



THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
INTO ANTISEMITISM

TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL EVIDENCE
SESSION FOUR
6 March 2006

SEPTEMBER 2006
ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

The All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism

The All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism was commissioned by John Mann MP, Chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group against Antisemitism.

The terms of reference for the inquiry were:

1. To consider evidence on the nature of contemporary antisemitism
2. To evaluate current efforts to confront it
3. To consider further measures that might usefully be introduced

The inquiry was chaired by the former Minister for Europe, Rt Hon Dr Denis MacShane MP (*Labour, Rotherham*) and included:

Rt Hon Kevin Barron MP (*Labour, Rother Valley*)
Tim Boswell MP (*Conservative, Daventry*)
Rt Hon David Curry MP (*Conservative, Skipton and Ripon*)
Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP (*Conservative, Chingford and Woodford Green*)
Nigel Evans MP (*Conservative, Ribble Valley*)
Rt Hon Bruce George MP (*Labour, Walsall South*)
Lady Sylvia Hermon MP (*Ulster Unionist, North Down*)
Chris Huhne MP (*Liberal Democrat, Eastleigh*)
Daniel Kawczynski MP (*Conservative, Shrewsbury and Atcham*)
Barbara Keeley MP (*Labour, Worsley*)
Khalid Mahmood MP (*Labour, Birmingham, Perry Barr*)
Rt Hon John Spellar MP (*Labour, Warley*)
Theresa Villiers MP (*Conservative, Chipping Barnet*)

The inquiry issued a call for papers in late November 2005, requesting information from Government departments, the police and criminal justice agencies, academics, trade unions, community groups and NGOs, amongst others. Over one hundred written submissions were received from a broad range of interested parties and individuals. Whilst all members of the panel were parliamentarians and the meetings were held within Parliament, this investigation held no official powers and the proceedings were not covered by parliamentary privilege.

The panel heard evidence from representatives of key organisations and individuals in four oral evidence sessions held in Parliament during February and March 2006 and this report was written in the months following those sessions. In addition, there were delegations to Paris and Manchester with the aim of setting the oral and written evidence in a wider UK and European context. In addition, the Chairman visited Rome to discuss the phenomenon with senior Vatican officials and has carried out research into the rising antisemitism in Eastern Europe.

Transcript of Session Four: 6 March 2006

Panel

Chair

Rt Hon Dr Denis MacShane (“DM”)

Rt Hon Kevin Barron MP (“KB”)

Tim Boswell MP (“TB”)

Rt Hon David Curry MP (“DC”)

Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP (“IDS”)

Nigel Evans MP (“NE”)

Rt Hon Bruce George MP (“BG”)

Lady Sylvia Hermon MP (“SH”)

Chris Huhne MP (“CH”)

Daniel Kawczynski MP (“DK”)

Barbara Keeley MP (“BK”)

Khalid Mahmood MP (“KM”)

Rt Hon John Spellar MP (“JS”)

Theresa Villiers MP (“TV”)

Witnesses

Mr Trevor Phillips (“TP”)

Chair, Commission for Racial Equality (“CRE”)

Rt Hon Charles Clarke MP (“CC”)

Home Secretary

Sir Iqbal Sacranie (“IS”)

Secretary-General, Muslim Council of Britain (“MCB”)

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks (“RJS”)

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth

Transcript of Session Four

DM Trevor, welcome sir, we're first names here. Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, and certainly the most dynamic and high profile one with strong and good things to say in a number of important issues. We've been exploring the nature of antisemitism in Britain. We've got yourself, the Chief Rabbi and I welcome Sir Jonathan here and Sir Iqbal Sacranie and Charles Clarke, though he may be detained in Parliament for a bit, whose department this afternoon is responsible for community cohesion and faith equality.

From your point of view, how can the different communities work together more effectively to tackle antisemitism would you say?

TP OK, well first of all let me thank you Denis for inviting me and for your very kind introduction which, translated, is "the most gobby git to occupy this chair that we have ever seen".

Our basic proposition here is that in a society which is changing more rapidly, where there are more different communities with different traditions and heritages occupying the same space, it is more and more important for us to find ways for those communities to live better together without friction. We think that the central point of this is what we call our "integration agenda" and the point from which we start here is that antisemitism has, same as racism or Islamophobia, no place in an integrated society. It is increasingly one of the faces of extremism in our society.

So what, in direct answer to your question, what are the central points. Well we think there are three essential issues which point to, if you like, tranquil relations between different communities. First of all equality - that we must be equal in our society and we are seen to be equal. That is part of our function to ensure that people are not discriminated against and are treated equally irrespective of their race or background. Secondly, every community has a way of participating within a society, for example we would like to see a more even distribution, if I can put it that way, of seats in this place amongst Britain's various communities, both by religion and by race. And thirdly, and this is perhaps the most direct response to what you just said, better interaction between different communities because our experience is a very simple one. When people don't know each other, when they don't know individuals from another race or religion, they are more likely to fear them, they are more likely to believe slurs and innuendos and myths about someone else and therefore the most important thing for us is that in our communities we avoid a situation where people are separated, where they live, perhaps tranquilly but separately, and in which, particular young people, get to know others of different religions, different prognosis's directly. That doesn't mean everyone's going to like everybody else, but at least it means they will know what other people are about and they will fear them less.

DM Thank you very much Trevor. I would like to open the floor to colleagues, I've got other questions that I might come back to, but I'm here to chair rather than be the key questioner. Bruce.

BG Thank you. One of the first committees I was put on when I came to this place, I actually volunteered, was the Race Relations Bill Committee of 1976. I followed your predecessors with enormous interest and, indeed, admiration. So much of central Governmental policy as you pointed out a couple of weeks ago in a very courageous speech was built on the concept of multiculturalism. Can you tell us, and we all read

it, (a) what the reaction was to your speech and was it more contentious than you anticipated and (b) does Government really need now to start re-thinking its central principles of race relations, so my question is more over-arching than looking specifically at antisemitism.

TP Well, you asked me directly what peoples' reactions are to some of the things that we have been saying on the policy of multiculturalism, which I would distinguish from the fact of our being a multi-cultural society. It is, to some extent, bafflement, some extent hostility, but I think actually, the truth is, what we have experienced is really rather a wave of relief that the Commission is prepared to engage in an honest debate about how different kinds of people should live together. I think it is probably fair to say that for the last 40 years or so, people have taken the view that race is too potent and difficult an issue to speak about honestly, and there are two ways in which we avoid speaking about it honestly. One, is to say that we are all the same and race doesn't matter and the other is to say that there is a sort of what we sometimes call "happy clappy multiculturalism" and if you say enough times diversity is a lovely thing and we all live together and so on, then everybody will believe it and people will forget about the fact that though it can be enriching to our society, you have to work to make that happen. It doesn't happen by itself. Which brings me in a way to the, if I may answer in the terms of today's discussion, the point that I was trying to make when I said that we had to move on from the idea of multiculturalism. It is fine to say lets recognise our diversity and I would not be in second place to anybody in acknowledging that. What I think is a problem is if official policy is based entirely on putting our differences ahead of the things that we have in common and that means that for some communities and some groups, it has become essentially more rewarding to keep themselves separate from others than to, where it is possible, to find points of commonality and integration. I think that one of the points that we shouldn't forget when we're discussing antisemitism has been the example of the Jewish community in this country which, if we think about the last 100 years, was as reviled as black communities have been, as in some respect Muslim communities are today, but found its way first of all by essentially being committed to being part of the wider community, contributing and so on, but also adapting its brand of Judaism to be compatible with British life. And that of course, could only happen in the context of law and politics which eschewed antisemitism and that gave Jews or Jewish communities the space in which to find that balance. So we have got a model. The Jewish community is not the only one, but that's what we're talking about today, in which you can find a way of preserving diversity, but at the same time, becoming one integrated community.

DM I'd like us to go focus a little on antisemitism, as we've got Trevor for a rather short period on that particular theme.

BG Thank you, please carry on.

IDS My apologies for arriving slightly late, but I was nonetheless fascinated by what you said in your original submission. Can I bring you back to some of the information that we have from others who have come in front of this Committee. I have been quite perturbed throughout all of this period, as I have listened to various people from Metropolitan Police right the way through to the Government, that we seemed to have lumped all attacks into one standard case, which is any attack within a racial category is categorised as a race attack, a "race-hate crime". But we don't break that out very much, if at all, and we certainly don't break it out consistently everywhere around the country. So the truth is we really have, according to official Government figures, absolutely no understanding at all, if we are to rely on them, of what constitutes the amount of antisemitism in terms of attacks or provocation or whatever, at present at

all because it's lumped together with everything else. So we get statements from the Government that things seem to be stable or manageable, but we have no idea and I'm intrigued as to how they can make that decision because the only groups are voluntary groups that make these comparisons. How from a standpoint of your position, how much better would it be if we had a much better understanding of what kind of attacks and to which particular group with even motivation, how much easier would that make your life in terms of understanding the nature of race-hate crimes, because they are not all the same, they may start with maybe the same premise, but they do vary somewhat.

TP I agree with that. More information and more transparency is always better. Of course, one has to balance that against the burden that might be placed, for example on the police, in terms of collecting information, and the fact that it is sometimes not so easy to tell exactly what the motivation has been but I agree with you as a general proposition and we do strongly feel that actually it would be if one of the things the recommendations or propositions that might come out of this exercise would be that we should have a proper conversation about how we might be able to gather that data more effectively, I think that would definitely be a positive thing. Having said that, and I know you don't intend to do this, I would not dismiss out of hand the information that is gathered, for example by the Community Security Trust because even though it is

IDS I wasn't dismissing it.

TP I know you're not, but even though it is bound to be only partial and so on, what it does tell us is something about trends I think that is helpful for us to know, for example over the last eight years or so, the number of reported attacks has risen. Now some of that might be changes in reporting, some of that might be changes in what actually happened, but I think they do give us some idea of the significant changes. But I think your overall proposition that it would be better if we had more information of the process, if it was more transparent, is undoubtedly true.

IDS Can I follow that up again? First of all of course I'm not submitting it because in fact, what I was going to come to, is that it's about all we've got. The terrible point is it's what we're learning from that which helps us understand a bit more about this. But what's interesting is when I put this question to anybody from the Met right the way through, we've had very variable answers. The police seem to have the opinion that it's pretty much manageable and not necessarily trending upwards, that was something that I took from them last week, yet evidence coming from there is that it's been on an increasing flame. The Government themselves don't break it down so have no sense of where it's going at all. When I put this to the Government minister at the time, his instinct was that it was probably about stable. So my concern is, the question here is, does the CRE have a view - is it trending upwards, it is a matter for concern, or do they think it's stable and manageable?

TP We think it probably is trending upwards. It's hard to tell exactly how fast and whether it's steady. The CST figures show a slight fall from last year, but over the last seven or eight years the general trend is upwards. I think that people can model two sets of things. First of all, there is, of course, concern out about the impact of international events on antisemitic attacks, and there clearly is some component in relation to what's happening in the Middle East and Palestine and Israel and so on. But we think that across Europe there is a general trend first in broadly speaking towards greater extremism and the acting out of that extremism. Bearing in mind, if you look at the CST figures, actually most antisemitic attacks or the largest proportion of antisemitic attacks that they report, really have more to do with far-right

politics and straightforward hatred of Jews rather than anything to do with what may be happening abroad. I think the fact is we're seeing more of it. Quite how much we don't know, and that's where your point about collecting numbers is material.

IDS One last supplementary before others get in, given that, this was put to others who came in front of this Committee last week and the week before. It has traditionally been accepted and assumed, and it's equally borne out by general figures that race-hate attacks have tended to be things loosely described as "extreme right" (although it's difficult to describe politics in quite that context). What we seem to be seeing from some of the journalistic response and from others anecdotally, is that on what is called the sort of intellectual left it appears as though there has almost become an excuse to raise antisemitism under the skies of anti-Israel or anti-activities of Israel. Do you detect any of that? Do you have a sense of that? That there is a sort of veneer of respectability to this now? Do you have any thoughts on that?

TP I think that there is clearly a discussion/debate to be had about the relationship between, let's be straightforward about this, critics of Israel and of Zionism and the way that their views might be expressed, and the encouragement that sometimes gives without doubt to people who straightforwardly don't like Jews. I think, however, that it is dangerous to get into adding to the confusion by saying that the evidence shows, because it doesn't, that this is what is driving any rise that we might detect in antisemitic attacks or in the antisemitic behaviour. Again, we've got to make the distinction between straightforward attacks on the person and on the other hand, attacks on property, Birmingham, synagogues and so forth, and then verbal incidents and abuse. I think that the evidence that we have from our Racial Equality Councils, from the complaints that come to us, says that it is still true that the overwhelming expression of antisemitism is not very much to do, as I say, with events in other countries. Nor is it to do with the relationship between Jewish communities and any particular community (and specifically what people refer to is the Muslim community), but far more to do with straightforward, old-fashioned, dislike of Jews and the proposition that there is an international Jewish conspiracy that is depriving us of one thing or another.

TB I wonder if we could go on to Higher Education, Trevor. As you know I have a background of that and I think most of us in the room would have a, perhaps, sentimental, belief that persons who have been educated to a graduate level tend to be less bigoted and tend to be rather happier and more effective citizens through the nature of their education. There is some evidence, and you will have seen this from Union of Jewish Students, about concern about what is going on in campus. I know you've been involved in the situation at SOAS specifically recently. And I think that a lot of us might be concerned both this is a counter-example to the conventional kind of antisemitism and this may have a more community driven or professionally driven or possibly politically driven element to it, an ideological element about it if you put it that way. Can you tell the Committee whether you detect this as being a separate type of phenomenon, how deep it is, how much it is likely to infect, not only the life of those institutions today, but the nature of those graduates as they go forward into their public lives or other activities later? And is it an area for particular concern for you?

TP It's an area of particular concern and it is part of our mandate because all the universities and public bodies are bound by the Race Relations Act and they have a duty to promote good race relations and, even apart from my view that there are some things which have gone on which should not have gone on some campuses, it is part of our business to ensure that public bodies are promoting good race relations and providing, in the case of universities, a climate in which relations between groupings

aren't allowed to deteriorate. If I may make a general point, which I hope will cover maybe a number of questions that may arise, I do not believe that, whatever the disagreements that most Muslims may have about politics or indeed about doctrines or anything else, that there is a wave of antisemitism within Muslim communities in this country. There is no evidence of that from the CRE's point of view. What we do know, and you may better ask Sir Iqbal Sacranie about this because he will be better informed, is that most Muslims in this country abhor the political extremism practiced by some groups which call themselves Muslim groups and essentially are effectively political groups rather than in any way religiously inspired. What has happened, I think, in some campuses is that the representatives of political extremism, who regard or treat Islam more as an ideology than a faith and in some ways pervert it, take advantage of the position on campus to essentially produce and practice a kind of anti-Zionism, anti-Israel policy which is very hard to tell apart from antisemitism. It is very often very hard to tell apart. They themselves would not accept that, but I think in practice, it is very hard once you say that a particular, for example, student society should not have, as was the case in SOAS, should not have the same right as any other student society, it's very hard to tell the difference between that and basically saying they can't have this because they're Jews. Not that's where I think there are problems, and if I may say one specific point, I think that part of this responsibility here does lie with the universities, not to stand on the sidelines wringing their hands. They have to be clear about what the rules are and they have to be clear that all of the rules apply to everybody all of the time.

- TB** Can I very quickly follow that up, because that is very helpful. Are you, as CRE, or do you think that somebody else, needs to engage universities who are failing in their public duty to promote good race relations, and actually confront them in cases where, in your judgement, they're not meeting these obligations by being discriminatory or pushed over by extremists?
- TP** We have recently, that is three or four months ago, produced what we call "Good Race Relations Guide" which has gone on to all public bodies offering them guidance in respect of all of these kinds of issues. Both in terms of what the law permits and requires, but also in terms of practical answers to some difficult situations. We are also planning to produce in the next few weeks further guidance on the responsibilities on public bodies in areas of tension of this kind. And to come straight to the hardest point, I want to be clear that if we think that institutions are failing to carry out their duties, we are not going to hesitate to consider to use our powers of formal investigation in this respect.
- TB** That saves one question, but a very small one, given that some of these areas are not self-evident in advance, do you have much traffic or as much traffic as you would like in terms of advice that you sought from vice chancellors or from senior members who are dealing with student unions or whatever, about how they should conduct those duties, I mean is there a grown up dialogue or is that one needs to be developed in the light of the guidance that you are now circulating?
- TP** I would say at best, it's patchy, two/three years ago when I first arrived at CRE I initiated what we call our "Safe Communities Initiatives" which is coming up to completing its work this March which was really about conflict avoidance or prevention, or resolution where we couldn't achieve that, and the Safe Communities Initiative has played some role in some universities in ensuring that situations which looked like they were going to get out of hand didn't get out of hand. And if you like, we can give you some more information on that.

DM Trevor, you say I quote - I do not believe that there is a wave of antisemitism in Muslim communities - and yet a Populus poll in this community recently taken, says 46% of those questioned greet the statement that Jews are - "in league with the Freemasons" - to control the media and politics and 69% of young Muslims oppose participation in Holocaust Memorial Day. Now your statement, you have that opinion poll, there is quite a gap between them.

TP Well with the greatest respect to anybody in the room who might be a Freemason, I think the Freemasons are very frequently victims of urban myth and it is not entirely surprising to me, that they might be drawn into a sort of general theory of conspiracy. I think what is important here is that whatever people say that they believe might be happening, the real question for us is: are they going to do something to their neighbours, or others in their communities which would answer to the description of an antisemitic incident. And my view is that whatever people's ideas, if you like, about the position of Jews or indeed the position of blacks and so on, we can't really say very much about what is in people's hearts or what they say to each other in the privacy of their own homes. The only thing that we can test is will they act, will they do something which discriminates, which incites violence against one racial grouping or another or which attacks one racial grouping or another? I guess what I really meant here, Denis, is the very simple thing, I don't believe that the vast majority of people within Muslim communities, whatever their views about Israel, Palestine, whatever their views about the Jewish community are inclined to answer calls that say let's do something bad to Jews. I just don't believe it. I don't hear that at all.

DM Do you agree the argument sparked by Ken Livingstone in Tribune this week, that the charge of antisemitism is sprayed around to stop people criticising actions of the Israeli government and its security forces and other agencies.

TP No.

IDS Can I just take it back to this issue of the attitude of Muslims as a whole, obviously going to have to rely on that, towards Jews generally, whether or not that has come about as a result of activities in Palestine or whatever. I perfectly accept what you say that we have to judge by activity and what we judge through the likelihood of activity. Wouldn't it be a little bit complacent to say, however, that opinions like that which have clearly grown or appear to have grown quite dramatically quite recently cannot themselves become the precursors of future action, and that therefore would this not be justification for delving in deeper and finding out more of ulterior motives as to whether or not we think there is a likelihood over the next few years that this opinion could turn into some form of antisemitic action on their part? It may be, as you say, that it is likely that there hasn't been such action, but given that no records, I come back to this records issue, that if we don't break down that these attacks and we don't see the motivation, we really aren't in any position to say that this has or hasn't happened to a small extent, at least yet, and my concern is that the CRE has not considered as a possibility of what may begin as an element now could develop into action in the future, or do you completely dismiss that?

TP Well first, let me say that I don't think any of your Muslim colleagues would describe the current chair of CRE as in any way soft or particularly massively sympathetic to Muslims. But I think it would be absurd to suggest that somehow we have a new surge in antisemitism which is produced principally or even primarily by Muslim opinion. I make that this point for two reasons, my understanding and my experience. I try to spend a day at least outside of London, so I visit a lot of communities, I talk to a lot of people. If there is anger about foreign policy amongst most Muslims, it is not directed at all at the Jewish community, because it is directed at our own government,

so it seems to me the first point is if one's going to try to trace the connection, then we need to understand what it is that these communities actually feel. Secondly, I am not at all trying to go to say the suggestion that there may be something that is producing action there, all I'm saying is that there is nothing in our experience that says that the anger or the distress that is felt over politics in the Middle East and amongst that minority of British Muslims, who may think that there is some close relationship between a Jewish community and what's happening in the Middle East has been translated into hostile real life action. Now the question of whether it might become so is a separate one. I think we are quite a long way from that and the only reason that I am, in a way, resisting going down the road with you, is that I do think that before we get to that point, it would be a good idea if we tackled some of the continuing old fashioned, antisemitism which has always been here in this country, which for example, in the past expressed itself as what people used to call pro-Arabism. Now I think that, what I'm really trying to say here is that let's deal as best we can with the phenomenon itself before we start ascribing motivation and, if we are going to ascribe motivation and focus on one group or another, let's work out all of the groups who might be expressing some kind of antisemitism. And this, by the way, let us be clear, isn't just about Muslims, it isn't even just about the rather old, as I describe it, pro-Arab aristocracy of this country. It is also, for example, about some of our new migrant communities who have come from countries which have a terrible history of antisemitism and Jew-baiting. I think that these are all different possible causes. Before we start locating it in one particular set of communities, let's get the whole map and in there, in that point, I come to the same conclusion as you that we do need better information, but not because we want to show there is one community to blame.

DM Trevor, I'm going to stop the questions there, and that's a good place to end on, with respect to colleagues who I know could ask more and more questions, and you've got Sir Iqbal and Sir Jonathan behind you who I'm sure would love to enter into dialogue with some of the points you made. Thank you very much indeed. Thank you for giving your time, making points clear and the suggesting lines of recommendation which I found very helpful for the Committee and we're very, very grateful for you doing us the honour and courtesy of turning up this afternoon.

TP May I just say one quick thing? We are very happy to help with any further work in this, and I know you want to concentrate on the issue of antisemitism, but if I may say just one point, we think that there is often too much concentration on either failure or the disadvantage or the prejudice against some minority communities and perhaps one of the weapons against the sort of sense of antisemitism that Iain Duncan Smith has been talking about would be to remind people of the contributions and the values or value of the Jewish community, communities I should say, to the best of British Britain today. So when we think about how we tackle antisemitism, I would urge you not just to think about how we deal with violence and the security issues, but how we change people's ideas about what this community has brought to this country, because I do think, not just with the Jewish community, but with lots of others, it would help us to get along better if we understood that different communities have contributed positively to what we all call Britishness.

DM Trevor, thank you very much indeed. Can I invite Sir Iqbal Sacranie to come into the witness seat please sir.

DM Thank you very much. I think this Committee knows of you, sir, and the work of the Muslim Council of Britain, of which you have been Secretary-General of since 2002. Can I just come in with one simple question to begin with, which is are there any recommendations that you might have for the Inquiry based on the Muslim community's work to confront Islamophobia?

IS Yes, first of all Denis, can I express my gratitude and thanks to the Panel for inviting me here this afternoon. It's an important area of discussion and I'm privileged to be here this afternoon.

Yes there are, I think, some recommendations that we feel would be very useful for the Inquiry to take on board. In terms of concerns that we have with regard to antisemitism, which are very similar to the concerns we would have on Islamophobia, because both areas deal with the issue of hatred, dislike against a community and particularly also the faith as well. Although as much as definition is concerned, there isn't a very clear area which is defined, but generally I'm particularly opposed, that is understood by everyone who comes when you're dealing with antisemitism or whether you're dealing Islamophobia. Therefore the issues of relevance when you deal with Islamophobia would be very similar, we would feel, to be taken on antisemitism. One area it would be useful is the communication that we have had over the years with various inter-faith bodies, the work of inter-faith network, inter-faith foundation, the three faith forums and many other local chapters around the country have proved a very good tool in this engagement between the communities, particularly at the grass root level. We've had some very positive developments at the higher level, at the national level, with the understanding, the communication, the meetings, the joint campaigns that have been carried out. And we all feel that if this could be filtered down to the mosque and synagogue level that would be extremely helpful because the very first point is that communication, contact, dialogue, engagement which is paramount, because that removes the concept that we have in terms of the community. As we heard earlier on with Trevor, that there is real issue where people do confuse the criticism, the clear concerns in terms of the crisis in the Middle East and particularly the policies of Israel in terms of the occupation of the lands, it is a very strong issue, not just within the Muslim community generally, but of course, outside Israel. And the easiest confusion that somehow when you are anti-Israel, when you attack the Israeli policies of occupation, breach of the international legality, disregard of international law, that somehow this is related to the Jewish community as well because the Jewish community of course have great sympathy for Israel. But that distinction is to be clearly drawn. That yes, there's a clear legitimacy in us expressing opposition to the policies that we feel are unjust, unfair but that does not mean that you link that criticism with antisemitism with the Jewish people. Because as a believing Muslim, one must oppose any form of anti-Jewish hatred as you would oppose any other racist ideology and in fact the holy Koran Islamic teachings is very clear, the morality of the Koran excludes every kind of racism. Now for that interaction at the lower levels is a must, we have raised it up in our discussions with the Board of Deputies, we try to have quarterly meetings with them and we do look at some of these recommendations and one of the areas that we had looked into how we can encourage the better engagement at the lower level, i.e. at the mosque and synagogue level as well. But the other area of course that was touched early on, are the universities and colleges. That certainly is an area of concern as well, that means that we have identified, reports have come in and as a national umbrella and representing around 400 organisations we have among our affiliates the Federation of Student Islamic Societies. We have branches in different universities across the country. And we have had meetings with the executive committee of FOSIS and have looked at this area. How they can lock relations with the counterparts of the other, the National Union of Jewish Students in the colleges and

other places. And I believe that they've had discussions, they've had meetings, they will be able to again identify areas where they can work together. That I believe is one very important aspect of the work which needs to be supported, encouraged at that level and of course we have concerns about certain fringe elements, more in the universities and colleges and their campuses, but I believe now the universities have shown some strong measures in ensuring that these elements are not allowed in the campuses and therefore the mainstream have a better opportunity to engage with these sort of bodies as well. The other area that we had also touched on is identifying the use of common good. Now, the Muslim Council of Britain works for the common good that's our motto. In terms as we have campaigns which we have conducted together, for example, a very important concern which we did address collectively, was the issue about Halal meat and the Kosher religious slaughter, where we had opportunity to engage with the government in the collective way, and fortunately the animal welfare group that presented its report recommending the prohibition or abolition of religious slaughter was unaccepted by the Government. That was an excellent initiative where both of our committees worked together jointly where we both work to identify common areas in terms of strategy and how to get that message across. We are learning at the moment on some of the experiences about circumcision, how both the religious groups as far as Islam and Judaism are concerned have a very clear message in terms of how to carry it out it's processes and we feel that there is much to learn in terms of how Jewish communities which have been longer in this country have established and have areas of various practice in line with the medical ethics and the law and we are now engaging how those practices can be expanded to learn from it and the availability of such service in the community. We have also been working very closely on the census 2001 question and media campaign in terms of faith identity and this, I think, piece of legislation would not have come in place if the faith communities would not have worked as a team. And this is again where the Christians, the Jewish community, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs worked together and made a joint presentation and we were able to convince the Government the need for the faith identity to be recognised. It is a major impact on the whole Government policy and I think this is something that we all feel very proud, that working together we can achieve some very positive results. The immediate examples that I could give in terms of what is happening on the local level, national level we are identifying, but we now need to deal with the difficult issues. The difficult issue is the concern that we have on the Middle East crisis. It is not an area that can be resolved by anybody [other than] at the international conferences and we see at international level where this is being done. But what we can do as communities is not to make a situation worse and ensure that any positive growth that takes place throughout the peace process is supported, is encouraged and ensure that the respectful international legality which is, there are no two views about it, everybody would want to see that, but practically whether we come from the Muslim community, whether we come from the Jewish community, we must be consistent in ensuring that the international legality must be applied across. Once it comes out, the powerful message comes through, it will make the minds of the ordinary people things a bit more clear that it is not just an ordinary Muslim who is seen to be working about it all the time, but the people in the Jewish community who feel very strongly about it as well about it and they also believe that there has to be the commission international.

DM Thank you very much. Just a point of interest, has the MCB taken any line, for example, on the need to recognise the State of Israel and implicitly therefore said that Hamas, as the new Government of the Palestinian Authority, the future Palestinian State, should recognise it as should it other neighbour's diplomatically just as an act of diplomatic recognition?

- IS** The line that we have taken is that there has to be clear consistency. We have deplored double standards and where there is respect for international legality it must be applied across. The OIC countries, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference countries, and I believe now generally most Muslim countries have accepted the recommendation of looking at the two state solution that perhaps is it a way forward and that takes into account on both the respect for international law and international legality. So our line would be very similar, that the decision of whether a country is a recognised country, of course, at the end of the day, that people on the ground, their recognition matters. We can say whatever we want to in terms of recognition and how the country should be recognised, but it has a clear...
- DM** Sorry, can I just Sir Iqbal, can you answer yes or no? If the MCB actually says politically on Israel that the countries of the region should recognise a member of the United Nations with whom Britain has full diplomatic relations, and Hamas, in particular, should say Israel has the right to exist, we could have a debate about the board, we could have a debate about the future Palestinian state, but Israel unconditionally now and forever has the right to exist as legitimate sovereign state and member of the UN? It's a yes or no.
- IS** Yes, it's certainly there is great emphasis on what MCB says to the Muslim world and the Muslim countries. The fact is our line is very clear and consistent. Israel is a member of the UN, as a legal entity, as such and the with international legality compliance and respect for international comes in together hand in hand and therefore on that basis there is no question of us saying we should not recognise it today and I believe the OICC has again made it very clear their position about it.
- DM** Sorry, butting in, it's just that there are other colleagues here. Now I'll go to John Spellar first because I had to interrupt him in the last questioning session.
- JS** It follows on from Trevor Phillips' contribution as well, I want to talk to you about your concern about difficulties in the universities. Have you really been satisfied with the response of the university establishments to matters of extremism and intolerance in the universities? And have you expressed any views to them on this?
- IS** I believe some of the universities have taken quite a strong stance on this sort of extremism and distinct elements that have been creating a bit of a problem. But I am not too sure whether this has been applied across and this is again a clear message that comes up that when we have clear legislation in terms of incitement against hatred then the law should be applied across and I think the law needs to be. Certainly the threshold that we have at the moment is even reduced even further to our disappointment where we can clearly see a law that is an existing law that we have, its threshold doesn't really apply equally to the Jewish community or the Sikh community. As we know that they have been under the legislation had been regarded as part of the racial group and therefore the incitement to racial hatred threshold. And the law that we now see coming through will have different thresholds certainly that bit of second class legislation is there. But there again, as much as it makes it more difficult now to bring about any prosecution, at least the message in the law is there and that is to be applied.
- KM** Have you thought about the way that you work together with the Jewish community, particularly in terms of Halal and kosher and other issues that you mentioned, but you still used to boycott the Holocaust, why is that?
- IS** On the Holocaust Memorial Day, there are two issues here. One is the issue of the Holocaust, which is very clear, a moral issue and it's utterly condemned. There are no

two views about it, we have expressed a view completely. And then we have got the HMD, which is a political issue. And when we talk about visualising any such event or so, that our key message that has come out is that it should be an inclusive event. The Council has always denounced the monstrous cruelty and inhumanity that underpinned the Nazi Holocaust. As we clearly stated a response, that the Muslim Council of Britain unhesitatingly and wholeheartedly supports the Prime Minister's determination that the horrendous crime against humanity committed during the Holocaust are never forgotten. Now after the world vowed never again at the end of the Second World War, though we have seen the same barbarism again in a number of countries; Vietnam, Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Chechnya, recently in Darfur and, of course, in terms of the number of people who have been killed, we have seen a number of people dying in Palestine as well. So this common humanity called upon us to recognise the crimes perpetrated against other people. And we called for the establishment of an EU Genocide Memorial Day. Now such a day would help dispel, and I think frankly the racist notion that some people are to be regarded as being more equal than others. Every year since the HMD was inaugurated in 2001, the MCB has been subject to intimidating smears of antisemitism in the press. We have been accused of wanting to scrap the HMD out of hatred of the Jewish people. This is simply hysterical nonsense. We abhor all forms of racial or religious discrimination. What we have been seeking is the issue of inclusivity, to ensure that all people irrespective of their ethnic, race, national, religious background if they have been under the crimes or have been murdered, been annihilated then they are humans, and they should be treated the same way. It is also interesting to note that there is no shortage of Jews, including Lesley Bunder, the editor of somethingjewish.co.uk, Rabbi Shochet, who recognised that the memorial day in its present format is morally problematic. Therefore the line that the MCB has taken is not to boycott the event, but to make it very very clear that we recognise this enormously sensitive territory and if widening its scope of the day while ethically right, is not politically feasible, currently, then we should consider establishing a truly inclusive genocide memorial day. At no stage has the Muslim Council said that we need to scrap the HMD as it stands, but to ensure that this clear double standard that we've seen happening, is recognised...

KM But aren't you practising double standards by what you just said? If you believe that the case for the memorial day in terms of the international issues then, then by not attending the HMD and saying that's just because its purely for the Jewish community that we're not going to take part in that. By campaigning on an on-going basis, but showing that strength of unity to the existing HMD recognition, wouldn't that add to your bow to be able to say that we want a better integration of all those other horrible crimes that have taken place against humanity, rather than saying that we're going to make a political stance against this, but we believe in this as well?

IS Yes, the key issue comes in, is how do you get the message across? The message that comes out in terms of the issue of Holocaust is very clear, statements are being made available at the time of the anniversary and its been and comes out very very clearly. It is not double standards, when there is an issue of principle that's there. We have been discussing with the relevant authorities, even lately with the Trust in terms of trying to see how it can accommodate the deep concerns that have been felt. It's to be seen in terms of how we see the whole issue, not in terms of that particular action because as we know that the members of the Muslim community that have attended the event, we very much regret that this has been the position and we hope that we will be able to come to a solution whereby we will be able to deal with the concerns that have been expressed. But I think one must understand very, very clear, the message that comes out in itself and how it is and it's a principle stance that the MCB...

- KM** Well the message that comes across, perhaps doesn't represent the sort of views that you are putting across. Whenever you take the sort of stance that you are taking it shows a huge friction between the Muslim community and the Jewish community and that surely can't be constructive?
- IS** Khalid, we can see from the certain commentators of course and I'll agree with you that they have taken that line. They have even accused us of being an antisemite. And I think that even in terms of all those statements that we have made at times on issues of the Middle East crisis when they have been clear attacks or whatever. What do we do? We have got a certain leeway in terms of how the message goes across, but we try to get the message across to our friends in the Jewish community, they are well aware, whether it is the Chief Rabbi or the Board of Deputies, that we have at meetings, we do deal with these issues and make it absolutely clear. And I fully concur with you that there is a problem in terms of the projection area and we have to find a way out to see how it is but we must be clear together in our determination condemning what is wrong, there are no two ways about it and I think that each time myself, my colleagues who have come up on the media or so, I am sure that there is a clear unequivocal clear stance we have taken on that.
- DM** Thank you Iqbal. It's one of the difficulties that all organisations, all politics have what we might call militant tendencies, that is to say who push an extremist line with a great deal of vigour and mobilised votes and anger and younger people and councils and conferences who say you're selling out Sir Iqbal, you know you've taken a knighthood and now you're just part of the establishment, just as there a Jewish organisations who'll say every part of Palestine should be as it were, should have the flag of David fly over it - is that one of your problems that you haven't yet gone through the Neil Kinnock moment when you expelled in that tenancy and shoved them back into their boxes? Because I agree with you that 10,000 Muslims in my own constituency, the vast majority just want to get on with the normal British life and have their faith respected, and yes, would like Kashmir and Israel to be sorted out, but they're not into all this extremism?
- IS** Yes. In short it's a very difficult position to be in. When we have 46 different nationalities, different cultural, ethnic, national background...
- DM** Muslim nationalities?
- IS** Yes, yes, sorry. In terms of and within the Muslim Council of Britain, 400 organisations if you look at the structure, it's a nightmare at times working through with all this different national, regional bodies together. And one of the real major problems which we have within the umbrella body, is to try to bring in such diverse opinion together on the platform and try to work on faith. Yes, there will be, there are accusations being made quite frequently in the papers, and certain particular sections there, where there, how the position the Secretary-General takes in, but the way the MCB actually works through that is it's very important for us to understand. It's a major contribution to British society such a body, it's unique in its many ways, I don't want to appear bombastic too much of a high regard in terms of what we are, but the fact is it's a unique body, which is for example is now being looked up in many of the European countries, including the States. We have no, we don't make such claims that we represent the whole community but we do say for a fact that it is a very large section, a cross-section, which is on board. Now for their views on such important issues, is to be taken on board. And how it is taken on board? We have a central working committee, where all these organisations and all the national organisations are, by right, nominated as a one member and the others are then

elected members there. So when such issues come up, it is being discussed and debated. But one thing that really comes out is that there is also a very strong view, within the Council, and it is reflected across the country in terms of the position of us not attending. And I do object to boycott because the connotation is there, somehow denying..., and that's not the case. It's not something that we are comfortable with. It's not an easy decision because it's not just ourselves, but the lay leaders but even the members, but in times when such painful decisions have been made with the issues of principle and we have to take it on board. But is a willingness to engage and that I think is a positive sign. As long as they're discussing even in areas where we disagree I hope and pray that a time will come with some solution that will be acceptable to all sides.

DM The last question to Iain Duncan Smith. Charles Clarke is waiting outside and is also under time pressure, I am sorry, this discussion could have gone on much, much longer as it could have one with Trevor Phillips, I'm sure we all feel this frustration, but Iain a brief question, a brief answer.

IDS Well it's two very brief questions and I'm expecting two very brief answers. Sir Iqbal, we understand or certainly we have been led to believe by a number of different sources within the Muslim community that you have expressed the clear opinion to them that you wanted to see the boycott, MCB's boycott of Holocaust Memorial Day rescinded. Do you still hold that view? And perhaps you could say that publicly, do you personally wish to see the boycott of the Memorial Day rescinded or is this nonsense, the stories that we hear about your private opinion?

IS I mean, as a Secretary General, I have a clear position as being the person to lead the Council, the views of an individual person then are sometimes discarded beyond the side, you represent the views of the Council. I have my views on this issue...

IDS Can I ask you what they are?

IS Yes, I felt that...

IDS Are they rescinded?

IS It's an area which cannot be happy about it. I feel very much uncomfortable...

IDS So the answer is that they should rescind this boycott?

IS I think that the MCB needs to find a way and we are working towards finding that way...

IDS But your view is that they should rescind the boycott, sorry to hector you, but I just need a clear answer.

IS I wish we could come to a solution where we would be comfortable attending the Memorial...

IDS But your personal view is, Sir Iqbal, is that they should rescind this boycott?

IS My personal view is that the Council, it's not at the end of the day a personal view Iain, that really matters...

IDS You must have a personal view as a human being sitting there...

- IS** Indeed....
- IDS** Can I just press you for a personal view, forget your....
- IS** I wish...
- IDS** Just a personal view, whether you think it's a good thing or not.
- IS** I wish one could simply say that the personal view comes in here. I will be able to give a personal view.
- IDS** A personal opinion?
- IS** Iain, when I finish my term as Secretary General...
- DM** I think Sir Iqbal has made his point and we're all politicians here. Sir Iqbal thank you very much. This entire conversation could have lasted much longer, but it's very courteous of you to have come and given us so much time. We really appreciate the frankness with which you've replied to our questions. Thanks.
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- DM** Home Secretary, welcome. We've been doing first names, so I might risk a Charles with you, sir. Thank you for coming along, we saw you on the screen moments ago leading on from the second reading of this important Bill. We've had some fascinating evidence over the last three sessions and we've had some very interesting questions to Trevor Phillips and Sir Iqbal Sacranie just now. Paul Goggins, the Minister at the Home Office who has been very, very cooperative with this Commission Inquiry told us last week that the situation is stable and yet both ACPO and the Community Security Trust says that there is a rise in antisemitism in the past few years. Are you happy that the Government as a whole really knows what's going on when there seems to be this discrepancy of opinion? It's a point that Trevor Phillips made too, just whether we've really got a tight enough grip on the statistics on the ground. In the many areas of responsibilities you have, do you feel that we really are on top of this?
- CC** Firstly I think there is a difficulty, Denis, always when you talk about knowledge in this area. There is a great deal of intelligence about what happens, I mean intelligence in the soft sense, rather than the hard sense of the word. It is true that because of the different ways of measuring crime, particularly crime based on religious or race-hatred in different parts of the country, it's not always easy to get a totally consistent picture. The work for example of Community Security Trust with their report recently, and indeed its consistent series of reports, has been very, very positive aspect to help understand what's happening, but and I have to say that I think the most important thing is to understand the general communities that we are talking about, rather than specific statistical measure. So I wouldn't say confident a 100% that we know everything that's happening but I think our general understanding is good and I think community relations, particularly given the massive pressures that they've been under in the last year, are relatively weak. Sorry, community relations are strong, community pressures are weak.
- DM** Let me open it up to colleagues. Tim.
- TB** I wonder Charles if I could concentrate on the education side, because it's a common interest of ours and experience of ours. I said to Trevor Phillips that my perception is

that universities ought to be a place of learning and that on the whole, there is a positive correlation between levels of learning and people's tolerance and ability to make a positive contribution in this society. We did have evidence, both from Trevor who answered interestingly on that, and also from the UJS earlier which expressed, I think it is fair to say, some considerable concern about what had happened in a number of institutions. I think the exact pattern of whether, in intelligence terms, that is political extremism masquerading as religious expression, or whether it's a kind of religious extremism which is coming out in political violence or threats of violence or boycotts, is less clear. But do you feel, partly in terms of the legislation, there is, for example in the positive duty on higher education institutions to promote good race relations, the loose touch but nevertheless existing regulation of student unions, responsibilities of vice-chancellors, do you feel there is a Governmental handle on this, would you like to tell the Committee whether you think there is an area of concern here and something to which you would wish to pay attention?

CC There's been a long standing issue on campuses, I mean you will recall Tim from your time as a minister in this field, the Zionism is racism debate which went on in very sharp ways and has been a very strong factor for 30 years or so. And I believe it's entirely correct to say as you say and as I saw the UJS had said that there are issues which need to be addressed. Do I believe that a fundamental change is needed, for example in the regulation of student unions or universities? I don't. Do I think a firm lead is needed both from vice-chancellors and from presidents and executives of student unions? Yes I do. And if there is an issue where that lead is not being properly offered, then I think it is an important matter to be taken up and changed. Personally I regret, as you know from the debates we had in the House, the fact that we didn't make the law against the incitement of hatred on basis of religious belief as strong as I think we should have done. There was division in the House, as you know on that question, and I regret that we don't have as quite as strong legislation on incitement on the basis of religious belief, incitement to hatred on religious belief as we do on incitement of hatred on the basis of race and I hope that at some point Parliament will return to that and look at it again, because I think it is quite important. So my view of the situation is to review it very carefully, to stand firmly against any effort by anybody to bring hatred and discrimination into campuses and to be very rigorous in dealing with it. Do I think there is a deep systemic problem here? I think that would be an exaggeration, I don't think that is this the case. I think there are issues that need to be addressed, but not a deep systemic problem.

TB Presumably the faith hate responsibility should lie with the vice-chancellors and indeed with NUS or student union presidents?

CC Indeed.

TB So to handle on this situation with either CRE or the law or yourself involved only as a last resort?

CC Precisely, I mean the law is a device to deal with that, but the most important thing is to promote very strong and good and this is the word you used earlier "tolerant" relations on campus I think, is entirely correct and I think it's very, very important indeed to do that. My believe is that, particularly with the very large number of international students on campuses these days, there is a desire of those authorities in general to make for very solid community relations and I think student unions as well as vice-chancellors do a lot in that now.

SH Just as a matter of interest, have you actually had any recent discussions with the secretary state of education on this issue?

- CC** Not on this particular issue recently. I have had an informal discussion, I should emphasise informal, very recently with the minister of State for Higher Education, Bill Rammell, on this matter and we had some quite a substantial discussion about this question. But that was entirely informal and in the margins of another event that were at.
- SH** Thank you.
- IDS** Home Secretary, can I just bring you back to the issues surrounding the first question by the Chairman here this afternoon? When I first came to this Committee, I assumed automatically that we would get, be able to get from Government, a clear, a very clear picture of what was happening out there in terms of antisemitism. I have been astounded really over the various inquiries with one of your Ministers and others and the police, to discover that actually, at best it's patchy, at worst it's impossible to breakdown what is actually happening and to define and to decide to what extent antisemitism is a problem, and if so, has it risen greatly? I was struck by Mr Goggins' view that it was stable, and yet I notice in the Home Office's own report today to this Committee, it's hugely leans on the CST's own findings which show that it's clearly not stable and that it has risen, and risen, one would say, dramatically. There has been a rise of some 42% in antisemitic related incidents then I wouldn't call that stable, yet Mr Goggins said about that that it was stable. When we talked to the police, the police said some of them collect the data on antisemitism, some don't, so it's impossible to get a sense of around the country - London does, the Metropolitan area does, but others don't. Can I just press you Home Secretary, do you think this is sufficient at the moment? Or should we really now look to try and break this down further so that ministers don't make statements on which they really don't have any basis?
- CC** Well I don't accept the implicit criticism you're making of Paul Goggins in saying that Iain, but I do think that you're right that we need a proper statistical basis for looking into all these things. And ever since I have known these matters, defining what is violent crime has been the single most difficult problem to define statistically, both for the police and other agencies. And how to relate violent crime in general to recorded violent crime, because of course one of the key problems for many violent crimes is that they're not recorded. The classic example is domestic violence, but it also extends to many sex-oriented crimes and some race-oriented crimes and one of the big issues to being to get people to report and therefore record the crimes to which they have been subject. Now I have become so concerned about this problem of the measurement of statistics, that you may or may not have seen, that shortly after Christmas I appointed a very senior group to review the whole, with the Office of National Statistics, the whole method in which data is collected on actually all violent crime, it certainly included this aspect of violent crime and I asked colleagues in other parties, I asked David Davis of the Conservatives for example, whether he'd be ready to nominate somebody, and indeed has done. And that group is now starting to meet to try and get this right. So I'm not as surprised as you were when you came to look at this, at the absence of coherent statistics and I am taking steps to deal with it as well. Nevertheless, I think it's important to focus, as I tried to say earlier, yes on statistical question, but even more important on the assessment of the state of affairs if I can put it across the country, and that's why I don't think it's unreasonable to give credit to the Community Security Trust for the quite detailed reporting process that it has established.
- IDS** Can I just ask one follow up? On that basis then, as we have you in front of us, and because the CST evidence is quoted in the Home Office Report, is it your opinion that

we have a reason to be concerned about antisemitism and that we should consider there have been legitimate numbers of rise in the number of attacks and therefore would you think that this is not stable, if anything it is actually a matter for concern?

CC Well any antisemitic crime is a matter for concern, and certainly therefore it is a matter of concern, as are other crimes of hatred against people on the basis of their religious belief or their racial status. I believe that it is very important that we drive these out and I think they're higher than they should be and that they should be reduced. It was in fact after 7/7, possibly the single biggest worry that we had about on-going events other than the possibility of future attacks as to what would be the impact of these events on community security across the country in a variety of different ways. But I think what the response to 7/7 and then 21/7 showed, was a real strength in most communities in this country of all faiths and faith leaders to work together in a very coherent way. So yes, I think it's right to express concern about the level of antisemitism in this country, but I also think it's important to temper that with the knowledge that, in many communities, people are working very effectively together to deal with hatred crimes of that type.

IDS I accept that, but a very short question, just obviously a small answer, because the CST stuff is included in the Home Office figures which show, what is, I think, quite a significant rise and therefore they have that authority of being included in the Home Office Report to us, is your opinion, therefore, that the situation is not stable and that is one of the good reasons for being particularly concerned about this bearing in mind, this is a community looking at antisemitism? I'm sure there are other areas too, but we are looking at this particularly narrow point. Do you think it's not stable is the key question on my mind?

CC Well stability is a word which is difficult to define isn't it? I mean you're trying to press me to say that I think it's not stable, I'm not prepared to make that remark. What I'm prepared to make the remark, is that any degree of antisemitism is more than it should be and that we have to focus on fighting it in every way that we can, and I think that's not an unreasonable thing for me to say.

SH Charles, may I just ask you about something that in fact we haven't discussed this afternoon, and that's victimisation. It's something that concerns me greatly. We have in Northern Ireland, now we've had a fairly peaceful situation for about 10 years, we've a huge number of immigrants coming from Eastern Europe and all over the place but when you have been attacked and we have horribly had a very serious rise in hate crime in Northern Ireland, and we do have the incitement religious hatred legislation on the statute books for about 20 years, as you know, without a successful prosecution. The really serious issue in Northern Ireland, and I think right across the United Kingdom, is victimisation where people are really scared about making a complaint. So even though we've talked about the statistics and how measure them, there is still a real fear, if I could say to the police (a) it might not be taken seriously and if it's taken seriously, they are going to come after my family. How could we strengthen the law, should it be strengthened? And if so, how could we strengthen it to give greater protection and confidence, and confidence, in the police and the judicial system itself?

CC I think the single most important thing to do, is to have a strong local policing structure, which means that anybody who stands up and gives testimony of hatred that is taking place, is protected by that community. Even in the circumstances less extreme than those in some parts of Northern Ireland, the fact is that we all know there are people who are frightened to speak in some communities about a range of different crimes and the measures to deal with that, I think as I say, are strongly with

the policing plus protection of the witnesses and a number of different things that we have done in that regard and protection for victims. Now, it's by steadily shifting the balance at one end with the group of, essentially, bullying and dangerous elements trying to oppress the rest of the community, versus the community lacking confidence to push back the other way with the support of local policing. That's the only way I really believe you can tackle it. Do I believe that changes in the law themselves will help that tack, then maybe. But the most important single thing is to build a culturally strong community in which people are able to speak for themselves and that's why the priority we've got is for neighbourhood policing in whatever we can achieve it.

SH Right, if I can just follow up on that. It actually moves onto my second question. As you know in Northern Ireland, we had a serious problem of under-representation in the police service in Northern Ireland from the Catholic community, due largely to intimidation and murder and targeting by Republicans of Catholics. We introduced for a temporary basis 50/50 recruitment, in other words positive discrimination in favour of those of the Catholic faith to come into the police service. Do you as Home Secretary believe we should have some form of positive discrimination for ethnic minorities and for the Jewish community to be more representative, more quickly, within local policing whether it be community safety policing or regular police officers?

CC I certainly think we should have more representation of the whole community and policing, including ethnic minorities, including the Jewish community. I am not in favour of the word positive discrimination myself, I never have been.

SH So it's alright for Northern Ireland, but not for the rest of the United Kingdom?

CC Are you asking me my view, because I'm telling you my view, I am in favour of the phrase positive action is what I was going to say. Because I believe that actually what is needed is to positively take steps to increase the recruitment of the various communities into the police. Now I have always argued myself, a long time ago, I remember launching a Runnymede Trust report which was extremely interesting on these matters, the way to do this, is to build a very strong relationship between the police and those local communities with whom they are. And as you travel around Britain, I won't say Northern Ireland, you find that some communities where the police are very strong in relations in local communities and then recruitment flows from that, other communities where that doesn't happen still today and I think that is the way to go. Now, it's very difficult, you can't legislate, for example you mentioned Catholics, to decide to become police officers in Northern Ireland, you can only build a state of affairs where the police force is closer to the Catholic community and develops means of doing that and that's my view of all communities by the way. I say Catholic because you asked me. But that's my view of the police's relationship towards communities.

SH Sorry, I should actually clarify that this Government, the British Government, Labour Government, did actually legislate for positive discrimination on the face of the legislation when in fact it is now a statutory obligation on the Chief Constable of Northern Ireland to ensure that 50% of the recruits to the police service are from the Roman Catholic faith under any the statutory obligation. So you're in favour of positive action, how much energy, how much of the resources of the Home Office are actually instead of gathering statistics and actually ploughed into promoting positive action for communities to be more represented within the police service?

CC Quite a lot. Dare I say an immense amount, not an immense amount, but quite a lot and there is a big focus on this, there really is. There is a focus also, not only on

recruitment and if you talk to Sir Ian Blair, the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police, he will tell me, as he did the other day, that the proportion of people from a variety of ethnic minority communities were being recruited to the Metropolitan Police today, this was a couple of weeks ago, is now at absolutely historic levels and it is happening. Then after that point, to ensure that people who are recruited are able to progress through the force to leadership positions, in ways which are desirable. So a lot of work has gone into this. To speak absolutely candidly, I'm not certain to what extent the police have given the same priority to the Jewish community in the context of this inquiry, as it has to some other communities and I think it's an appropriate question for you to raise and for you to recommend on, if you feel that something that's worth looking at, in particular. The principle which I believe, is that we should be working with all communities and not particular communities, but there is no doubt that following the killing of Steven Lawrence that there was a particular effort made with the Afro-Caribbean community and there is today a considerable effort being made with some of the Asian communities and I'm not certain if that's happened to the same extent with the Jewish community, and I think it would be an appropriate question for you to reflect on as a Committee and see what you felt ought to be done.

SH Thank you.

DM Thank you Charles. And on that indeed, the Community Security Trust say that Jewish individuals and people and organisations have to spend about £5 million a year on enhanced security in their synagogues, their schools, that's pretty bad isn't it, that British citizens have to fork out that amount of money because there is an element of fear in their lives, which on the whole, shouldn't be there and Jews are statistically, and you make a point of how statistics and the definition of crime, three times more likely to be attacked, than say you or I are, in the streets. Again, that's rather a worrying statistic for a very tolerant and well integrated country like the UK.

CC Well of course it is, and particularly the security of Jewish buildings. I met the Board of Deputies to discuss that some months ago, because there are real issues that are involved in this and despite what I said a second ago, if you look at the Community Security Trust Annual Report, you will see the focus on the discussions with the Commissioner and also Deputy Commissioner Andy Hayman on these questions as well. There is a very active debate about how to deal with these things and if the implication of your question is that we should do even more to provide security, well I agree. I would say actually, there is a whole string of measures we are doing to develop security in these areas and we would continue to do that.

DM Looking to an international perspective on this the front page of the current *Nouvel Observateur* talks about the return of...

CC I missed it this week unfortunately.

DM I'll put it on the board for you, it has a big discussion about the rise of antisemitism, Jews say that they don't want to walk the streets of Paris wearing a Star of David or a Kippah for fear of attack. This is all after the murder and torture to death in fact of a young Jew because the people who kidnapped him thought that he, as a Jew, his family and community would have the money to pay up the kidnap. But in Lithuania, Poland, even the new Pope is condemning antisemitism. How do we handle the international aspect on this I'm thinking particularly in dealing with paedophile crime, you and the police have been pretty tough in tracing back paedophile crime to its international origins when it comes down the internet. You haven't just allowed yourself to be hemmed in by dealing with it exclusively in Britain, just as we've been

prepared to prosecute and change our law to allow the prosecution of British paedophiles to crimes they commit thousands of miles from the UK, but under British law. Do we need now an international policy on antisemitism because there is the most poisonous stuff available on the web, the most poisonous stuff being circulated, not generated within the UK. How does the Home Office respond to that aspect and are there lessons from dealing with paedophile internet activity that we should be looking at in terms of antisemitic images and messages on the net that are read and opened up by British citizens here?

CC This is a major question. At the level at which you ask it, I can answer it fairly easily, at the level slightly deeper than you ask, I would think it's more difficult. We discussed at the G8, the Justice and Home Affairs' ministers in Sheffield last June, the G8 countries, how we could deal with websites which promote hatred, incitement to hatred, on the basis of race of which there is a variety of different kinds. We also discussed at the same meeting, as you say, child pornography and how to deal with that. We have agreed a whole set of steps, which I'm not going into detail about, to deal with those hate sites, if I can put it like that, which are very, very important for a variety of different reasons. There are much less easy to deal with than you might think, simply because the location of the servers and the websites varies internationally so very widely. I hope that the Russian presidency of the G8, which has now commenced, as you know, will take this very seriously. I have been assured that they will, and that has important implication in taking these issues even more widely and there is substantial work taking place to try and deal with this kind of issue which is a very serious one. It's wider than simply promoting antisemitism, it also includes incitement to religious hatred in a variety of ways - promotion of terrorism in different ways and so on. And of course, in each country where this is discussed, the major free speech issues of the types that we have debated in the House here, which are not always easy to resolve. And that takes me on to the deeper question, which I think is, there has been discussion in the European Union of having a directive on racism and xenophobia, and when we discussed it, it was actually a very difficult question to get agreement, because the histories, even across the 25 EU countries, are all so different in relation to particular forms of race-hate which have developed in the history of different countries in different ways. It's quite difficult to get any kind of consensus about the kind of language that one is talking about to deal with that in a proper way and the kind of measures that should be taken. As it happens, I was visiting North Africa the week before last, and just at the time of David Irving's trial in Vienna and, of course, the issue of Holocaust denial was an issue that was raised substantially there and I perfectly understand why in Austria and Germany they have such a law and I think that's the state of affairs but what I'm trying to say, Denis, is that, I think, disentangling your proposition that we ought not to have websites which promote race-hatred, with which I completely agree, and on which we are acting, from precisely what should be the, kind of, world of free speech legislation, if I can put it like this, is a very tough call indeed.

DM But should, for example, if we know, that a number of these sites are originated in country A or B, should we be inviting the Foreign Office to make either private or public the diplomatic demarche to those governments to say look...

CC I mean, you know the Foreign Office better than I do, its, I won't say it's Byzantine workings, for fear of being accused of being pro-Turkish, but the way in which it operates. I would say as the Home Secretary, that that we're working well with the Foreign Office on these types of issues to include the whole suite of Home Office policy concerns in the international policy stance of the Foreign Office.

DM Tim...

- TB** Really following on with that train of thought, one element of international agreement we've reached is the OSCE Berlin Declaration, which is now some three and a half years old. The impression given to us in the evidence was that Berlin had a leading and exemplary role in that and I don't seek to criticise that and I'm not suggesting that you should finger any participant colleagues, but following on that as an example, do you see it as a way of perhaps leveraging up standards within the European area initially and possibly with a wider international resonance? And is there anything else we can do in terms of monitoring it, reporting to Parliament on it? Or giving it a higher profile?
- CC** I do think it's a very useful lever, I think we should be confident that we are doing what we should in that context, but shouldn't be complacent about that in any way. I think there is a very substantial amount of educational work that is necessary and that's an important component in the OSCE Berlin declaration and I think, for example, the important Holocaust Memorial Day, but also the range of educational support programmes which take place, is very, very important indeed. And I think the frightening thing is the constant need to educate about the truth in our history in relation to these areas and I think that's what we have to promote all the time. And all I'll say is that I think it is not treated in quite the same way in all the countries in the European Union, or I should say in the OSCE, and I think that we need to continually work forward.
- IDS** A very short question - when Paul Goggins was in front of us last time, this is no criticism on him generally because he didn't have any notice of this question, but we got into the David Irving territory, just simply because it was a matter of some prominence at that time and, Home Secretary, you've touched on it now. Can I just confirm in your own view, that this crime itself in Austria would have been, had they wished to, they could have appealed for extradition to have Mr Irving sent to Austria for trial, but at no stage did they, but had they done so it's an extraditable offence, in your opinion, it's not one that we would have taken a view about?
- CC** My understanding is that that's not the case. Philip Johnson, the excellent Home Affairs correspondent for the Daily Telegraph, not somebody with whom I agree on everything, but he wrote a very interesting piece on precisely that point some while ago, which provoked me to look into the situation. I'll write to you Iain, if I'm incorrect in what I'm saying, but I don't believe that the warrant would have allowed for that to happen because it relates to offences which have been in both countries as being offences that need to be addressed, but I will double-check, my memory...
- IDS** I'd be grateful because Paul Goggins thought it was, and if you don't think it could be, if you could clear that up for the Committee, that would be great.
- CC** Yes, I will.
- DM** On a broader political point, Mr Berlusconi was savagely criticised by many politicians when he compared Martin Schultz, the leader of the Social Democratic the German Social Democrats, in the European Parliament to a concentration camp guard, even to the point of Mr Schroeder cancelling holidays and it was a terrible row, but Ken Livingstone, when he compares a Jewish reporter to a concentration camp guard, is, this week in Tribune, defending his remarks as just a harmless bit of Daily Mail bashing. What's your view on that?
- CC** Really doing a nice *tour d'horizons* of political scandals of our age, which normally as Home Secretary, I try and avoid.

DM Well you're a politician Charles...

CC Let me see if I can try and answer your question.

DM Not *just* the Home Secretary.

CC What I actually think about this and I think it is a very serious, so all joking aside, I think it's a very, very serious question. I think that free speech is something which should only be curtailed in the most extreme circumstances. The examples where we do do that are incitement, and slander and libel, incitement to violence, incitement to hatred on the basis of religious belief or racism, glorification of terrorism and so on. I think there is a very small number of areas where it's necessary to restrain freedom of speech. I do think it is necessary, I think that sometimes freedom of speech by one individual can violate the freedom of the society as a whole and indeed even threaten other individuals and I defend the legislation that we have emerged and developed in this country to deal with that - first point. Second point, I'm in favour of promoting as strongly as we can a basis of tolerance towards others whose views are different and respect for others, I don't mean respect in the word of respect agenda which we we're debating in Parliament today but a general respect for others. But thirdly, I think it's important to use that freedom of speech with responsibility and care and, say for example I think our newspapers are right, you'll very rarely hear me say this, not to publish the Danish cartoons and took a responsible, in my opinion, correct decision to operate in that way. I can't argue with their right to publish the cartoon, but I can argue with the judgement of those who decided to publish the cartoons. I'd say exactly that in relation to the phrase "concentration camp guard", it was one of those deeply insulting remarks that could be given to anybody in any way, and I think it's correct that it should be taken up and dealt with. So the implication that if I think that neither Mr Berlusconi nor Mr Livingstone were right to use the phrase concentration camp guard in the general political abuse that sometimes take place, wherever it might be. That doesn't deal with the question of what the appropriate penalty should be. I'm not therefore going to argue whether the right penalty was operated, but I think the phrase concentration camp guard is a deeply insulting one, and one which should be not part of a generally civilised political debate. I understand why Martin Schultz, who I've spoken to about this, was shocked that that should be used.

DM Well we don't want to enter into discussion as to whether Mr Berlusconi or Mr Livingstone are in the same camp on this issue so to speak. But in the same article, it's an important one, Ken Livingstone says that the charge of antisemitism is immediately brought up to stop any criticism of the State of Israel, but isn't there an equal and opposite danger that in criticising the state of the actions of what Israeli soldiers and governments do, and there are some pretty horrible things that have been done, that one actually allows, one opens the door slightly, to a glide from criticising Israel into just having a go at Jews in this country and making them feel uncomfortable about even defending a countries to which they feel very closely attached.

CC I think there is a fundamental difference about antisemitism and attacking Jews for the race or for their faith than criticising actions from time to time in the State of Israel, I think they are different things, and I think most people would accept that they are different things, and they should be treated on that basis. But certainly images, by images I'm not meaning to demean it, such as concentration camp guard, are not something about criticising the current State of Israel, they are things about something deep in the history of the Jewish, deep in Jewish history, which is a

deliberately provocative act and that can't be ignored. The way that language is used, can't be entirely separated from the circumstances in which it is used.

DM Well thank you Home Secretary. Could I just ask you, and this is in the form of a Select Committee Inquiry, we will be producing a report with all the evidence and, by the way, may I thank the Home Office and Paul Goggins and the Police Services for first rate evidence, first rate documentation and indeed the Attorney General who talked to us at great length and in a fascinating exchange. But might I just ask you if you would accept once the report is published with recommendations, you would give us a written reply to it, on behalf of....

CC I will accept, and I won't guarantee to agree with everything you say....

DM No, of course.

CC I will. And the reason why I was ready when you asked me to come to the Committee and to encourage Paul to come and to encourage others to come, is that I think it's an important part of our national life and I think that it's important to properly debate and your device is an important way of doing that, so I'd welcome it and of course I will respond.

DM Thank you very much and see you at the vote in a few hours time if there is one.

CC Indeed.

DM Thank you.

DM I think we should just carry straight on, if the Chief Rabbi is ready? He's been sitting there very patiently.

Sir Jonathan, thank you very much for coming along and I hope you've enjoyed listening to the questions and to some extent, I think we might have enjoyed having a four way dialogue. You're not a man who flees from discussion, I'm sure there'll be plenty of other chances of that happening. You said on BBC television, I saw it around New Year, that there was a tsunami of antisemitism, that was a pretty big exaggeration?

RJS Mr Chairman, if may I just begin by thanking you for the privilege of being invited to address you, and to thank you for this inquiry itself, which I think is an important one. To say on this year of 350th anniversary of British Jewry how much Jews have had reason to be thankful to Britain for being one of the most tolerant and welcoming societies that Jews have ever experienced in 4,000 years of history and has given much to us and we hope we have given a lot back in return; and to welcome the chance to clarify some issues on which there is sometimes much confusion. To make it clear that my concern with antisemitism does not diminish my concern for prejudice directed against other communities, such as Islamophobia. Let me say first of all about the, it was actually on radio, but why I used that rather dramatic image. And of course I apologise if it caused offence, which was the last thing I intended. My concern was to draw attention to what is, irretrievably a global phenomenon. When we use a highly-charged word like antisemitism, we tend to associate it with the other mental associations which we bring to bear. So we think about the 1930's and we fail to see what is happening, because what is happening is different, in kind, from what was happening then. Then one could talk about national cultures being

antisemitic, antisemitism being part of public discourse in certain countries and so on. Today, the phenomenon is completely different. What we have now is, courtesy of internet, satellite and cable television and other technologies, is the possibility of globalising hate, and that is what is happening in the case of antisemitism at the moment. To give you some obvious examples, the 40 part prime-time television series to coincide with Ramadan on Egyptian national television in 2002, a dramatisation of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. In 2003, a similar and even more savage portrayal of Jews on Syrian national television, again a 40 part series to coincide with Ramadan. An exhibition in the National Library of Cairo of the sacred texts of the Jews in 2003 an official which showed, amongst the bible and the Talmud, the Protocols of the Elders of Zion as one of the sacred texts of the Jews. If I can give you a very tiny, one single example to give you the tonality of what I'm speaking about. 13 May 2005, on Palestinian television, Sheikh Ibrahim Mudeiris says the following - *"the Jews are a virus resembling AIDS from which the entire world suffers, you will find that the Jews were behind all the civil strife in this world. The Jews are behind the suffering of the nations. It was the Jews who provoked Marxism to wage war against the entire world. Yes, perhaps some of them were killed and some burnt, but they are inflating this in order to win over the media and gain the world's sympathy."* In September 2004, a Turkish journalist, writing in the Turkish press gives the following examples of what he regards as a sharp upturn in antisemitism in the Turkish national media. He says that in the past few years Jews, not Israel here, Jews, have been blamed in the Turkish press for murdering 335 children and teachers in Beslan, the barbarism of 9/11 was a Jewish plot, Turkish society and values are being destroyed by the Jews, it is the Jews who are cutting off heads in Iraq. They, the Jews, are so blinded with hatred that in order to conceal the Jewish role in all of that, they sometimes butcher their fellow Jews as well. It was the Jews who bombed their own synagogues, who when their own families died, they shed false tears.

Now that is happening of course a long way from here, so why do I raise it here? Because hate today it is global and therefore it is picked up, it is not part of a national culture, it is not broadcast, it is narrow-cast. Much of it is not in the English language, how do we see its effects? Front page of The Times, lead item, 11 August 2004, The Times interviewed two Iraqi born Britons, who have gone to join forces in Najaf and it reports one as of them as saying, "I don't know if you have been to Golders Green, it's full of Jews, we had many chances to go there and kill people. I even had Jewish friends, I could easily have got them home and killed them". Of course, what moved me to get involved in this, because I've never, ever spoken about antisemitism before 28 February 2002, I had never experienced antisemitism before then, was of course a trial in London of a cleric who, amongst other things was recorded on video, presented to court, by saying in answer to the question: How do you fight the Jews; he answered: "You kill the Jews". Now obviously this comes back to me in certain obvious pastoral ways. The young man already some years ago, called David Meyers who was, a gentle and very saintly young rabbinical student, in a rabbinical seminary in the North of England, was sitting in a bus in North London, reading a religious text when he was stabbed 23 times and only very, very narrowly escaped death. So we are dealing here with the phenomenon which is global in its environment, which is largely invisible and inaudible to most Britons. If you were to ask me is Britain an antisemitic society, the answer is manifestly and obviously no. It is one of the least antisemitic societies in the world, but there is a global problem and it is picked up by individuals in Britain as elsewhere.

DM Thank you. So your reference to tsunami was in a global context rather than specifically in the UK?

- RJS** Obviously. I think in the United Kingdom, if you compare figures on antisemitic attitudes of Britons in general, they are lower than those of Americans, in general in the United States. So this is a very tolerant country indeed, which I've said many, many times in public, whenever interviewed.
- TB** Can I thank you very much Sir Jonathan for that remarkably eloquent account of how you see it. I think it's left us in a sense stunned into silence. Can I invite you to lead it back towards the Inquiry? I think we needed to hear that, but what I'm feeling after is quite a lot of the discussion, including that which you would have heard with the Home Secretary for example, has centred around the physical manifestations of antisemitism in our community and the attacks and the violence and the issues which are dealt with day to day by the Community Security Trust as well as your own community members. What I'd like to know is how much in a sense that is a proxy for the antisemitism which you say is at least a part of British life, albeit a small part. Is it in a sense an alternative expression for these particularly horrible views and is there a danger, for example, that the Inquiry will get side-tracked into looking at the physical evidence, because the physical evidence exists and that the horror of people's attitudes may not be sufficiently attended to and possibly, as part of this, is there any measure you can produce which has any conviction as to the extent of peoples' minds? I mean we've heard Trevor Phillips earlier say I can't in the end decide what goes on inside or is said in the privacy of somebody's home and I think we all understand that. But I think that somewhere around I'm feeling for saying, or asking you to comment on how much we should be spending our time, and on our report, on the hard evidence of specific hate crimes, that's one side, how much should we be matching this with the consideration of the wider context and possibly just to look forward and be a little more positive about this, any way in which we can influence opinion across the nation to make that wider context more favourable towards tolerance and your community, and indeed in my view the benefit of the country generally? How can we wrestle with this?
- RJS** Well thank goodness, I thank the Lord daily, that I'm not a politician because it's far too demanding a task for me. But I am very often reminded of the difference in time-scales that religious leaders and politicians have. Like Harold Wilson famously said, a week is a long time in politics, and Psalm 90 says that a thousand years are in Your eyes but as yesterday when it is passed. And therefore I have just tried to introduce, physically in terms of the global environment, but let me now do so temporally in terms of our time horizons. I have, if I were asked, you know, where on the map of history are we in Europe today, the short answer is we are not in 1938 Kristallnacht, we are not in 1942 the Wansee conference, we are not in 1933. We are in 1862, when a secular Jew, erstwhile colleague of Karl Marx, Moses Hess wrote a book called Rome and Jerusalem in which he first diagnosed what later became known as antisemitism. The term itself was not coined until seventeen years later. So I'm giving you an early warning. But the early warning is this. We are dealing with a global environment which is very dangerous indeed. We have been in the West going through what is perhaps the longest peace-time economic boom in living memory. What is being stored up today, what that might bring, if God forbid, there were major further terrorist attacks, a global recession and so on and so forth I would be very worried indeed. On 27 January 2000, I was very privileged to be in Stockholm where over 20 Heads of State of European countries gathered together to commit themselves, individually, to programmes of Holocaust education. What I'm suggesting today is that that now needs not to be individual alone, but to be collective, because unless collective action is taken, then I worry that we will have been passive bystanders to a phenomenon whose danger is a long way off, but very real. So I am urging you not simply to look precisely at whether there are more CST recorded or police recorded attacks in 2005 than in 2004. We know 2005 we had 37

attacks on Jewish school kids, 11 on university students. In 2004, slightly different, 28 school kids, 18 university students. Take it for granted that if it were not real in the present, I wouldn't have troubled you today. I don't like it when kids at Jewish schools, Jews Free School in Kenton and King Solomon in Redbridge and so on, feel afraid to go home because they are under attack. I have been to three university campuses in the last two weeks, I don't like it when our students do feel under threat. But I don't want to exaggerate. If I want to draw your attention to one thing above all others, it's the need to monitor this phenomenon, the creation of a potentially, very dangerous discourse. But of course what is happening here and let me make it very clear, is a deliberate blurring by people who are hostile of Jews, between criticism of Israel and criticism of Jews, don't forget when a synagogue has a suicide bombing attack in Djerba or two in Istanbul or synagogues are fire-bombed in Paris or Jewish schools are burnt down to the ground in Marseilles, these are Jewish targets, they are not Israeli targets. And it is not the Jewish community, but those who are hostile to it, who it seemed to be blurring that distinction.

IDS Chief Rabbi, can I just take you back some of the evidence that you would have heard today, or views expressed. We heard from the CRE, Trevor Phillips, that he didn't agree that the views of Muslim people as expressed in the poll that the Chairman read out and we followed up, he didn't think that that was linked to antisemitism although it expressed very strong views in the poll about Jews, he didn't think it would lead to any antisemitic activity. He didn't think there was a concern and, I'm trying to get him right about this, he didn't think that that connection should be made and his people and he did not feel that was happening on the ground. I mean you were listening to that at the back at the time, did you share that view that there is a disconnect between what we see in that evidence, or do you have a sense that ...

RJS One of the most wonderful things ever said about the Jewish people was the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, I am always delighted to note the Jews control the media, the finance, the banks and the economy. As I often say to my own members, sometimes we can't even control the synagogue board meetings, so it's a wonderfully flattering portrait. Mr Chairman challenged Trevor Phillips on two statistics, one about Jews and Freemasons and one about something else. If I had been sitting where Mr Chairman is sitting now, I would have raised a quite different statistic from the same Populus poll, which is that 37% of those questioned thought that British Jews were a legitimate target. Now that is the figure from the same poll, and it is that figure, not the others, that give me concern.

IDS On that basis then, would it be right to assume that you would take a view that it is impossible to disconnect an expressed opinion with potential action, not saying it necessarily leads to it, but it would not be right to assume that it could not lead to action?

RJS There was a great defender of freedom called Voltaire who in 1761 published an article in his philosophical dictionary in which he described Jews as the most superstitious and barbarian nation. Still, he said, we ought not to burn them. Less than two centuries later, Jews were being burnt, so what is said today, can be thought tomorrow and acted on the day after.

IDS That's very clear and can I follow up a little bit from this? I'd just be interested in general views, we've heard quite a lot from you recently in the media about this issue and therefore I'd like just to pick you up on a couple of facts. The Synod quite recently voted to disinvest, I think is the term used these days, disinvest themselves of shares or any other holdings of Caterpillar, I think, and the reason they gave for that was that Caterpillar had produced equipment which was involved in the building of

the Wall and the knocking down of Palestinian homes. Now you at the time expressed quite a strong view about that, others did too, you were no means alone, do you still stand by the view that this is, would be a retrograde action, insofar as it encourages antisemitic, that's a strong word to say, it encourages antisemitic activity, but it certainly encourages those with a tendency towards that, to feel as though this is now gaining purchase elsewhere.

RJS I will answer that question, but given what I've heard today, I wonder if I might just preface it with a clarification. There has been much concern, I mean there's a piece in one of the nationals today; is criticism of Israel taken by the Jewish community to be antisemitic or could it lead to it? And I found it helpful in my discussions with Church leaders in the last couple of years to make the following distinctions, and I think with your permission, I want to distinguish five phenomena:

Number one - what I would call legitimate criticism of Israel. That is part of the democratic process. Israel is a democracy and there has hardly been a single criticism of Israel in the British media that has not been made in Israel by Israelis in the Israeli media. There is nothing remotely anti-Zionist or antisemitic about that.

Second phenomenon - illegitimate criticism of Israel. The demonisation of Israel as an apartheid society, like South Africa, let us say. What we see as illegitimate criticism of Israel should be fought with truth. We should not wish to constrain freedom of speech in any way just because it offends us.

Three - the view that alone of the 192 or so nations comprising the United Nations, Israel alone, has no right to exist. That is what I call anti-Zionism. Anti-Zionism is not antisemitism, but it is something which might give us some concern.

Four - Israel is the cause of... and fill in the dots. The latest one, I'm sure you've read, is that Israel is the source of avian flu. I hate to mention the tsunami again, but as you probably know, Israel was blamed for causing the tsunami by underground testing. Israel has been blamed for AIDS, Israel has been blamed for etc. etc. And as you know in the rather notorious 2001 United Nations Conference Against Racism in Durban, NGOs and some states accused Israel of ethnic cleansing, apartheid, attempted genocide, crimes against humanity and racism. Now that is demonisation and that is far more serious than simply denying one people the right to its own home.

But when you say, five, every Jew is also a Zionist, and therefore, ipso facto, a legitimate target, we can attack them in the streets, bomb their synagogues, then I think you have antisemitism.

Now I think it is important to keep those five categories radically distinct, otherwise you will get into a terrible mess.

Now the Church of England, the Synod vote. Let us take it for granted:

Number one - that I fully understood and sympathised with the view of the members of Synod who surely wanted to do nothing more than to make a moral point in a way that seemed real to them and I respect that.

Number two - how a Christian body or any other religious body decides to order its affairs, that is not within my remit to pass comment on. However, I have taken a stand, and I have taken some risks for that stand, to work as far as I can for better relationships between the faiths and between faith communities. I've taken many risks, been criticised by my own community for so doing and I have articulated a

simple principle - let us export a message of co-existence, tolerance and mutual respect from Britain to the conflict zones of the world, rather than import from those conflict zones, tensions into this country, and that is the only ground on which I felt the Synod-vote might have momentarily and for the best reasons, simply forgotten or overlooked, the impact that that would have on Jewish/Christian relations in this country, which as I said in the article are, for me, the greatest single sign of hope in the modern world, that after 17 even almost 20 centuries of estrangement, today we live and remain as friends, as do, I think, all the leaders of faith communities in Britain and that was my only concern.

SH Just following on from that, I think one of the most moving and, for me, positive signs this afternoon was actually when Sir Iqbal Sacranie was leaving the room that you shook hands and you held hands for such a long time. I think it's wonderful and you don't see it that often, I thought it was just a wonderful thing, so positive. I'm reflecting. I come from Northern Ireland so I can only reflect on experience of 30 years of miserable dialogue where we kill one another because of our faith or our religion or our political viewpoint. Over those 30 years, that I have lived through, we lost almost 4,000 people, almost 4,000 people, and we had some very courageous leaders, we've had the David Trimbles, Nobel peace prize winner who unfortunately lost his seat at the last election. The most powerful message in Northern Ireland throughout those years was when we had the leaders of the Catholic Church standing full shoulder beside the leaders of the Church of Ireland and Presbyterian and the Methodist Church. The most powerful message, I think, having listened so carefully to you and it was so very moving this afternoon, is again, seeing yourself and Iqbal Sacranie standing together and speaking together, it's much more forceful from my perspective and from my experience in Northern Ireland, than politicians standing together. So even though I did know that you were very upset about the decision by the Church of England, that you have explained that this afternoon, could I just implore you to somehow come to terms with that decision, but not, not, to draw away from that very, very strong bond that you have with the Christian leadership. It's such a powerful message.

RJS I just, if I may, just to remind us, because you know sometimes good news isn't news. But within 24 hours of 9/11, the then Archbishop of Canterbury and the late Cardinal Hume and I, and the late and much beloved Zaki Badawi for the Muslim community, stood together issuing a joint statement on the steps of Lambeth Palace. Ditto, within 24 hours of the Iraq war, given the kind of divisions we knew that might create within the nation. Ditto, within 24 hours of 7/7 and when the Home Secretary invited us to the Home Office the next day after 7/7, and this was of course, including the Sikhs, the Hindus, the Jains, the Zoroastrians, and the Bahai, not to forget the Buddhists, how could I forget the Buddhists. I don't think he realised that we know each other and we're friends and my wife and I, of course, a year ago gave a reception in our house for the leaders of the Muslim community, simply to mingle with the leaders of the Jewish community. Ditto with the Hindus. And as soon as the decorators leave, we'll do the same for the Sikhs and all the others. We, I am absolutely determined that those friendly relationships should continue and should be strengthened and it is only the fact that the strength of friendship between myself and the Archbishop of Canterbury is so strong as to be in my opinion, unbreakable, that I was able to express some of the pain of my community, although it didn't quite come out the way that I expressed it because over the article which I wrote was the headline "Chief Rabbi Calls for Calm", but that was not the headline on the front page of the newspaper, which actually used the verb "lambasts". Now, Lady Sylvia, I don't do lambasting. But we will be friends and from any frank and candid exchange of views comes deeper friendship, not God forbid, estrangement.

SH That's the message that needs to be publicised if I may say so with respect. It needs to be made more public, I find that very positive, very reassuring but I am also very concerned. I mean you have articulated this afternoon, and I have taken down here, an early warning against a global environment which you regard as being very dangerous. I mean, how do you anticipate that this can be headed off?

RJS It needs global response and Britain is in every position to lead from the front. I know of no other country, and I know a lot of other countries, the Chief Rabbi of the Commonwealth, associated President of Conference of European Rabbis, were involved a lot of global things, we are not the Elders of Zion, but we do get together. There is no country that I know of, with the relationships between the heads of the faiths that are so strong. We have had a number of conversations, the Archbishop of Canterbury and myself, and other religious leaders, about how we can take that message through to our schools to give you if I might just add, given what was said about the Holocaust Memorial Day, is that you should know is a fact: Number one, that when I was asked by the Prime Minister whether I wish to have such day, I said to him: Prime Minister, we have no need for such a day, we have our own, Yom HaShoah, our own Holocaust Day which is basically in May and we have no need. For us, this is what I call a grief observed. I said I would agree on only two conditions - number one, the Holocaust was made a platform on which we could relate to other human tragedies, Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, as we do each year without fail. And secondly, that its message be taken into schools. So each year, I go out on Holocaust Memorial Day to a school assembly, a non-Jewish school, 40 or 50 different language and ethnic groups, very often no Jewish students in that school, and I see how those kids, many of them Muslims, many of them Africans, instantly understand how this relates to them. And therefore we can do some wonderful things. I believe that the heads of the faith communities today need to issue a call to their faith schools more actively to engage in relationships with young people of other faiths. I would welcome a call from this Inquiry, nationally, centrally and locally, through constituencies to local groups to engage in such things. I was just inducting a new rabbi in Birmingham yesterday and there was the head of the local Muslim community, the Catholic community, the Anglican community, all that joining in what was a Jewish religious celebration. And I have now for the last year or two, urged my rabbis to work for better community relations at a local level. So great things can be done, and here the essence is to emphasis the positive and not to scare people by these warnings which I have shared with you, but which I would not wish to exaggerate.

DM I pressed Sir Iqbal Sacranie on the question of the MCB saying that Israel should be fully recognised period, I mean no ifs and buts, and I think he slalomed round my question quite effectively. I have strong, with 10,000 Muslims in my constituency of Rotherham, mainly Pakistanis who read in their own papers, I don't know what they get of the foul antisemitic stuff that you describe that worries us greatly, but they do get a lot more detailed information about Palestine and the behaviour of the IDF than is printed in The Guardian and the mainstream papers, and as I say to them, your first point of departure has to be the recognition of the State of Israel. The non-recognition of the State of Israel is diplomatically and in international relations terms a complete and utter disaster. Israel is not going to be wiped off the face of the earth. Israel is there, we will defend it. I will defend it. The British Government will defend it. But, you have to start from that basis. But equally, do you not think that yourself, or other representative Jewish groups, have to be a bit blunter in condemning, not just the state's, but sometimes organised policy, collective punishment, the razing of homes to the ground, or just a simple T-shirt I saw on a very interesting article in Hebrew, you might have seen it in one of the papers on Saturday, where the Jewish lad wearing the T-shirt was protected by an Israeli soldier - Jews equal life, Arabs equal death. Now if

you reverse that and said Jews equal death, Arabs equal life, I think you'd be calling that antisemitic. But isn't there a fundamental problem that other distinguished leaders of the Jewish community here today, that you acknowledge legitimate criticism of Israel but there is a sense that Israel, right or wrong, is the leit motif of representative Jews of which you perhaps are one of the most prominent, and that this validates the other extreme, that says everything Israel does is wrong and we can use what methods we can to defend the rights of Palestinians? It's a hard question, I mean and forgive me for finishing on a sad note. Look...

RJS There is an untold story that I think deserves to be told. That the person currently reconstructing the Palestinian economy on behalf of the group of four is a very distinguished member of the Jewish community of Sydney, Australia called James Wolfensohn. A very prominent member of our community, Sir Ronald Cohen, who gave up his business in order to set up an enormous charitable trust called The Portland Trust, to reconstruct the Palestinian economy, where he has opened an office in particular in Ramallah, getting and supporting small business ventures, by being the investment bank, giving them that kind of micro-loan. I find it very moving that this particular individual was born in Egypt, educated here in Cambridge and the son-in-law of a very famous Israeli Yossi Harel, commander of the Exodus, the ship that bought...as you know separately. So that is not widely known. There are Jews really out there, committed Zionists, were out there helping the Palestinians redevelop their economy. Of course, it was James Wolfensohn who raised the £25 million which he started from his own pocket of £750,000 to buy the Israeli agricultural facilities which were bought by him for the Palestinians. And some of that good news needs to be shared. We had a member of our community, a wonderful, wonderful young man, whose name was Yoni Jesner from Glasgow who was killed tragically in a suicide bombing at the age of 19. His family went out and donated one of his kidneys to a young Palestinian girl who had been waiting for two years for a transplant. Three months ago, the same thing happened in the opposite direction, a young girl with Palestinian parents whose child had died and who gave an organ and so on. What I am saying to people in the media and politics all the time, and I've been saying this for five years, is you are utterly wrong to present the Middle East Israel-Palestine conflict as a zero sum game, in which there is a winner and there is a loser. That is quite untrue. From violence, both sides lose. From peace, both sides gain. Once you construct it as a zero sum game, you drive people into a defensive, aggressive mode, where every criticism of their side is threatening and if it's one of their side doing the criticising, a form of betrayal. So you get this scenario where it's very difficult to do what you have to do, but if you've read, for instance, my very public statement and it's in one of my books on the terrible massacre in Hebron in 1993/94, or a certain interview that I gave on one occasion with the British press, very gently I spoke about some issues that we ought to raise - a highly polarised environment makes that very difficult. In order to be a pastoral leader of your flock, you have to defend them against what you see as the world attacking you. So the way forward is to break the zero sum adversarial format, and that is where I believe your very distinguished work in Parliament and through the media can be enormously helpful. At the end of this, there is good news waiting to be had, but it comes through joining hands, not by taking opposing sides.

DM Jonathan, the last word to you. Any particular recommendations you want to see, you'd like to put to the Committee, if they are of length you can send them in by writing. I know people have got important other engagements this evening.

RJS Very briefly - number one - establishment of a standing committee on community relations. I think these hearings have begun a process of understanding, but only begun, and I think it is important to monitor, if possible, in an ongoing way.

Secondly, as I've said if the United Kingdom can push/take the lead in arguing for a global crackdown on hate speech across the internet.

Thirdly, regular meetings between the leaderships of the various faith communities, facilitated by the Government.

And fourthly, education - working with local educational authorities to encourage interaction between children of different faiths and different faith schools.

DM Thank you very much indeed. And it is very good to end on that positive note and on your reference to break out of the zero sum mentality: if I win, then you have to lose. I'm grateful to you. I'm grateful to all the different colleagues in the Jewish community who have helped with this Parliamentary Inquiry. We have some more work to undertake, we will be discussing ourselves when to produce our report. You heard what I thought was a very positive statement from the Home Secretary, that he would take this as a quasi select committee report and respond to it. It will now be up to us with some other visits and discussions we have to make to get on with writing it. But I'll just put on the record, I mean colleagues have come and gone, but we've had a dozen of quite the most senior Parliamentarians taking a very active part in our four big witness sessions, and we're very grateful to them and I hope the final report we produce will do justice certainly to the very high quality of the evidence given to us and the witnesses who've discussed so openly and frankly as you have Sir Jonathan, this very grave problem that certainly, we wouldn't all be around this Committee and this table if we didn't think it was a serious phenomenon that is worthy of deep consideration and some powerful, political recommendations. But thank you all very much indeed.