

NEWSLETTER

CFI Annual Business Lunch 2015

CFI held its biggest ever Annual Business Lunch on the 7th December 2015, which was attended by 750 people, including 160 Conservative parliamentarians and 13 members of the Cabinet. CFI were delighted to be joined by keynote speakers the Secretary of State for Justice, Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, and the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP, who appeared 'In Conversation' with the Secretary of State for Education, Rt. Hon. Nicky Morgan MP.

In their remarks, the Cabinet Ministers demonstrated staunch support of Israel against delegitimation attempts, condemned Palestinian incitement, and pledged to maintain strong bilateral ties between the two countries.

Conservative Candidate for Mayor of London, Zac Goldsmith MP, and former Ambassador for Israel to the UN and the UK, H.E. Ron Prosor, also gave speeches, as well as CFI's Parliamentary Chairman, Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Pickles MP.

"We must never lose sight of the prize that we would all like to see, which is a peaceful, democratic Palestine living alongside a peaceful, democratic Israel. But if we're going to achieve that goal, then what we must not dilute is our commitment to peace and to democracy, and that means that we do sometimes have to say very tough things to those that run the Palestinian Authority, including that some of the money that European taxpayers give them in order to support education is being misused". **Secretary of State for Justice, Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP**

"Our bilateral trade is worth £5 billion a year. In the past decade it's up by some 60% and we want to see that continue. The business relationship between Britain and Israel has never been so strong. We have over 16 Israeli companies on the London Stock Exchange... There is a lot for us to learn from that country and we want to see more business". **Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP**

"We can stand up at every opportunity as each and every one of us in this room does for Israel - the only real democracy in the Middle East. Our friend; one of the most dynamic and extraordinary countries in the world". **Conservative Candidate for Mayor of London, Zac Goldsmith MP**



Zac Goldsmith MP addressing the CFI Annual Business Lunch 2015



Secretaries of State 'In Conversation' at the CFI Annual Business Lunch 2015

DELEGATIONS



▲ JUNE 2015

In June, CFI coordinated its first ever delegation for 15 young Conservatives, marking the first in a new programme of fact-finding visits to Israel and the West Bank for the Conservative Party's future leaders and opinion formers. The delegation received widespread press coverage and phenomenal levels of interest, with as many as 450 young Conservatives submitting an application. As part of the diverse itinerary, the delegates received security briefings from the IDF on Israel's northern borders with Syria and Lebanon, and met with some of Israel's leading officials and experts.



▲ JULY 2015

CFI's newly-appointed Parliamentary Chairman, Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Pickles MP led CFI's Parliamentary Officers on a high-profile parliamentary delegation to Israel, which included a meeting with Israel's President Reuven Rivlin. The visit marked the formation of CFI's new team of Parliamentary Officers that, working alongside Sir Eric, serve as Israel's strongest supporters in Parliament. The itinerary also included a visit to Sderot in southern Israel to see the remains of Hamas rockets, in addition to the Netiv Ha'Asara moshav where MPs saw the entrance to a Hamas cross-border terror tunnel.



▲ SEPTEMBER 2015

CFI led a delegation to Israel and the West Bank for nine newly elected Conservative MPs. The packed itinerary included a mix of political meetings and briefings, as well as cultural and historical visits, providing an insight to the many different sides and voices within Israel. The delegates were the first group to meet with Prime Minister Netanyahu's spokesman Mark Regev, following his announcement as the new Israeli Ambassador to the UK. For the first time on a delegation, CFI filmed the visit for YouTube, featuring interviews with James Cleverly MP, Suella Fernandes MP, Will Quince MP, and Paul Scully MP. Visit our Youtube page to watch the video.



▲ NOVEMBER 2015

CFI led a second trip in a new programme of fact-finding visits to Israel for young Conservative Party activists. The group had the opportunity to visit Masada and the Dead Sea, as well as the Gaza border town of Sderot, Save A Child's Heart in Holon, the Knesset, and Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial. In the West Bank, the delegates paid a visit to the first Palestinian planned city of Rawabi, and met with young Palestinian entrepreneurs and PA official Dr Husam Zomlot. At the Erez Crossing on the Israel-Gaza border, the group received a briefing about the work of the IDF's COGAT in facilitating tonnes of goods to Gaza every day.



▲ DECEMBER 2015

CFI coordinated a delegation of five Conservative parliamentarians to join the fourth annual Australia Israel UK Leadership Dialogue in Jerusalem. The delegation brought together legislators, business leaders and opinion formers from across the political spectrum from the UK, Australia and Israel. They were also in attendance at the Knesset for the launch of the new UK Israel Parliamentary Friendship Group. Among participants were CFI's Parliamentary Chairman, Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Pickles MP, CFI Officer Rt. Hon. Lord Trimble of Lisnagarvey, and CFI Vice-Chairmen Andrew Percy MP and Guto Bebb MP.

CFI IN THE PRESS

The appointment of Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Pickles MP as CFI's new Parliamentary Chairman and the dynamic new team of Parliamentary Officers has led to increased publicity and a surge of press coverage for CFI's campaigns and parliamentary activities.



► Prior to the General Election, in April 2015, the Daily Express published an article on the Palestinian Authority's payment of salaries to convicted Palestinian terrorists, featuring a statement from CFI Vice-Chairmen Guto Bebb MP and Andrew Percy MP, as well as James Morris MP. The statement called on the Government to "seriously reconsider" its provision of aid to the PA's general budget.

◀ In October 2015, CFI's Parliamentary Chairman, Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Pickles MP, and CFI's Parliamentary Officers, wrote a letter that was published in The Times condemning the ongoing wave of violence against Israelis, and calling on the British Government to tackle Palestinian Authority incitement.

► Amid the wave of deadly Palestinian attacks against Israeli civilians, CFI's Vice-Chairman Andrew Percy MP in January 2016 condemned the "constant incitement of violence by the Palestinian Authority", using a rock-throwing "incitement doll" to demonstrate the indoctrination of Palestinian children. Customs officials at Israel's Haifa port in December 2015 seized a disguised shipment of 4,000 dolls wearing face-covering keffiyehs with a rock in a raised hand, bearing the slogan "Jerusalem is ours". Andrew Percy MP displayed one of these dolls in a Westminster Hall debate. The Brigg and Goole MP's comments were widely covered in the Israeli and UK press, including in the Times of Israel, Jewish News, and Ynet, as well as on Israel's Channel Ten nightly news broadcast.

Foreign aid cash 'handed to terrorists'

By Anil Dawar

TAXPAYERS' cash given to help rebuild Palestine is being used instead to "reward and incentivise" terrorists, MPs claimed last night.

The Palestinian Authority has taken around £130million in foreign aid from the Department for International Development over the past five years.

But the cash is being used to help the PA fund its estimated \$84million annual payments to convicted terrorists locked up in Israel, according to campaigners.

MPs yesterday called for the Government to suspend all aid to the PA until payments to convicted terrorists cease.

In a joint statement, Tory MPs Guto Bebb, James Morris and Andrew



► Former Chairman of the BBC, Lord Grade of Yarmouth CBE, in October 2015 expressed concern about the BBC's coverage of violence in Israel and the West Bank, in a letter to the organisation's Director of News and Current Affairs, James Harding. In his complaint, Lord Grade said that the BBC coverage was at times misleading and failed to provide a wider context of what is an "undoubtedly complex issue". The letter received widespread press coverage in the UK and worldwide.



CONGRATULATIONS, STUART!

2015 was a big year for CFI's Stuart Polak.

In May 2015, he received a CBE for political services to Conservative Friends of Israel, which was presented by His Royal Highness Prince Charles in a formal ceremony at Buckingham Palace.

In October, CFI celebrated the introduction of Stuart to the House of Lords as Lord Polak of Hertsmere CBE. Lord Polak was introduced to the chamber by Lord Grade of Yarmouth CBE and Lord Sterling of Plaistow GCVO CBE.

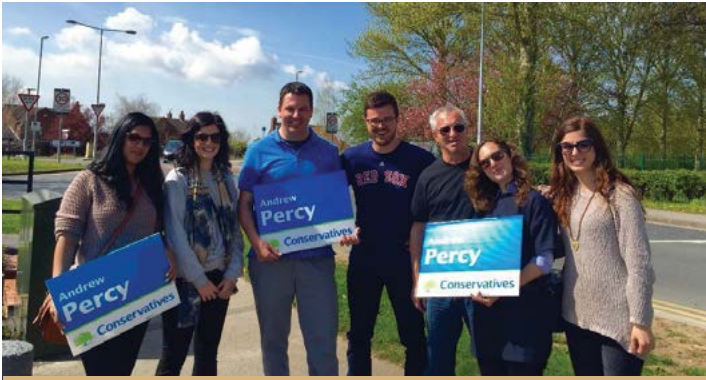
Following the ceremony, a reception was held in celebration at Westminster

Central Hall, where a number of key figures spoke, including Yesh Atid leader Yair Lapid, Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, CFI's Parliamentary Chairman, Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Pickles MP, and CFI's Chairman Andrew Heller.

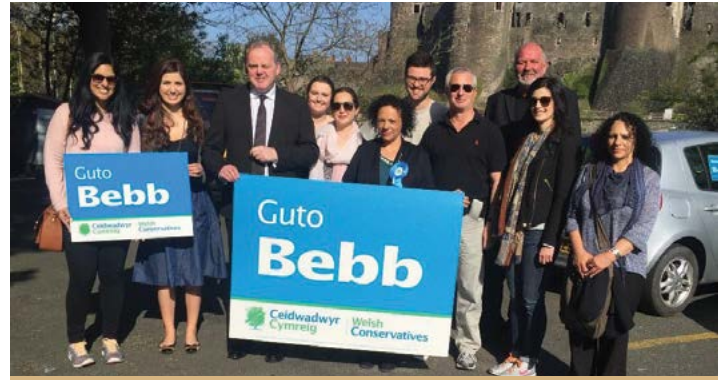
Stuart has worked tirelessly over the years to strengthen and develop the Anglo-Israeli relationship. During his 25-year career at CFI, he has coordinated and led more than 150 political delegations to Israel, and has helped establish several Jewish faith schools, including Yavneh College and Hertsmere Jewish Primary School. Lord Polak continues as CFI's Honorary President.



GENERAL ELECTION



CFI team with Andrew Percy MP in Brigg and Goole



CFI team campaigning for Guto Bebb MP in Aberconwy

CFI spent much of the spring last year campaigning in 12 Conservative target seats ahead of May's General Election. In the run-up to the election, CFI was active at every level in campaigning for a majority Conservative Government.

Over two weeks, the CFI team campaigned in eight constituencies across the UK, including Aberconwy in North Wales, Brigg & Goole in Yorkshire, and Halesowen & Rowley Regis in the West Midlands, as well as a number of key London seats in the final week.

Come rain or shine, Team CFI walked well over 100 miles, canvassing and leafleting across the country. Following the resounding Conservative victory on May 7th, CFI was delighted to welcome so many new Members of Parliament on the Conservative benches.

EVENTS



JANUARY-MAY 2015

CFI hosted a Parliamentary Briefing for MPs on Israel's March General Election, with Yossi Shain, Professor of Political Science at Tel Aviv University and Georgetown University, and CFI cosponsored BICOM's Israel Election Night party, attended by five Conservative MPs. CFI coordinated a breakout session at We Believe in Israel 2015 with Bob Blackman MP, Mike Freer MP and Matthew Offord MP on why supporters of Israel should vote Conservative. CFI's first post-election briefing event in Parliament was with Brigadier General Michael Herzog on Iran's nuclear programme, which was well-attended by Conservative MPs. During the spring months, CFI hosted a Parliamentary Briefing with Israel's Vice Prime Minister Silvan Shalom, which attracted over 50 parliamentarians and key CFI supporters. This was followed by a Parliamentary Lunch with then Ambassador of Israel, H.E. Daniel Taub, attended by 35 Conservative MPs, including 17 who were newly elected.



JUNE-SEPTEMBER 2015

In July, CFI said farewell to outgoing Ambassador H.E. Daniel Taub, hosting a lunch that was attended by over 85 MPs, Peers, and key supporters. The strength of the UK-Israel relationship was highlighted once again in September, when Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made a high-profile visit to London. CFI were delighted to cosponsor a special Parliamentary Briefing with PM Netanyahu, attended by 35 Conservative parliamentarians and chaired by CFI's Parliamentary Chairman, Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Pickles MP. Prime Minister Netanyahu reaffirmed his commitment to restarting peace negotiations with the Palestinians: "Anywhere. Anytime. Now. Without preconditions". Thanking the Conservative Government and MPs for their continued support of Israel, he said: "I thank you for the constancy of your friendship, sometimes under difficult prevails", and spoke of the "remarkable bond between Zionism and Britain".



OCTOBER-JANUARY 2016

In addition to the Annual Business Lunch, CFI had another strong showing at Conservative Party Conference in Manchester, with Foreign Secretary, Rt. Hon. Philip Hammond MP addressing a 500-strong crowd of Conservative parliamentarians, activists, and supporters. Mr Hammond underlined: "I want to reassure you of Britain's unshakable commitment under this Conservative Government to Israel's security; Israel's right to defend itself; Israel's right to exist". A series of Secretaries of State and Government Ministers, as well as dozens of MPs attended the reception, which has become one of the main events on the Conference calendar. In January 2016, CFI held its Annual Parliamentary Reception in the Houses of Parliament attracting 300 people, including 60 parliamentarians. CFI were delighted to welcome keynote speakers, the Chief Whip, Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP, and Minister of State for Employment, Rt. Hon. Priti Patel MP.