



HOME SECRETARY APPOINTS CHAIR AND TRUSTEES OF HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY TRUST

18 November 2004

The Home Secretary, David Blunkett today named the Chair and Trustees of the soon-to-be established Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.

Dr. Stephen Smith, Director of the Aegis Trust, Director (and co-founder) of the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre and co-author of several books on the Holocaust, has been appointed Chair of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.

Jane Clements, Paula Cowan, Louise Ellman MP, Jack Gilbert, Henry Grunwald QC, Agnes Grunwald-Spier, Judith Hassan, Ben Helfgott, Rabbi Barry Marcus, Karen Pollock and **David Russell** have been named as Trustees of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.

The Home Office is handing day to day responsibility for Holocaust Memorial Day to the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. The Trust will be an independent charitable organisation responsible for taking forward the delivery of Holocaust Memorial Day from 2006 onwards. The Home Office Faith Communities Unit currently manages Holocaust Memorial Day.

HM the Queen, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, will represent the Nation at the Home Office organised Holocaust Memorial Day National Event at Westminster Hall in London on 27th January 2005, marking the 60th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The Home Secretary, David Blunkett said:



"Holocaust Memorial Day is vitally important, not just as a commemoration for all the communities who suffered as a result of the Holocaust and Nazi persecution, but as a reminder that the lessons of the Holocaust - to challenge racism and intolerance head on - are relevant to everyone in the UK today.

"Stephen Smith and each of the Trustees have been working tirelessly to educate and inform people of the events of the Holocaust. I feel proud and confident to hand over the responsibility of organising this important annual event to the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust."

Dr. Stephen Smith, newly appointed Chair of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust said:

"This appointment is an honour to receive and a challenge to fulfil. The foundations laid by the Home Office provide us with every confidence to build a meaningful and embracing national day of remembrance and learning. We take very seriously the duty to remember the past and our responsibility to shape the future."

ENDS

For more information and to be added to the HMD 2005 press list please contact Meg Baker, Ben Rich or Aileen Lee at Luther Pendragon on 020 7618 9100 or email hmd@luther.co.uk

Note to editors

About Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day has been an annual event in the UK since 2001. It is held on the 27th January each year to coincide with the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1945. The purpose of the day is to commemorate all victims of Nazi persecution and to show that the events of the Holocaust remain relevant to everyone in the UK today. Holocaust Memorial Day 2005 will be marked by thirteen countries across Europe including Germany, Italy and France. Please see website for more information: www.holocaustmemorialday.gov.uk

About the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

Up to 2005, the responsibility for delivering Holocaust Memorial Day has been with the Home Office, working in conjunction with the Department for Education and Skills and a wide range of individuals and organisations involved in Holocaust remembrance and education and other related issues.



The Home Office is now handing day to day responsibility for Holocaust Memorial Day to an independent charity, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. The charity will be run according to the principles outlined in Holocaust Memorial Day's statement of commitment: <http://www.holocaustmemorialday.gov.uk/roc/default.asp>

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust will be an independent charitable trust.

About Dr. Stephen Smith, Chair

Stephen is the Director of the Aegis Trust, which works towards prevention of genocide. He is the Director (and co-founder) of the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in Nottinghamshire. Stephen is also a member of the International Taskforce for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research; an adviser to the Stockholm Forum 2000 on Holocaust issues; a Trustee of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre; co-author of several books on the Holocaust and frequent international speaker on the causes and consequences of the Holocaust.

About the Trustees

Jane Clements

Jane is the Deputy Director of the Council of Christians and Jews. She has worked as a teacher, is currently doing a PhD in Holocaust education, and has been involved in the DfES working group on Holocaust Memorial Day for many years.

Paula Cowan

Paula is a lecturer in education at the University of Paisley. She has produced educational materials for the Scottish Executive's Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration, and is co-Vice President on the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council.

Louise Ellman MP

Louise is MP for Liverpool Riverside. She is Vice-President of the Local Government Association, the Regional Vice-chair of Poale Zion, an Executive Member of Labour Friends of Israel, Vice-chair of the All-Party:Israel Group and a member of the Council against Anti-Semitism Group.

Jack Gilbert

Jack Gilbert is directing the project to establish a national museum of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) history. He is a communications specialist with over fifteen years experience, a senior independent community advisor to the Metropolitan Police Service and has held numerous national and international posts in both Jewish and LGBT organisations. He is the son of an unaccompanied child refugee from Nazi Germany, who escaped from Berlin on the last Kindertransport in September 1939.

Henry Grunwald QC

Henry Grunwald QC is President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, which protects and supports the interests, religious rights and customs of Jews in the UK.



Agnes Grunwald-Spier

Agnes was six months old when she was liberated from the Budapest Ghetto in January 1945. She is involved in a wide range of multi-faith work, has been involved in Holocaust Memorial Day commemorations in Sheffield and has spoken about her experiences as a Holocaust survivor on many occasions. She has also recently completed a PhD thesis on Holocaust rescuers.

Judith Hassan

Judith works for Jewish Care as the Director of Services for Holocaust survivors, refugees and their families. She has worked with Holocaust survivors and refugees for over 25 years and founded the Holocaust survivors' centre in Hendon. She has written several books and articles on the Holocaust.

Ben Helfgott

Ben is a Survivor and Chair of the '45 Aid Society of Holocaust Survivors. Established in 1963, the Society consists mainly of Survivors from concentration camps who came to England in 1945/6 and others who have immigrated subsequently.

Rabbi Barry Marcus

Rabbi Marcus has been involved in Holocaust education for many years, pioneering one-day trips to Auschwitz in 1996 and has written on the subject of personal reflections on visits to Auschwitz.

Karen Pollock

Karen is Chief Executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust. She has been involved in Holocaust education for over 8 years, working to raise the profile of the subject of the Holocaust and its relevance today. Since being Chief Executive, the Trust has grown considerably. Its work reaches thousands of teachers and students across the country and its impact is well known. Karen represents the Trust on both domestic and international projects, and works with both governmental and non-governmental organisations.

David Russell

David is a co-founder and Director of The PR Office, a public relations consultancy. He has worked voluntarily for Jewish Care and a Jewish youth group, which introduced him to the sensitivities of Holocaust education. For the past two years, he has played a prominent role in organising Tower Hamlets Holocaust Memorial Day commemorations and has worked with the Rwandan survivor organisation SURF.