once again thank the right hon. Member for Chipping Barnet for all the work she has done on this vital Bill, which delivers a small amount of justice to those who have suffered so greatly.

In closing, let me say that I had the pleasure in 2017 of watching the Liverpool Everyman theatre production of the beautiful musical "Fiddler on the Roof", which included—I hope no one minds my mentioning this—my brother Patrick in the starring role of Tevye. Colleagues will know that it tells the story of a Jewish family in Russia who were forced from their home by the pogroms that were the precursor of the ultimate obscenity of the Nazi holocaust. In thinking of the Bill and what it seeks to do, the words of one song my brother sang in that production came to mind:

"Sunrise, sunset, sunrise, sunset  
Swiftly fly the years  
One season following another  
Laden with happiness and tears."

As the years fly ever more swiftly by, let us hope that the right hon. Lady's Bill, in removing the sunset clause, will bring a small ray of happiness to some victims' families, as they contemplate through tears the horror that befell their relatives because good people did too little, too late to stand up to evil.

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Michael Ellis):** I start by thanking all colleagues who have spoken so powerfully this afternoon. This is one subject where we should all speak as one. Let me say on behalf of Her Majesty's Government that we strongly support the Bill. As a nation, we must continue to pursue every effort to track down and return cultural objects lost during the Nazi era, when families were wrongfully and criminally dispossessed of these items, often in the most vicious and cruel way.

Our national museums take these issues very seriously, as they should, and they have been working to identify objects in their collections with uncertain provenance from between the years 1933 and 1945. That research is held on a recently upgraded online database, which is actively maintained by editors from the 47 contributing UK museums, and co-ordinated by the Collections Trust on behalf of the Arts Council.

3 pm

This is an ongoing task. Potential claimants may still be unaware of the location of objects that used to be in the possession of their families. Given that progress is

still being made in carrying out comprehensive research on the provenance of items in relation to the 1933 to 1945 period, it is vital that the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act 2009 be renewed, as the Bill in the name of my right hon. Friend the Member for Chipping Barnet proposes, in order that claimants may continue to have their property returned to them where they Spoliation Advisory Panel recommends it and Ministers of the Crown agree.

I thank my right hon. Friend for the brilliant work she has done and is doing. It is not easy to progress a private Member's Bill through this House, and I would like to express my admiration and thanks to her. Her constituents can be very proud of her.

**Theresa Villiers:** I rise briefly to provide a brief summary of some of the comments in this excellent discussion of the two clauses of the Bill. Making a guest appearance on the Front Bench has been a bit of *déjà vu* for me. I am deeply grateful to the Minister for the Government's support, and I am also grateful for the strong support that everyone who has taken part in the debate has expressed for the Bill.

Being present in Parliament for debates on the holocaust never fails to move me; it is always harrowing. No matter how many times I hear the facts recounted and the stories told, it is always moving and, frankly, disturbing and distressing to know that this happened on this continent within living memory. As many have said, the Bill is another opportunity to stand up to the holocaust deniers and to reiterate our strong commitment against antisemitism and the horrors to which it can lead. In this Committee, the House has spoken clearly with one voice on that matter.

The hon. Member for West Ham emphasised the insidious nature of antisemitism and highlighted the grave concerns felt about recent increases in antisemitic incidents. With many other Members of this House, I will be meeting the Community Security Trust at its annual event this evening. I am sure we will have important discussions with it on these matters. I wholeheartedly endorse the hon. Lady's rejection of the politics of fear and conspiracy, which are fuelling antisemitism.

My hon. Friend the Member for East Renfrewshire spoke movingly about his constituents' strong support for the Bill, and I am grateful for that. As he said, there should not be a limitation period on the semblance of justice that we can deliver via the return of treasured objects to the families of people from whom they were seized or stolen.

The hon. Member for Glasgow East gave his support and highlighted the staggering figure that 20% of Europe's cultural treasures are believed to have been lost, stolen or misappropriated during the Nazi era. That demonstrates the scale of the task and the importance of ensuring that the 2009 Act stays on the statute book.

My hon. Friend the Member for Brigg and Goole highlighted that, at a time of holocaust denial, it is important for us all to stand up against the extremists who perpetrate these falsehoods. He also said that this is an opportunity to reflect on the horrors of the holocaust. I was grateful to him for his words about the Czech Memorial Scrolls Museum.

The hon. Member for East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow—I am not sure I have pronounced that entirely correctly—rightly said that future generations should still have the opportunity of restitution of precious objects owned by their relatives who perished in the holocaust, and that we should all act together, across parties, to send a strong signal about our support for that process.

The shadow Minister, the hon. Member for Cardiff West, spoke movingly, saying that the sun should never set on justice and righteousness, and told us about his visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau and the horrors that took place there. Like him, I would like to praise Andrew Dismore, which is something I have been cautious about, as we have battled against him in Hendon for many years. However, in this regard, he did a great service by taking through the 2009 Act. It is not an easy business to turn a ten-minute rule Bill into legislation, but he did it. We should pay a strong tribute to him for his role in creating Holocaust Memorial Day.

Finally, I thank the Minister for the Government's support today, and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport for its administrative support and briefings on the Bill. I hope the Committee will support the two clauses, and I commend the Bill to Report and Third Reading.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 1 accordingly ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Clause 2 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Bill to be reported, without amendment.*

3.7 pm

*Committee rose.*