



THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
INTO ANTISEMITISM

TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL EVIDENCE
SESSION ONE
6 February 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.

The transcript that follows has been redacted for legal reasons.

Session One – 6 February 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 Henry Grunwald QC (“HG”)

President, Board of Deputies of British Jews

Mr Mark Gardner (“MG”)

Director of Communications, Community Security Trust (“CST”)

Mr Mitch Simmons (“MS”) and Ms Jess Kosmin (“JK”)

Union of Jewish Students (“UJS”)

Professor David Cesarani (“DC”)

Royal Holloway, University of London

Mr Steve Silver (“SS”)

Searchlight Magazine

Transcript of Session One

DM Good afternoon everybody, my name is Denis MacShane, I am the Chair of this All-Party Parliamentary Committee that is inquiring into antisemitism in the UK, thank you very much for coming to our first evidence session. We have received over 100 substantive written submissions of evidence which certainly I think prove the usefulness of setting up the Committee. We will ask questions after any of you would like to make an opening statement. We are trying to explore the extent and nature of antisemitism in the UK today and we will be having four evidence sessions over the next four parliamentary Mondays. We might extend that, if required, with some visits overseas. I am very grateful to you, Mr Grunwald in particular, for coming here, Mark Gardner, of the Community Security Trust and our two friends from the Union of Jewish Students. Mr Grunwald can we start with you, would you like to make a preliminary statement, sir?

HG May I begin by thanking you and your colleagues for seeing us today and receiving the submissions and sitting on this inquiry, something that we feel is clearly very important because antisemitism isn't a Jewish problem; it's a problem that affects Jews but it is a problem for the society in which it exists and I am afraid to say in some quarters flourishes. We as members of the Jewish community are all too conscious of it and we sometimes have concerns about whether, despite what we see and read about antisemitism, people outside our community actually know the effect that it has on us and the way that we live our lives. The Jewish community in this country this year is marking the 350th anniversary of the re-admission under Cromwell. The Jews were expelled from England in 1290; there were no Jews living here legally until 1656 and in the last 350 years we have become a very established community, a very entrenched community in British society and a well integrated part of British society. Yet despite the integration there is probably a greater feeling of discomfort, greater concerns, greater fears now about antisemitism than there have been for many decades and possibly worse in some ways than at any time that Jews have lived here, despite the fact that we have full social rights and full legal rights.

You and your colleagues may know, but most people in Britain don't I think, that when we go to synagogues we have security guards on duty outside them, our communal buildings are guarded and secured, our schools have professional guards outside then so that parents can't simply come up to the front of their school, drop off their child, and pick up the child at the end of it. It is much more complicated than that. And we have learned to live with those restrictions over the last 35 years. And in recent years because of actual threats and actual incidents that have happened to Jewish communities abroad, those measures, those provisions have had to become stronger. People often forget. People think back to 9/11 and to other incidents that have happened in other parts of the world. People forget that in 1994 the Jewish community in Argentina was bombed with an enormous loss of life and it is because of incidents like that that we have had to become used to living with the security measures.

So, despite the fact that we have an awful lot to be grateful for to the United Kingdom, we feel that the last 350 years, the great mutual benefit - we think that Britain's been very good for the Jews and think on the whole the Jews have been very good for Britain - despite all of that, we still have fears and concerns about the evils of antisemitism. We can't understand why we live - on the whole, comfortably and well integrated - we live in a society where this, it's The Protocols of the Elders of Zion in Arabic, is openly on sale in a bookshop on the Edgware Road; why this, an Arabic version of Mein Kampf, is equally openly, in full view of anyone walking into

the shop. It's not as if anyone can claim it is a shop that historians would go to, it's a shop on the Edgware Road, and this is just sitting there on the shelves. I'm not even sure what the title of this one is, but the cover makes it plain that it's talking about a Jewish conspiracy with the United States, the United States is enmeshed in the Star of David, trampling on a piece of olive branch, trampling on a piece of the foot. We don't understand why books like this are freely and openly on sale and the fact that they are goes perhaps a large way to explaining why we have the fears and concerns that I and others have referred to. We don't ask for special treatment. All that we want is the right to live our lives in peace and security as any other British citizen, so that we can practice our religious rights as we choose to do so, live our lives as we choose to do so and bring up our children as we choose to do so, in exactly the same way as any other citizen in this country. Thank you.

DM Mr Grunwald, thank you very much. As a distinguished lawyer and Queen's Counsel yourself, is there real evidence that would stand up in a court of law, under existing British law, and convince a jury that antisemitism is on the increase in the UK?

HG The question of what will stand up in a court of law is never an easy one to determine. I say that as somebody who spends his professional life defending those alleged to have committed all sorts of criminal offences. The Jewish community is covered as the result of case law, not because of any primary legislation but as a result of case law, by the Race Relations Acts. In the early 1980s there was a case that went to the Court of Appeal, House of Lords, *Mandla v Lee*, which held that only the Jews and Sikhs – it was a case involving a Sikh - are not only religious groupings but also ethnic groupings, and therefore we have had protection of race relations since then. And we are very conscious of all of the problems that there are inherent in bringing prosecutions. There have been times in recent years where we have been at a loss to understand why what would seem to us would be very clear breaches of the law have not been prosecuted in the way that they should have.

There have been some changes a little in the last two or three years but going back not very long ago to the September 2000, the beginning of the so-called second Intifada, when leaflets were openly paraded in the streets of this country which said 'kill the Jews'. In very large print, 'kill the Jews'. Now so far as we are concerned, the fact that it says 'kill the Jews' is neither here nor there. Whether they said kill the Christians, kill the Sikhs, kill the Muslims, kill anybody – it's as offensive and unacceptable and wrong in each of those instances. And in our view existing laws need to be enforced with perhaps more vigour than there was at the time. It has improved since then, I have to say, but anybody walking along the streets of this country displaying a leaflet that says 'kill the Jews', 'kill the Sikhs', 'kill the Hindus' ought to be arrested and prevented from doing so because it is a clear breach of the law.

NE Mr Grunwald, looking at the increases of antisemitism in this country now, I can remember when I was Home Secretary of State for Wales, going down to Swansea and visiting a synagogue there that had been desecrated at that time and I saw the graffiti that had been sprayed there which was offensive to anybody of the Jewish faith. Something like that is logged as an attack on the Jewish community. Is anybody monitoring this to the extent that they can say 'well actually that last year there were 150 attacks, this year there were 250 attacks'?

HG Can I ask Mark Gardner of the Community Security Trust to deal with that?

MG Thank you. The Community Security Trust is the community's own body with responsibility for monitoring antisemitic incidents and for liaising between the

community and the police. So it is a three-way partnership in order to log the incidents and ensure a requisite policing response and also a requisite community response to them. We believe that the community is best protected by its own members taking an interest in security, performing security rotas and liaising with local police stations. We appreciate that the police don't have the manpower to be stood outside every synagogue. If you visit synagogues in mainland Europe, some of which have permanent armed police stations outside the synagogues, I think you will see actually why we prefer members of the community performing that service rather than having the police uniforms outside the buildings. It's difficult to measure discourse, it's difficult to argue - unless you take perhaps a three- or four-year university degree in it - what is antisemitic discourse, what is anti-Zionist discourse, what is anti-Israel discourse, what is anti-American discourse, but the incident figures however give us something which is measurable. It's not the absolute figure that is important, it's the trend line that's important and it is the consistency in the methods of collection.

So with those caveats let me say, as Henry points out, September 2000, the start of what has become known as the Second Palestinian Intifada, really became a flashpoint for the escalation in antisemitic incident levels. Prior to the year 2000 we had seen an average of between 10 and 30 antisemitic incidents in any given month. With any type of racism you see an average monthly level of incidents and hopefully over time of course you hope that level will begin to decline. Unfortunately what we have witnessed with antisemitic incidents since September/October 2000, is that the graph has risen, gradually, steadily by about 10-15% each year. Now the monthly total, on average, is between 20 and 50 antisemitic incidents per month. So it's an approximated doubling of incident levels post 2000 compared with during, say, 1995 up to the year 2000. We are very concerned by this. We look at where there are months where trigger events occurred, so you have if you like the monthly average, and then a trigger event occurs and the incident levels spike. If we look at the spikes, 105 incidents in October 2000, start of the Israeli/Palestinian violence. That is over twice the previous highest monthly total that we had ever recorded and that year also still reached 405 incidents. In the wake of 9/11, we had 90 incidents spread out over the four-week period after 9/11. 9/11 did not involve Jews, it did not involve Israel, it did not involve Zionists, or did it? Because what concerns us is what excites the antisemites, what excites the fanatics out there to go out and trigger those incidents, so it doesn't actually matter what we, as Jews, perceive as relevant. All that matters is what triggers the antisemites and 9/11 obviously did it for them.

NE Can you explain to the Committee what an incident is?

MG Certainly. We are very rigorous in our classification of what is an antisemitic incident. The onus is on the reporter to prove to us that it was indeed antisemitic. Last year, 2005, we received 455 antisemitic incidents, and that was the second highest total that we have recorded. It was a decline of some 14% on the previous year, 2004. However, we also rejected 194 incidents as not being proved as antisemitic. So that's about one in three, one in four that we reject. People call us up, they say 'I'm sure I was attacked because I'm Jewish' and we say 'but did they actually say anything?' If the perpetrator did not say anything relating to Jews or if there is something else they seem to be blaming the victim for, we can't classify it as being antisemitic. 'But I look Jewish, so it must have been' - well did they actually say anything? Cemetery desecrations: if there is a Jewish plot in a Council graveyard and somebody has obviously gone through the Christian part to reach the Jewish plot, and that's the part that's been vandalised, then we say that, on the balance of probabilities, this is an antisemitic incident. If, however, both the Jewish plot and the Christian plot have been vandalised, then it's vandalism. It doesn't count as an

antisemitic incident. So there needs to be some form of proof that there is an antisemitic motivation or an illustration of antisemitic stereotyping or blame. Somebody phones up a synagogue and says 'Why are you killing Palestinians?' The synagogue has nothing to do with the situation in Israel. Similarly if a synagogue is desecrated with a swastika or with a BNP sticker or with a 'Jews out of Israel' sticker or a 'Gas Israel', which is something that we get sometimes, it's a combination, again it's obviously antisemitic. We have had cases in the past where a bunch of drunken youths leave a pub and they damage cars, buildings and one of the buildings happens to be a synagogue, it gets a brick through the window – it's not an antisemitic incident. If, however, only the synagogue is attacked, and there is some sort of abuse, then we can classify it as an incident.

So we are quite strict with that. The increases continue. 9/11, as I said, about 90, so we have a trebling of the average incident rate. Then in April and May 2002 we had the peak of the suicide bombing campaign in Israel and then Israel's subsequent actions, and particularly on the West Bank. Following on from that in both months 47 incidents, 47 in April and 47 in May. Then again September and October 2002. Then again with the invasion of Iraq we had a doubling of incidents up to 57 incidents. 100 in March 2004 after Israel assassinated the leader of Hamas. In 2004 the total reached a record of 532 antisemitic incidents compared to 270 in 1999 so you see where these figures have reached in percentage terms. And within those statistics we are seeing about 75% more violent attacks. There was an initial 400% increase in the number of attacks on synagogues per se, although that has tailed off slightly since then. 2005 was relatively peaceful between Israel and Palestinians, certainly in comparison with the years that go on immediately before. And I have to say we had expected that there would be a greater peace dividend if you like in terms of incidents and our concern now is that there have been so many years of unusually high levels of incidents that we have been left with an unusually high monthly average of incidents and that it may take some time for that unusually high monthly average to decline to levels that we saw in the 1990s.

TB Thank you. Two quick questions for Mr Gardner about the evidence base and, if I may, an equally quick question for Mr Grunwald about the issue he referred to earlier. As I understood you to say, your information is more comprehensive than that of the police, who have limited resources to track this along with their other duties. I take it that you are regularly in touch with them and that their evidence, such as it is, is broadly consistent with what you have found? The other question on the evidence base, very simply, was that people sometimes say in the context of crime that the more consciousness there is of the availability to report it, the more people do report, for example the existence of mobile phones. Can you refute any suggestion that this merely reflects more intense reporting or more awareness that this is a potential issue?

MG Well first of all I would say that the availability of mobile phones or the availability to email in detail about an incident (which CST now provides for victims), all of these things of course are relevant and as any criminologist will tell you, the awareness of victims that there are support mechanisms in place, the awareness of victims that the authorities will be sympathetic to their phone calls, all of these things have a bearing on the number of incidents that would be reported. CST's own reporting mechanisms relies upon the representatives that we have scattered throughout the Jewish communities throughout the length and breadth of the UK and also across all of the religious divides of the Anglo-Jewish community. I would say that the facility of CST has been fairly well known now with consistency over the last 10-15 years. Obviously the CST has grown in the last 5 years and we would expect that to influence the number of reports, but I think an increase of the magnitude that we are

seeing, which is an approximate doubling, that's down to more than increased reporting.

The importance of consistency with police statistics, it really is vital. I didn't mean to infer that people were reporting more to us than the police, I only inferred that the police were unable to provide the security at the actual locations and for the actual events. We have excellent cooperation with the police and the police use the relationship with the CST as a model to encourage other communities with what can be done. So for instance in the aftermath of the nail-bombing attacks in 1999, I helped to lead the police in emergency meetings in the middle of the night with representatives primarily with the gay community but also with Muslims and people mainly from Brixton who had been alarmed from previous attacks which had occurred. Similarly, after the 7th July terrorist attacks, the next day Sir Ian Blair was at an East London Mosque advising them to put together a CST.

So I hope that the Jewish community has led the way that other communities can follow and can see that the police are not some sort of racial monolith but appreciate the value of good community relations and that the police are going to give and if we can go as well with them then we can have great results. The police statistics coincide with our own and I understand that at a future date you will be taking evidence from a criminologist, Paul Iganski, whose team is based at the Race and Violent Crime Task Force Unit at New Scotland Yard and examines CST's original incident reports alongside the police's original incident reports. They find that about a quarter of incident reports to the police were also reported to the CST. About half of the incidents reported to the CST were also reported to the police. We meet with specialist units and senior officers at New Scotland Yard about every 6-8 weeks. We compare the general trend in incident statistics. Most months there is a very close similarity between where the incidents figures are heading.

TB May I speak very briefly to Mr Grunwald? The books that you have shown to the Committee - I have to say I have not had the extremely dubious privilege of reading them - are you saying to the Committee, and I am thinking consciously of the experiences over the last few days in London, and you yourself referred to hate-filled incidents with placards etc directed against your own community - are you saying that, in your view perhaps as a lawyer, there is sufficient material in those that they should be prosecuted within the existing law and is that your wish that they should be?

HG The Protocols of the Elders of Zion are a well-known Tsarist secret police forgery. That is something that is well known to us and it may be well known to you as educated members of British society, but unfortunately there are whole parts of the world, and I have to include I am afraid probably some parts of the people who make up this country, where this is not seen as a forgery but seen as a blueprint for a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world. Now the language of that is nonsensical when we speak of it rationally.

You say to people, how many Jews are there in the whole world? There are probably about 13 million Jews in the whole world. You say how many Jews are there in the United Kingdom, you get the most astonishing answers, one million, two million, three million, and yet there are between 300,000-350,000 Jews in the whole country. And yet we are said, and this is used as evidence of the blueprint, we are said to control media, banks. Part of me says if only!, part of me says it's a ridiculous reaction, but I am afraid that this finds a ready audience in too many parts of the world, turned into television series that have been broadcast on satellite channels

from Middle East, and our concern is that there will be people who won't recognise this as a forgery, but will actually see it as proof of what they believe.

Mark mentioned 9/11. I am sure that you will be aware of the rumour, which still persists in some places, that it was the Israelis and the Jews that were behind the bombing of the Twin Towers and the myth, the allegation, that a phone call went to the offices in the two buildings telling Jewish people not to turn up for work. It's real nonsense but unfortunately if it's repeated often enough there will be somebody who will believe it.

TV I wanted to ask you the wider question on what steps you feel you should recommend and what are the most important things that you think should be done to tackle antisemitism in this country?

HG First of all there has to be a recognition of what I began with, that antisemitism is not a Jewish problem; it's a pernicious form of racism that has existed in many societies. It has taken on many forms and it has to be recognised as a pernicious evil. I say type of racism, it is probably a unique form of racism because of the way that it comes. Jews are accused, over the years we have been fascist, we have been communist, we have been capitalist – it's come at Jewish communities from all angles. So there has to be a recognition that it is a problem of a society in which it is permitted to happen.

There has to be a far higher level of intolerance of language, which might be seen by the less rational amongst our society to be suggesting that the Jews are all of the things that I have mentioned before. It has become much more fashionable to hear things said about Jews in recent years than was the case after the war. So there has to be a far higher level of intolerance, of language, of stereotyping of Jews as being of a particular sort.

And the laws that do exist have to be properly enforced. I don't think we as a community are suggesting that there need to be stronger laws, for the reasons I gave before, save perhaps when dealing with material that comes over the internet or over satellite television channels, where of course perhaps the controls are more difficult, but where we'd like to think that it can be done so that a satellite channel should not be permitted to beam into television sets anywhere in the world. But we are talking about Britain, television series like the one that came from a Hezbollah television station Al-Manar a couple of years ago, produced by, I believe, a Syrian company, which was effectively a television series showing the Protocols as being the truth. There is perhaps an area there where this country, together with other countries, need to get together and ensure that that material is not broadcast and not received.

BK Two questions, and it might be that both Mr Grunwald and Mr Gardner might be able to answer me. You were talking about the CST. Firstly how has the increased level of incidents that you have talked about and the threat of terrorism affected the Jewish community and specifically your work? Secondly, and obviously you may not want to include too much detail, but can you tell us more about security measures which you are now taking and perhaps can you give us a little more information about the cost involved.

MG Certainly. First of all may I say I am very grateful to you for mentioning the terrorist threat because this is actually the *raison d'être* for CST's function. We are first and foremost anti-terrorist prevention, eyes and ears for the Jewish community. We believe that the only real way to stop the terrorist attack is in the planning stages of that attack. The police after 9/11 put together a specific operational unit at the anti-terrorism branch to deal with incidences of suspicious behaviour around sensitive

sites. That is our single most important operational tool and we liaise with that certainly on a weekly basis to discuss suspicious activities around synagogues.

The reason for the terrorist threat - CST actually compiled this report which summarises 430 different terrorist attacks against Jewish communities or Israeli institutions outside Israel which occurred between 1968 and 2003 - Al Qaeda instructed its groups around the world to target Jewish communities around the world. Their commands went out in December 2001. Since then there was a petrol tanker explosion at the oldest synagogue in North Africa. Since then there were simultaneous attacks on 4 Jewish communal institutions in Casablanca, to coincide with the festival when Jews gather there. And there were also the simultaneous attacks on two synagogues in Istanbul. Recently there were people convicted in Germany of planning attacks on Jewish locations there. The train bombers in Madrid were alleged to have gathered intelligence against potential Jewish targets there. Henry mentioned the brutal attack, very recently in which the suicide truck driver, packed with explosives, was found to have been a 21-year-old Lebanese Hezbollah activist. He killed 85 people and blew up the Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires.

Can you imagine the effects these attacks have on the willingness of parents to send their kids to Jewish schools rather than to state schools? Dreadful, dreadful impact. That's why CST goes to the efforts that we go to. To be honest there is not so much we can do about antisemitism in the streets. We are not vigilantes. We are not patrolling the streets in that sense, but we are available around Jewish communal institutions. We have had spates of incidents in recent years such as Iranian tourists, so-called, taking photographs of communal buildings which are not in salubrious areas, believe me, and why should they all come at once? We had rucksacks with wires protruding from them in distinct Jewish locations in three completely different areas of the country. Why did they all occur within one month of each other? So these things occur and we collate 200-250 incidents of that type every year. If only a half per cent are real then we have a very serious problem.

The investment that we put into countering that is over £4 million per year, which is a considerable strain on a community of 300,000 people, not all of whom are able to contribute towards the CST budget, because we are entirely funded by private donations. We receive no money from Government. In addition to that, organisations themselves spend money. Jewish schools spend money on guards. Jewish schools, synagogues other communal buildings spend money on CCTV systems, on secure fencing, access control. CST, at the moment, is committed to undertaking a security review of over 600 Jewish community buildings throughout Britain in which the primary purpose is to ensure that all of the windows are shatter-proofed because when an explosion occurs it's the shattering glass that causes the casualties. And if you bomb-proof the glass then what happens is that the glass as a whole travels through the room and acts itself as the weapon, so we have to ensure that the glass is firmly placed within the building itself, the window frame doesn't come flying out. We have over 3,000 card-carrying volunteers, all of whom undergo a fourteen-week training course and have to conform to our standards or else we remove their cards. There are 50 staff, three full-time offices. This is not the kind of emergency planning that can be turned on and off like a tap. We need to be prepared. We need to have contingency plans in place. We have two alternative offices that we can re-locate to if necessary or that other Jewish communal institutions can go to if necessary. We protect approximately 1,000 Jewish events every single year. We've worked out that it involved something like 43,000 man-hours, the majority were Jewish trained volunteers. Last year we trained over 2,500 Jewish school children in self-defence. We don't want Jewish kids to be seen as easy victims on the streets.

- HG** It is very important, if I may, to say that the sort of attacks that Mark has been referring to, that the community feels the need to prepared to defend itself against, are attacks on our members for no reason other than that they are Jews. And you may know, you've read the submissions, that there are large concentrations of physical attacks on the most visibly obvious Jews, because of the clothing they are wearing, if they are walking to and from the synagogue on the Sabbath or festival. Nobody stops to ask the people being attacked what their views are on this topic and that topic. They are Jews and that's the reason they are attacked, not because of any political stance that they may take because the attackers don't bother to ask. So it's because of that that the whole community has, in recent years, felt the need for the sort of defence measures that Mark has mentioned, that we have come to live with. And we probably don't notice them as much as we should do because we've become unfortunately so used to them. And I ask the question again that I did earlier. It's difficult for us to understand why we should have to live like that in our wonderfully civilised society.
- MG** There are also other terrorist threats beyond those that would be in your prominent imagination. The last sophisticated hoax bomb that was left outside a Jewish premises was actually by animal rights activists, outside a kosher butcher shop in Temple Fortune, North London. You know I mentioned the Nazi nail bomber from 1999, but two years ago a group of German neo-Nazis were convicted for planning a terrorist attack against the opening of a Holocaust museum in Germany that was to be attended by the German President. So there are a range of activists out there who are talking about terrorism against Jews and it's a multi-national world now with instant communications, with travel between countries and unfortunately we can't restrict ourselves only to look at what's happening within the UK village because it's a global village now. We have to be very very cognisant of what these ideologies and the people that follow those ideologies are perpetrating elsewhere.
- DM** You say the CST spends £4 million. Is it possible to put a figure on the totality of this, beyond the norm. I mean most schools have CCTV now; most schools have enhanced access protection following some very distressing cases. Do you have a ballpark figure for what it costs the Jewish community that is specifically linked to worries about attacks because you are Jews?
- MG** It is very difficult to put a figure on it and yes schools have CCTV, but schools tend not to have full-time security guards who come to work at about 6.30/7.00 am in the morning and remain until after everyone has left the premises, and are full time solely dedicated security personnel at the premises, and organised rotas for all parents to participate in. It's the same at places for worship. As Londoners we are all at equal risk when we get on the tube to go to work in the morning, but my neighbour and I are not at equal risk when we go to our places of worship.
- HG** There are several million pounds spent over the CST budget because of all the sums that are spent by the individual organisations.
- DM** It might be helpful for the Committee if we could have a note in writing, one that would pass muster with an accountant.
- MG** I may say that perhaps one of the easier ways to define it would be to look at the percentage of expenditure which Jewish community institutions have to spend on security as a percentage of all of their other activities.

- BG** I'd like to ask questions on who you think could perpetrate this. If the Muslim Council of Great Britain were sitting here in front of us, they would present probably an equally worrying set of statistics on Muslim properties and individuals, because Islamophobia is rampant. What I want to ask is who do you think is committing these threatening acts? Are they Muslims, extremist Muslims, ordinary Muslims who get worked up? Are the same people attacking Muslims and Muslim mosques as attacking your synagogues? Is there any differentiation? Maybe the stats are available but you would have a perception that would be fairly close to reality, I suspect, and therefore I wouldn't expect a criminal profile but give us a hint if you will, or more than a hint, of any information you may have.
- TB** Also it would be quite useful if you can say a word or two about any distinction which you feel you might be able to draw about what might be termed as 'anti-Zionist' and people who are antisemitic. I know that is a distinction we will probably want to look at on a number of occasions but I think it goes a bit behind some of the things that Bruce was asking you.
- HG** Can I deal with the second and Mark can deal with the first? There is scarcely anyone in the Jewish community in this country who would dream of saying that Israel was beyond criticism. There are no greater critics of the Israeli Government than Israel itself. You know it's a vibrant, noisy democracy that makes the House of Commons look very staid by comparison. So criticism of Israel is absolutely acceptable. The dividing line is, to me, is very clear. When people criticise the politics of Israel – fine. When they say Israel has no right to exist, that's crossing the line. Because that is saying that Jewish people alone - of all the peoples of the world - have no right to a homeland of their own. So that's a very clear line. So when you look at CST's submission, and that of the Board of Deputies, you'll see we deal with that and it is sometimes difficult to draw the line which is why I try and put it in that very very clear way. You do find frequently that when people are criticising Israel, the language goes from Israelis to criticism of Jews. And it's 'you', 'your people', 'your government'. Well I vote here, I don't vote in an Israeli election. And it's that blurring of the distinction between the Israelis and the Jews which has been so worrying and which is the concern that Mark mentioned before, and I picked up, that the attacks are on Jews because they are Jews, not because they are Israelis or because they have this contact with Israel one way or the other.
- JS** What's the extent to which the attacks and intimidation are from Muslim extremists or from the more traditional problem of the far right in the UK? And also I understand that there are some internal upheavals in the far right at the moment and whether that is likely to have any implications for intensification or otherwise of these problems.
- MG** These are critical questions and I want to try and answer them as fully, but not take ages over, as I can. Firstly you will appreciate that in the majority of cases we do not have a physical identification of the actual perpetrator. However what we do have, last year, we had 455 incidents, 163 of which included a description of the perpetrator, of those 52% were white. Of the rest about 20% were Asian, about 20% were black and about 10% were Arab in appearance. I have the actual figures here. I will certainly submit them for you to look at, at your leisure. Now obviously that is out of proportion per head of population and obviously it's a concern for us.

When we talk about antisemitism, I think it's important to identify, as I mentioned before, the trigger events which cause the surges. We find different trigger events appeal to different types of fanatics. The media made a huge deal out of the fact that, in our most recent incident report, we said that 10 incidents included direct reference to Prince Harry, in the Nazi uniform and that 11 made direct reference to Mayor Ken

Livingstone and his argument with the Jewish Daily Mail journalist. I would say that in at least 75% of those incidents, because they were all hatemail-related or abusive emails, it read as if the perpetrators were white nationalists, probably over the age of 50 or 60. That's because it appealed to them. None of them looked as if they had come in from Muslims or from any other section of society. However, the criminological analysis that was conducted by Paul Iganski's team, who I mentioned earlier, showed that in those months where there were trigger events involving the Middle East, the percentage of incidents in that month where the perpetrators appeared to be of Muslim appearance increases. And that makes sense because whatever the trigger event is that it will bring different types of fanatics out of the woodwork. I think that what's important to stress though is that the events which involve Israel or which are alleged to have involved Israel such as the invasion of Iraq or 9/11, bring far right wingers, but you also get people who fit different descriptions. We have very very few incidents where the perpetrator looks like the traditional skinhead stereotype. Very very few indeed, year on year.

BG Is there any indication of a number of these being organised, orchestrated or do they tend to be individuals who are angry, firing off some letter or smashing some window or other?

MG They tend to be perpetrated by individuals rather than organised by groups.

DM Thank you. Can we move to Mr Simmons and Ms Kosmin. Do you want to make a quick statement?

MS First of all thank you for inviting the Union of Jewish Students here, it's very much appreciated. Just to give you my background, I was a student at Birmingham University and I graduated last year. I worked within my Jewish society on campaigns in the Student Union for the equality of all students and dealing with issues such as anti-racism and anti-fascism and last year I was on the NUS National Executive where I was actually responsible for environmental and ethical campaigning as well as anti-racism work.

The first thing to say, to clarify what we're talking about on campuses as far as Jews and antisemitism goes, is that societies form on campuses within student unions. Most student unions across the country have a Jewish society where Jews come together for cultural, religious, political purposes, to come together as a community. There are approximately 107 bases of Jewish students across the country, of which there are maybe 70 that have relatively reasonably-sized Jewish societies of maybe 10-15-20 people, and there may be up to 15 where numbers are in excess of 50 students in a Jewish society. UJS exists and was born out of the 1970s when Jewish societies were being closed down on campuses due to parallels with Zionism and racism and the idea that because Jews may be Zionists therefore they must be also racist and because racists are unwelcome on the campuses so we shouldn't welcome Jews. So UJS was formed on the back of this in the 1970s, and ever since then UJS has been there to protect and defend the welfare of Jewish students on campuses.

To categorise the issues we face, before I do so, I would like to quickly say that things aren't all bad on British university campuses. There is a lot of positive work that goes on in British campuses where Jews are engaging in political and cultural activities with other students just like any other student, where they are going clubbing, they are going drinking, they are engaging, they are going to library with their friends and they are not experiencing any problems. However on certain campuses, what we experience are a few specific issues. They tend to fit in three

categories, which we outlined in our original submission: extremists, motions, and academics.

To address the first, these are the extremists on our campus – people that are on our campus with a political purpose to alter things in any way that can be detrimental to other minority students. To address the issue of the far right, the BNP are active on campuses. They claim to be active on about 15/16 university campuses. They are run by a guy called Joe Finnan who is the current head, and their former head is a guy called Mark Collett who has just been at Leeds Crown Court. They tend not to be the main focus of concern to Jewish students because when people deal with the far right on campus they generally find that everyone is behind them. The problem is that when the issue of antisemitism is spoken of from other areas, such as the Islamic organisations or maybe from the far left and pro-Palestinian groups, all of a sudden Jews may find that the friends that they formerly had tend to step to the sidelines and they end up being Jews by themselves. These are groups such as Hizb’ut Tahrir, who try and work on campuses underground and will have front societies where they will not just simply talk about the Middle East and talk about Israel, but will often talk about Jews. They will quote certain hadith and have hadith on some of the flyers, of which I have examples here, that is nasty about Jews, talks about why we should kill them, why the Jews shouldn’t be on our campuses.

DM Can you explain what “hadith” is?

MS “Hadith” is not part of the Koran, but is a saying around the Koran, that someone who knew Mohammed is supposed to have said. Specifically, the one that is usually quoted is ‘the final battlefield is between the Muslims and the Jews, and we will find them and kill them’. The other groups that we find, and these are groups that often stand side by side with groups like Hizb’ut Tahrir, are pro-Palestinian organisations and leftists, or leftist organisations or what we would traditionally call, I guess, the anti-racist left. People [REDACTED] who are seen as mainstream people, will come onto our campuses and they will talk about supporting suicide bombing in Israel. Now whilst that may not necessarily seem problematic, and while actually on certain instances this has happened we have told students that it wasn’t necessarily antisemitic, if we believe that there is inciteful language being used and if there is incitement on own campus, we think that it actually is antisemitic and actually that the discourse of anti-Zionism has somehow been polluted with antisemitism. [REDACTED]

And finally let’s talk about academics. There are two issues. And first one I will sideline along with the BNP, which is the issue of the Jewish students being allowed to be Jewish on campus, the issue of Jewish festivals, the issue of being allowed to miss lectures that they may have on religious festivals, that’s problematic and has always been problematic and it is something that I think will continue as it has historically been. But what we have seen in recent years is this trend of academics becoming involved with politics and wider politics. As the wider political sphere arrives on campus, so too does it arrive into the lecture theatres and into the seminar room. We have had maths lecturers who have decided at the beginning of their speeches not to lecture on maths but to talk about the Iraq war or to talk about Palestine or to talk about Israel. We have had incidents where Jewish students have been made to read out sections of documentation or have been told that because they are a Jew, they somehow have some responsibility to be answerable for the Israeli army or for things that are happening in the Middle East.

DM This is all documented?

MS Yes. The major problem I guess we have is with university institutions; some are fantastic and some will have equal opportunities policies that they will adhere to stringently; some will automatically adopt the Race Relations Amendment Act and other similar legislation. However, other institutions take the position that it is not their responsibility to deal with what happens in the student union, and that actually freedom of speech should always win out. It is the view of the UJS that certain views are not acceptable under free speech. So that starts you off if that helps.

DM Thank you very much indeed.

JS I think the crucial issue is not whether people behave badly but actually the response of the academic institution to that, and the right of free speech of all groups, including those who are being attacked. Could you just add a bit more as to which universities are responding well and particularly which have responded badly and what has been their response?

MS The two most recent examples would be Westminster University. On 9th December Westminster were due to host MPAC, the Muslim Public Affairs Committee, who are currently on the NUS no platform policy for racists and fascists. Their website has literature from David Irving, and has a section entitled 'the other side of Holocaust denial', which explains that Holocaust denial is acceptable, and it also has stuff talking about a web of Jewish conspiracies and is certainly accusing me and my organisation of being part of a Mossad web across campuses. That organisation was due to speak at Westminster University. The Jewish society there raised concerns with the student union. The student union alerted the university authorities. We sent documentation of the website to the university and the university then turned round and said 'We don't want this on our campus. Get off.' And it was as simple as that. Godfrey Davis, the Vice Chancellor there, basically turned around and said that 'this is unacceptable on my campus. I'm not having this. Go away'. Essentially.

There has also been another good practice in Birmingham University where they have had a kind of slow history of events occurring. The main points that have come out of this is that they have two weeks' notice for any speaker speaking on campus so that the university can properly vet them when they going to speak in the union. They have also improved their equal opportunities policy and allowed students to go forth, and hear their comments and responses to the things that affect them and concern them. And upheld the Race Relations Amendment Act, which is quite specific about making good race relations on campuses.

I guess there is a gap in the law as well which I can address at this point, which I think Jess can talk about as well. There is currently an issue, and I am not a lawyer and I don't profess to be a lawyer, but under the current Education Act of 1986 it quite clearly states that we are duty bound within an educational institution to support freedom of speech within the law. However certain institutions will say that the European Convention of Human Rights, which talks about freedom of expression, supersedes that. There is also the 2000 Race Relations Amendment Act. I think Jess is best to speak about that.

JK The problem of the Race Relations Amendment Act is twofold. Student unions are not classified as public institutions although they are funded by their university block grant, and this is in fact mixed messaging. I am a nationally elected officer of the NUS this year. I am responsible for the anti-racism campaign and many of our constituent members have voluntarily taken up the Race Relations Amendment Act in addition to the no platform policy promoted by the NUS.

- DM** So this leads to what? Allowing people to speak or to toughening up the exclusion policies?
- JK** NUS promotes freedom of speech without incitement to hatred so it targets racists and fascists. We believe that students irrelevant of gender, sexual orientation, religion or race, are free to study at university without intimidation on their campuses.
- MS** I mean I think that the main point is - I can go through in a minute if you want some of the bad cases - but we want essentially Jewish students to feel like all other students. We don't want them to feel on their campuses that they can't talk about stuff, or that they have to hide their Judaism. I understand that they should be challenged and that what happens at university is a kind of convergence of different communities and often they clash and there are tensions, but there is a point at which you have to say whether this tension is actually detrimental to the welfare of the students.
- TB** Perhaps I ought to say to the Committee, speaking as an ex-Higher Education Minister who was responsible for the regulatory legislation in the 1990s, I have a certain interest in this, and I would like your opinion on one matter and perhaps information on the other. And the opinion is whether you think this is essentially a matter which needs the attention of very senior management, for example at vice chancellor level or otherwise? And the request for information is really about any legal challenges you put on this, and I am conscious from other contexts including for example care homes, some deficiencies in the positive duties which are being imposed even now by the Equalities Bill on public authorities but not necessarily on private authorities in receipt of public money. That is one area and I think if you had time or you had access to legal advice you could advise the Committee on this. But also the question of conduct of student unions itself which, although it is very much a light touch as I remember, is not completely something which is divorced from the university's own responsibilities and there are also codes on that. Do you lean on them and do you blow the whistle on them, and does it have any effect?
- MS** I think the best way to answer that is with two examples. The first being Sussex, which is perhaps the best example. In 2002 an organisation was formed on campus called Ché-Leila, Ché for Ché Guevara and Leila for Leila Khaled, a Palestinian terrorist, an organiser of hijackings. It was the ultimate convergence of the radical left and pro-Palestinian groups. Quite simply, the Universities UK view on this tends to be that whatever happens on campus, it generally is up to individual vice chancellors to decide. [REDACTED]
- This is obviously in complete contrast in what I was talking about with Birmingham and Westminster. And what we find is that some institutions will take a positive role to get themselves involved in the union, and say they will keep a check and balance on the union and understand that responsibility that you spoke of, and other vice chancellors will say I'm sorry, it's nothing to do with me. And that's problematic because there doesn't seem to be a coherent strategy of how to deal with things. It appears to be merely based on an individual whim of each vice chancellor.
- DM** As a former editor of the student newspaper in Oxford I would have been very reluctant to be told what to publish by the vice chancellor and he was always very vicious to us whenever we published anything he didn't like. I am conscious we are running out of time. This is a fascinating session and we could have devoted just a full two hours just to almost one of any of the people coming in to give evidence, but I must be faithful to the next witnesses.

- NE** I just wanted to know, have there been any personal violent attacks against Jewish students on campuses that you may know of?
- MS** In what period?
- NE** The recent period – over the last three or four years.
- MS** Last year there were 11 incidents on antisemitism on campus. It's recorded by the CST. Only a few of those were violent incidents. Others things involving bricks through windows, people having their skullcaps knocked off their heads and abusive language etc, those kind of things. I mean - what Mark spoke about before – about when tensions increase, things tend to get out of hand and when something happens in one place it sparks a reaction. It perhaps was best seen in Manchester 2002. There was a motion in Manchester in 2002 where 22 incidents of antisemitism occurred including razor blades, put through doors, screwdrivers, there were other incidents, knives left in mailboxes, those kind of things. When I was at Birmingham there was a pig's head stapled to someone's door.
- JK** Also antisemitic literature usually appears outside student union buildings before council meetings and we have literature actually from the General Union of Palestinian Students who handed this out on February 27th whilst the Manchester motion was being discussed, talking about Jewish conspiracies and evils of Jews in Britain.
- BK** Following on from that, would you say then that there is a worsening trend? Earlier we heard of a raising of the background of incidents in comparison to four or five years before that, do you know if over the last four - five years there has been a worsening trend?
- MS** There are so many low profile cases that we have heard. SOAS, in particular, is another one like Sussex, where they actually essentially prevented the Jewish society from existing because they are one of the unions that has this Zionism equals racism platform and it actually took college intervention to create the Jewish society and allow Jewish activity to happen on campus. And that was something that was caught in the 1970s – we hadn't seen that since the 1970s where this Zionism equals racism, Jews were Zionists, therefore they were racists and fascists. And actually we have had incidents outside SOAS meetings where people were told that they should have died in the Holocaust, where major, major problems have occurred. And this is another incident where we have gone to the vice chancellor there, Colin Bundy, and he essentially turned around and said that freedom of speech tends to rule out – I mean to a certain extent they were allowed to have an Israeli speak on campus but only after persistent lobbying from UJS, initially they were told no Zionists can be on campus.
- And just to make that point a little bit more, that means that if for example if you're boycotting Israel, or banning Israel from campuses, that also means that if there's kosher food that comes from Israel that people want to have sold in shops so they can keep kosher, then that is unacceptable as well. It also means that if they want a rabbi to come in and talk about medical ethics or any number of Jewish cultural, religious-related issues, that they also potentially may be told, 'I'm sorry but if you are a Zionist rabbi, you're not allowed to go on campus.'
- DM** What is a non-Zionist rabbi?

HG The point is that the word ‘Zionist’ has become a term of abuse. And not only when there is any discussion of anything to do with Israel. It replaces the word ‘Jew’ all too often on lots of websites that we can point you to.

DM We are exploring the difference between antisemitism, anti-Zionism, anti-Israelism in due course. Gentleman, I am going to cut this off now because we are running late. Thank you very much and this has been a very good opening session. What you are giving us are lines to explore and you have given us some more written material and the committee is open to continuing evidence of any sort. I certainly could have found many themes to keep discussing with you, Mr Grunwald in particular. Thank you all for coming along and giving us your time.

HG Thank you very much chairman and your colleagues.

DM Welcome, Professor David Cesarani, who is the doyenne, if that’s the right word, of issues to do with, I think, modern history, immigration, citizenship and above all the treatment of Jews and the relationship between Jews and non-Jews in Britain and other European countries. And all of us, I hope, know of Searchlight magazine which has been going, Mr Silver, 30 years, 40 years?

SS Since the sixties, but the magazine since February ’75.

DM Professor Cesarani, in your evidence you talk about anti-Jewish currents and trends in Britain being situated in a specific historical context. Would you like to locate it historically? I’m trying not to cover the ground that we have already covered quite well with our previous witnesses and we will cover again next week.

DC I think that the most important way of thinking about anti-Jewish currents in the United Kingdom is to clear your mind of what happened on the Continent in the Nazi years, to clear your mind of pogroms, the kind of violence, brutal attacks on Jews in Russia and other parts of the Continent and instead to think about a society in which tolerance is very deeply embedded but in which tolerance is in some senses conditional. That is to say that you are welcome to live amongst us if you are like us, if you play by our rules. When the Jews returned to England in the mid-1650s - Henry Grunwald spoke about the 350th anniversary - they were not welcomed with open arms. There was a tremendous amount of opposition and attempts to chuck them out, in fact. The community, which grew very slowly, was constantly experiencing rebuffs of one sort or another, prejudice of one sort or another and it developed, I think, a political culture handed down from one generation to another, which was keep your heads down, you’re allowed to live in this country, to trade, an enormous amount of social freedom... that it’s much better here than on the Continent, but don’t get into arguments with people, don’t push your own interests too far and too fast.

This ingrained attitude was reinforced by the long process by which Jews gained what was called emancipation – the right of Jews to sit in Parliament, and of course Lionel Rothschild was the first Jewish Member of Parliament, although having won this privilege after a long struggle, he never opened his mouth once to ask a question or make a statement. Indeed he was probably very popular in that sense. During that struggle, in polemics against the right of Jews to sit in Parliament, all sorts of accusations were made against the Jews, that they were unfit to sit in the Christian legislature. In fact, the House of Lords in the end said the House of Commons could do whatever it wanted to do but it would not have Jews in the House of Lords because

they were not fit to sit in a Christian legislature and it repeated those words in 1858 and it was many years thereafter before Jews were allowed to take their seats in the Lords. And of course Jews did not graduate from Oxford or Cambridge until 1874.

So the history of exclusion has gone on for a very long time. Jews realised that to get on they had to make themselves more or less invisible, to behave like the English, which meant behaving like the white, Christian, middle-class majority. The same kind of strategy was actually adopted by Jews at different levels of the social order. Working-class Jews melded into the English working class.

This attitude of self-effacement was reinforced dramatically during the period of mass migration of Jews from Eastern Europe at the turn of the century. This was the period when part of my family arrived, a period which, in some senses, is a fine chapter of British history. Tens of thousands of Jews who were fleeing violent pogroms in Eastern Europe (although a very large proportion of them were also economic migrants) were allowed to live and settle in this country.

But a debate began very soon whether they were assimilable, whether they could be British citizens, Englishmen. So the Jewish community set in motion projects to anglicise them. Jews' Free School, for example, in Bell Lane in the East End of London, boasted that it took in little Poles and turned out little Englishmen. The Jewish Boys Brigade would drill Jewish boys on Sunday and took great pride in numbers but then went off to get killed in the Boer War.

That kind of sacrifice was seen as a validation of the process of Anglicisation and assimilation, but despite that there was enormous opposition and a popular movement developed in the East End of London, the forerunner of the fascist movements that we are probably going to hear about in a moment; and eventually after much debate and argument, in 1905 Britain's first immigration controls were passed into law - the Aliens Act of 1905, which was specifically intended to keep Jews out. It created enormous nervousness in the Jewish community about what would happen next. It's one step from legislating against Jews who were coming into the country to heavy legislation against Jews in the country - this created a genuine fear. Coming just a few years after the Dreyfus affair in France, the rise of political antisemitism in Germany, English Jews felt that they had to be on their guard which again reinforces the idea that you had to keep your head below the parapet, you had to be self-effacing, don't push your agenda too far.

That is the background to the rather lack lustre response of Jews to the refugee crisis triggered by the rise of the Nazis, with tragic results. The Jewish community did not exert itself, as it probably would now, to rescue Jews from the Nazis. Instead a delegation went to Downing Street in 1933 and said, 'We will pay for any Jews who come to this country so they don't become a burden on the public purse', not expecting there to be tens of thousands queuing up to escape Germany. The Jewish refugee organisations were bankrupted by 1938. They had to turn Jews away. Now this memory has haunted the Jews in Britain, and all the things that happened during the Second World War.

Since 1945 a new and rather more assertive attitude has developed. The thesis that I have put forward in my written submission is that generations of Jews born in Britain since the Second World War, some of which are represented here today, are not willing to put up with contempt, disdain, intolerance, exclusion. This has fitted them rather well for a multi-cultural, boisterous society in which there are lots of ethnic groups pushing their own agendas. But we have a number of clashing ethnic and ethnic-faith agendas at the moment. There are generations of Jews who are no longer

willing to, as they would say in Yiddish, ‘to stay shtumm’, ‘to be quiet’ or just to go quietly round to the back of 10 Downing Street and grab a friendly politician and ask for intercession and help. The campaigns are now open and they are vocal and they are on the streets, and the collision is I think one of the things that has led to this committee meeting.

I would just like to end with two points. It would be possible to write a history of the Jews in Britain and one of my colleagues, Bill Rubinstein, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, has done this, which is a story of harmony, of prosperity, of success. A unique story, paralleled perhaps only by the story of Jews in America. I would not want to give the impression that there is not a fantastic, positive story to tell.

But on the other hand, I would just like to recite a list of dates when there has been major violence against Jews in the last century. In 1900 there were riots against Jews in the East End triggered by the British Brother League which was aiming to keep Jewish immigrants out. In 1911 there riots in South Wales allegedly against Jewish moneylenders and peddlers. In 1915 there were the *Lusitania* riots which indiscriminately led to attacks on German, Russian and Polish Jews. In 1917 there were riots in two or three British cities, particularly in Leeds because Jews were accused of not doing their bit in the War. In 1919 there were riots in connection with a wave of anti-alienism. Between 1934 and ’39 there was constant violence in pretty well every single British city that had a group of the British Union of Fascists. Of course, there was the battle of Cable Street and the mini pogrom that followed it a couple of weeks later, which is not so well known, when Jews were chucked through the glass windows of shops in the Mile End Road. In 1946 there were riots against Jews in three major cities following terrorist incidents in Palestine. In 1946, 1947, 1948 constant fighting between Jews and non-Jews around the activities of Oswald Moseley’s British Union. I’m glad to say that violence on that scale and frequency has tailed away. We have heard plenty from Mark Gardner on what does exist but this has left its mark on the popular memory of Jews in Britain and certainly young Jews who determined that they would never again have to face that kind of daily harassment.

DM Thank you Professor Cesarani. Questions from any of the colleagues?

BG I am going to ask a rather personal question because what you have been talking about corresponds with an academic interest that I have in the history of private security. Whenever I go to a city abroad which has, or has had, a Jewish population, I elicit information on how those societies protected themselves during the corresponding and worse periods in Spain and Italy. In Girona, the building of a city within a city, the Jews were protected by the king and saw that city as a separate city from the rest of Girona, so there is a long, long history. Your history just goes back a few hundred years, you could go back a lot further. You gave me one good reference, the Professor from the University of Wales, but where would there would be histories of self protection by Jewish communities, including gated cities, or gated communities establishing their own police force, having their own legal system conferred upon them. Because this Inquiry is taking account of what is happening abroad and any history of antisemitism must be set within an international context.

DC Well Jewish self defence is a very modern phenomenon. You described rural communities, ghettos. That kind of separation between Jews and non-Jews was imposed on Jews in the middle ages and perpetuated until the last ghetto was eliminated, which was the ghetto holding the Jews of Rome which was liquidated in 1870. And of course ghettos made a terrible return in the Nazi years. Jewish self defence goes back to the events in Russia at the turn of the century, then very much

associated with the rise of the Jewish Socialist Party, the Bund, the rise of the Zionist movement in Eastern Europe. It was a psychological revolution that led to Jews arming themselves with whatever they had at hand and defending the quarters in which they and their families lived. The first organised self defence by Jews in this country probably is the 43 Group composed of Jewish ex-servicemen who returned to this country after the Second World War and refused to take Moseley's antics lying down. Prior to that time the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and we heard Henry Grunwald, had been running very effective campaigns of one kind or another but usually what were called 'speaker campaigns' whereby you got an orange box and you put it next to a fascist and you tried to tell the truth. Or else it was intercession, it was going to politicians, it was seeking support and having aid from non-Jewish politicians and leaders. I'd be happy to supply some references.

BG Thank you.

TB If I may, I will set my question in a kind of academic context. I hope, we share a common value or belief that knowledge in itself is a good thing and that, on the whole, degrees of knowledge and understanding tend to generate tolerance. Now it seems to me that there are beginning to be two different possible branches in this inquiry. It has been rather stimulated by your remarks about the low profile. I wonder if you can reflect on the difference between the Jewish population since the return and the way in which it has sought the knowledge, sympathy and understanding of its Christian, Caucasian counterparts for example. And whether or not the sticking point has been a small minority of disaffected people and the kinds of linkages between them, because of course there will have been within the white Christian community people who were very tolerant of the activities of fascists, and I think that that will be relating to Steve's evidence in a minute. But I'm just trying to get the feeling as to how much this situation which, from what has been said earlier, is not seen as perfect, has been stimulated by tolerance and indifference rather than active hostility or is that a distinction one shouldn't be drawing at all?

DC Well first of all, I think that knowledge, mutual knowledge, mutual understanding, dialogue is tremendously important and it's quite remarkable just how late it developed in this country. James Parks, was one of the first people to engage in Jewish/Christian dialogue, the Council of Christian and Jews was one of the first organisations actively to try and overcome the ignorance, the separation of the two communities and to move away from 'tolerance'. Because you 'tolerate' people who are not like you, you don't know much about them, you think they have rather mucky habits, you are going to put up with them, because you are better than them and it's a mark of just how much you are superior that you will put up with them. It is not about accepting people for who and what they are. It really I think only has been since the shock of the Nazi genocide against the Jews that non-Jews in this country, as elsewhere, faced the challenge of learning about this minority within their midst and great strides have been made in Jewish/Christian relations.

But knowledge can work the other way. A little knowledge can be a very bad thing. One of the problems in Muslim/Jewish relations in this country and Muslim/Jewish dialogue is that Muslims feel, think, not quite correctly but there is some basis for this in history, that they never persecuted Jews, they were not responsible for the Nazi genocide, therefore why should they worry about antisemitism? They have never been antisemitic, the Koran honours Jews, they are a protected people etc etc. It's going to take a great deal of dialogue and education with Muslims to try and explain the ambivalences, and that is a key word, within Islam. Ditto, Jews are going to have to learn a lot more about Muslims in order not to see them as simply terrorists and a potential threat. I hope I have answered your question.

TB That's very helpful.

DM Is there a qualitatively new historical phenomenon, and that is the existence of Israel, and in particular not Israel as the state struggling against Arab invaders of the 1940s, the Israel that is dominant, that wins wars, that occupies territories, controls the lives of hundreds, thousands, millions, a small number of millions of people who don't accept its rule. How do you fit that into the historical continuum of antisemitism?

DC Well, we are, I think, in uncharted waters. Israel was supposed to have solved the problem of antisemitism. Instead it has evidently aggravated it because Jewish diaspora communities are being associated with Israel, and of course given that Israel is such a major part of the Jewish identity of Jews in the diaspora, it could not be otherwise.

Another dimension is multiculturalism. In a peculiar way, Jews were better off when ethnic and faith groups just shut up and went about their business and hoped they wouldn't get clobbered by the particular majority community. We are now in this bear garden of ethnic and faith groups which on the one hand allows us to celebrate our ethnicity, our faith, Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, the whole gamut, but which will inevitably will lead to more points of friction.

And another element that of course has altered the dynamic, is the existence of states in a globalised world, pumping out information, propaganda, stereotypes which cannot be controlled. When Jews were dealing with antagonistic other minorities or majorities sited in one country, they had a measure of control that they do not have when material is coming over the internet, satellite TV etc etc. from a state which is putting its heft behind that. Not even really in the years of Nazi Germany is there a comparison. The Nazis had agents, there were ethnic Germans in various places, but that kind of propaganda was easy to control and it was identified with a particular state which many people disliked. There is now a diaspora of Arabs, of Muslims and they are not going exactly the same way but there is one element, some elements, which receive information and direction from the Middle East and this has introduced a radically new dynamic in the relationship between Jews and other minorities in this country, which is very hard to manage.

Nobody has thought about managing diversity in multi-cultural societies in which everyone is hedged around by rights: 'I have a right to say this, to say that'. Of course the issue of the cartoons has brought this into very sharp focus. But all of these conditions are new and Israel, I think, is just one element that is making the friction sharper than it probably would otherwise have been, and I think it may well have occurred in any case.

BK You have just touched on something I was going to raise. I was just going to say could you give us a comment on the role of popular culture and is that helpful in terms of knowledge, tolerance, dialogue, the things that you have been talking to us about? And whether it, in any way, has been part of life rather than hostility?

DC Well popular culture is enormously important. It is, of course, a famous paradox that, although there were many Jews in Hollywood, - producers, directors, screen writers - Jews are very rarely depicted as Jews in Hollywood films until well into the second half of the last century. The same was rather true of British TV. One thinks of Lord Bernstein and Lew Grade. It's not until the 1970s that you actually see Jews portrayed on British television in a realistic and even sympathetic light. In some ways perhaps that's good. The absence of Jews from popular culture has meant the

absence of stereotypes like Fagin, who has been enormously influential in constructing the way in which people think about Jews in this country. When I was at school, I used to go to a sweetshop across the road from the school that I went to, which will remain nameless, and the man behind the counter would go, 'Ah, here comes Fagin' and that was in the early 1970s.

So popular culture is enormously important and I am glad to say that I think that in this country, certainly television and radio has been pulling its weight in presenting the range of ethnic groups, faith groups, portraying them realistically and sensitively. I think that the behaviour of the British press recently, over the last few days, has been exemplary. I have been shocked by the restraint and good sense over the matter of the cartoons. Popular culture is one area in which I think we can be genuinely proud of what has been achieved. I can't speak for other ethnic minorities but I think that popular culture in this country, since the 1970s, has responded to changes in society, to changes in attitudes towards religion and ethnicity. And has done a reasonably good job and it certainly hasn't made things worse which, given how it's run and for what motives, is a blessing.

DM Can we move on to Steve Silver, the editor of Searchlight. Steve, Searchlight, that's the far right. So, how real is the threat to far right groups?

SS I think probably the best thing is, is that I touch on some of the things that were brought up by Professor Cesarani. He talked about what effectively were proto-fascists and the fascists and the antisemitic attacks that were carried out and obviously in our written submission we talked of all the various fascist groups and some of them are very, very tiny and are probably not worth dwelling on them. But what I wanted to really say a few words about are the main fascist groups.

When I say fascist groups, I mean the groups that stand in the tradition of the old fascists, British Union of Fascists, the kind of groups that have members who have been in that organisation and are effectively successor organisations. The most active of the far right antisemitic organisations in Britain is of course the British National Party. There are two main things I want to talk about. First is the way they are engaged in Holocaust denial and in more recent years the relativisation of the holocaust. And then the second is their advocacy of the Jewish conspiracy theory. Of course of which you have heard quite a bit in the earlier submissions.

So there's obviously a very specific reason for the BNP to have been engaged in Holocaust denial and more recently in relativisation - they have got self interest in it. And that is because for decades after the Second World War the greatest barrier to the rehabilitation of organisations advocating national socialism, advocating fascist ideas, was knowledge of the heinous crimes that were being committed, particularly the Holocaust. That's why, along with their sister organisations, in the world the BNP enthusiastically engaged in Holocaust denial, after the organisation was founded by long standing post-war Nazi, John Tyndall in 1982. During the 1980s the BNP distributed Holocaust News, which was a newspaper-style pamphlet which was printed in Sussex by Anthony Hancock, in many different languages, for international consumption. The reason that the other languages were printed in Britain and exported was that in some countries it would have been illegal to print the material, the denial of the Nazi crimes and the holocaust is a specific crime there and in Britain that is not the case. The BNP were openly part of an international movement of holocaust deniers. They met at conferences, they exchanged material and personnel for meetings. All had the same interest at heart, which was to make Nazi ideas acceptable again.

The BNP found they had problems with this, with the Holocaust denial and at the same time trying to pursue a populist, electoral strategy. As time moved on throughout the '80s and '90s they shifted and changed and tried to find a new way forward and they realised that for most British people, the Holocaust was a most irrefutable, historical fact, they don't dispute it. Those that do just seem to be a bunch of cranks and crackpots. Secondly, with the years that now have been passing, memory of what has happened in the Holocaust is beginning to fade. It wasn't so hard to be an extreme far right party because a lot of people that were around in the forties are no longer around so people are not particularly concerned about it. And probably more importantly than anything else, there have been other genocides since - the Holocaust wasn't the only genocide; there have been other mass murders.

And finally fascist parties outside Britain are beginning to make breakthroughs again in Germany, and in particular France, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Rather than deny the Holocaust outright, it was easier publicly to relativise it as Jean Marie le Pen infamously did in France when he described the Holocaust as a "mere detail of history", and that's pretty much the road that the British National Party has gone down. No change in belief, a kind of change of tactic if you like. So whereas Nick Griffin used to say that he believed that the extermination "tale" is a mixture of allied-wartime propaganda, an extremely profitable lie, now he's saying something defending David Irving, a so called revisionist historian, who is currently facing criminal charges in Austria, on the basis that Irving was merely expressing opinions on aspects of the twentieth century European history and that this is for historians to debate as with any other subject. And of course I'm sure as David Cesarani will point out, the Holocaust isn't a matter of debate, it's just an historical fact, it is not debatable within the historical community. That's really where the BNP have gone with the Holocaust denial and now relativisation.

In connection with the conspiracy theory, the BNP's main public propaganda drive, I am sure you all know, isn't against Jews but it's about immigration and Islam. Without a doubt the BNP is the brand name of organised racism in Britain, just like the National Front was the brand name of organised racism in the 1970s, and of course the BNP is in fact a splinter of that organisation. BNP activists are most likely to be involved in attacks on the most visible of ethnic minorities, not necessarily Jews and this leads I think perhaps to a widely-held belief, even amongst the people who oppose the BNP, even in the anti-racist circles, that the Jews are the fascists enemy of yester-year and that today things have moved on in some way.

I think that that is actually a profound misunderstanding of the way in which different racisms work and of where the BNP is coming from. [REDACTED] Even behind the anti-black racism can be found antisemitism and it has been a long standing belief among British fascists that there is an international Jewish conspiracy to destroy the white race, that non-white immigration into Britain is part of a plot to destabilise it, to mongrelise the white race. It isn't a new idea. That was argued by Hitler in Mein Kampf. It's the politics of National Socialism. To the Nazi everything is explained by the supposed hidden hand of the Jew and that includes immigration. That also includes the media, and the way the media works. In the late 1990s, Nick Griffin wrote a pamphlet entitled 'Who are the mindbenders?' A publication that was a supposed expose of the way that Jews control the media and "provide us with an endless diet of pro-multicultural, pro-homosexual, anti-British trash". The Mindbenders stands in a very long tradition of the modern antisemitic conspiracy theory literature - it goes right back really to the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and that was first published in English in 1919. More recent publications fall in line with the general BNP wish to court respectability and are nowhere near as explicit in their antisemitism but instead talk of Zionists or American capitalists. This is a general

trend not just on the right – this is across the spectrum. But they are code words for those who know within the party.

The point is that the BNP's main propaganda drive may be anti-Islam at the moment but their world view, the prism through which they view everything, is antisemitism, even with all of the removal of the words of the literature and stuff like that. It is said that you can judge a person by the books on the bookshelf, but even with the BNP, having done that, if you just have a look at their booklist, at the stuff that they sell, it shows what they really think. Apart from the stuff that you might expect, they have got stuff still by revisionist historians, like David Irving, books by Michael Hoffman, racist publications. Their overseas collection, a large part of it concerns Israel, rather strange for a party that mainly really seems to be interested in Britain, rather peculiar to have so many books about a country about the size of Wales. Entire continents don't get a look-in as the BNP only seems to be concerned about Zionism and Islam. The important thing about these books is that they are not actually in themselves antisemitic – these are fairly mainstream books – they're critical of Israel or Zionism or both. For example, it sells Victor Ostrovski's "The Other Side of Deception" and James Bacque's, "Crimes and Mercies", which are both insider accounts of the Israeli Secret Service, Mossad. It is certainly worth asking why on earth the BNP and its membership would be so pre-occupied with the activities of Mossad. It doesn't stock any books on any other of the world's secret services.

- DM** I'm going to stop you there simply because we technically have to stop at 6.30. I know you want to give private evidence. I think you have made your point very forcefully that the BNP, despite being best known as arguing politically on a racist basis against different, recent immigrant groups - I think I am right in saying that in the Griffin trial that ended with his acquittal, there weren't any anti-Jewish or antisemitic remarks in the evidence, in the videos that were played to the jury, I mean headlines in the news reports were on the Muslims and the Lawrence case and so on - but I think that you made that point very positively. Are there public questions before we just have a final private session with Mr Silver that colleagues would like to ask?
- TB** One very quick question. You rightly explain the huge cultural and to some extent racial differences between the BNP as a sort of white Caucasian, and some of its hate figures not just among Jews but among Muslims as well – is there any evidence at all, despite those apparent barriers, for forces of antisemitism on the right as you describe them making common cause with forces of antisemitism on the left?
- SS** Well historically there were connections between the Nation of Islam, a black nationalist organisation, and the National Front, in fact the very same people, Nick Griffin himself was involved with those kind of connections. In more recent years it's not – I don't think that has been the case. But in the end the two don't need to make contact – well really they are two sides of the same coin because the BNP argue that one of the main reasons for their existence in increased strength is because of Islamic fundamentalists and of course the Islamic fundamentalists argue that it's because of the racists, such as the British Nationalist Party, that they have to take the measures that they have to take. I don't think that they actually need contact to almost have a symbiotic relationship and they believe very much in the same things, they both believe in the world Jewish conspiracy theory.
- DM** Okay well Steve, Mr Silver, has asked to give us some evidence in a private session so can I ask everybody who is not a member of the Committee to clear the room. David, thank you very much as well for coming in.