

HOLOCAUST COST

Times Monday, 2nd Sept 2019

Sir, Readers of Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis's letter ("Holocaust shrine", Aug 31) supporting the proposal to erect a memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens might be forgiven for supposing that no world-class Holocaust memorial graces our capital city. In fact, there are already a number in London, notably Frank Meisler's Kindertransport sculpture at Liverpool Street station and the Holocaust memorial in Hyde Park.

The Imperial War Museum houses a permanent exhibition, and in Russell Square is to be found the unique Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide.

Rabbi Mirvis does not mention the cost of the proposed edifice in Victoria Tower Gardens. The British government has pledged £75 million of taxpayers' money. Last December it was announced that two Jewish philanthropists had agreed to raise another £25 million.

So that's £100 million in total for a Holocaust memorial in a city that already has several and yet another educational centre for which there is absolutely no need. In the Jewish circles in which Rabbi Mirvis moves there may well be enthusiasm for the Victoria Tower Gardens proposal. But in the Jewish circles in which I move there is nothing but horror and incredulity.

The argument that the memorial will act as an antidote to antisemitism is preposterous. The eye-watering sums of money involved can be put to much more deserving uses.

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