

Press release: Britain honours its Holocaust heroes

At an event at the Foreign Office hosted with the Israeli embassy, the Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, Communities Secretary Sajid Javid, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis and Israeli Ambassador Mark Regev, will gather to honour heroic men and women with the British Hero of the Holocaust Medal.

The award, whose previous recipients include Sir Nicholas Winton, recognises those Britons who undertook extraordinary acts of courage and self-sacrifice, in order to help Jewish people and others.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The moral conviction and bravery of the British Heroes of the Holocaust should fill us with pride.

These exceptional individuals saved hundreds of lives and went above and beyond the call of duty in the most difficult circumstances to do the right thing.

As a government we are committed to ensuring that society learns the lessons of the Holocaust so that bigotry and prejudice are given no place to take root.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Nazi oppression was defeated not only through military force but also through quiet acts of courage and compassion.

These eight individuals are true British heroes and a source of national pride for us all, fully deserving of our lasting respect and lifelong gratitude. Their willingness to stand up to hate with often little regard to their own personal safety is an inspiration to us all.

Award Recipients

The eight recipients of the award are:

1. British Diplomats John Carvell and Sir Thomas Preston who issued almost 1500 Jews with certificates to enable them to escape to Palestine. Margaret Reid who worked in the Passport Control Office of the Berlin Embassy and issued visas that allowed thousands of Jews to emigrate. She

often bent the rules for issuing visas, a practice that was deliberately overlooked by the British Consul-General Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, another recipient of the award;

2. Academic Doreen Warriner and Trevor Chadwick who worked closely with the 'British Schindler' Sir Nicholas Winton in Prague to organise the evacuation of hundreds of Jewish children from the then Czechoslovakia to Britain.
3. Dorothea Weber (née LeBrocq) who sheltered her Jewish friend Hedwig Bercu during the German occupation of the Channel Islands at great personal risk. She was aided by a German soldier, Kurt Ruummele, whom she married after the war and;
4. Otto Schiff who helped to create the Jewish Refugees Committee which arranged to bring Jews out of Germany and Austria to Britain during the war, as well as supporting them financially once here.

This Government is determined that the genocide of six million Jews will never be forgotten. That is why it will be building a spectacular and poignant Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, right next to Parliament, reminding all of us of the depths to which humanity can sink, and the importance of robustly opposing all forms of bigotry. Holocaust Memorial Day 2018 will take place on Saturday 27 January with thousands of activities and events taking place across the country at community centres, schools, libraries, museums, arts venues, prisons and places of worship.

Further information