



REPORT OF THE
ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
INTO ANTISEMITISM

SEPTEMBER 2006
ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP AGAINST ANTISEMITISM



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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.

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Summary

Until recently, the prevailing opinion both within the Jewish community and beyond was that antisemitism had receded to the point that it existed only on the margins of society. However, the evidence we received indicates that there has been a reversal of this progress since the year 2000, which has created anxiety and concern within the Jewish community.

The aim of this inquiry is to investigate the current problem, identify the sources of contemporary antisemitism and make recommendations that we believe will improve the current situation.

In the introductory chapters we define the term ‘antisemitism’ and the nature of the problem. In this regard we have been guided by the definition of racism put forward by the Macpherson report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and the definition of antisemitism provided by the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.

It is clear that violence, desecration of property, and intimidation directed towards Jews is on the rise and in chapter three we explore the increase in antisemitic incidents and the response of the law enforcement agencies.

With regard to the recording of antisemitic incidents, we were concerned to learn that there is a lack of consistency in police processes and procedures. Only a minority of forces have the capability to record antisemitic incidents. Without a clear and comprehensive understanding of antisemitism it is difficult to formulate adequate solutions and address the failure of some police forces to collate statistics and monitor anti-Jewish incidents.

During the course of the inquiry, we have become alerted to a form of anti-Jewish prejudice which takes the form of conversations, discussions, or pronouncements, made in public or private, which cross the line of acceptability. This is explored in chapter four.

‘Antisemitic discourse’ is the term we have adopted to describe the widespread change in mood and tone when Jews are discussed, whether in print or broadcast, at universities, or in public or social settings. We are concerned that anti-Jewish themes and remarks are gaining acceptability in some quarters in public and private discourse in Britain and there is a danger that this trend will become more and more mainstream.

According to a significant amount of evidence we received, it is this phenomenon that has contributed to an atmosphere where Jews have become more anxious and more vulnerable to abuse and attack than at any other time for a generation or longer.

In chapter five we look into the sources of contemporary antisemitism. Whilst the far right, the traditional home of antisemitism in the last century, continues to be a problem,

it is no longer its exclusive source. We heard that the recent surge in antisemitism is closely linked to the periodic outbreaks of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; but given that the majority of victims are neither Israeli nor displaying support for Israel at the time of the attack, the precise reasons for this link require more investigation. This, in our opinion, reflects the complexity of antisemitism in Britain today; it is not one dimensional and is perpetrated by different groups in different ways.

The committee unanimously recognised that criticism of Israel should not, in itself, be regarded as antisemitic but equally recognised that anti-Jewish prejudice in any context should not be overlooked.

Antisemitism on campus is a serious issue, especially because we feel that better education has a significant part to play in community relations. We heard that some universities are being targeted as recruiting grounds for extremists, and of tensions within student bodies, and we were concerned that not enough is being done to counteract the effects of antisemitism on campus.

In chapter seven we examine the measures that already exist to address antisemitism. Although government has a significant role to play, our recommendations are aimed at all agencies, organisations and individuals with a remit in this area. In the view of the panel, it is up to all of us – the media, university lecturers, politicians and community leaders – to understand the issue of antisemitism and treat it in the same manner as other forms of racism.

We make a number of recommendations to the police, the Home Office, Government departments, schools, universities, and others on steps that can be taken to better monitor and reduce levels of antisemitic abuse. However, we consider that further research needs to be undertaken in the UK on the correlation between the conflict in the Middle East and attacks on the Jewish community. This must be better understood if the problem is to be tackled.

Some witnesses to this inquiry pointed out that the level of antisemitism experienced by Jews in Britain remains lower than that faced by Jewish communities in some parts of Europe and that the Jewish community is not the only minority community in Britain to experience prejudice and discrimination. However, such arguments provide no comfort to the individual victims of hate and violence, nor should they be used as an excuse to ignore the problem.

Racism and intolerance must be challenged wherever they exist. We believe that Britain is at risk of becoming complacent in this respect and that antisemitic abuse, be it physical or verbal, must be condemned in the same unqualified terms as other forms of discrimination and prejudice.

1. Introduction

The Inquiry

1. The inquiry was established to investigate the belief, widely held within the Jewish community, that levels of antisemitism in Britain are rising. Following an investigation, we have reached the troubling conclusion that this belief is justified.
2. The main aims of this report are as follows:
 - To identify and define the nature of antisemitism in Britain today;
 - To analyse, as far as evidence allows, the extent of the problem;
 - To make practical recommendations as to how the problem can be addressed.

Defining Antisemitism

3. We take into account the view expressed in the Macpherson report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry that a racist act is defined by its victim.¹ It is not acceptable for an individual to say ‘I am not a racist’ if his or her words or acts are perceived to be racist. We conclude that it is the Jewish community itself that is best qualified to determine what does and does not constitute antisemitism.
4. Broadly, it is our view that any remark, insult or act the purpose or effect of which is to violate a Jewish person’s dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him is antisemitic. This reflects the definition of harassment under the Race Relations Act 1976. This definition can be applied to individuals and to the Jewish community as a whole.

The Problem

5. In his oral evidence, the Chief Rabbi stated: “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.”² However, the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews told us, “There is probably a greater feeling of discomfort, greater concerns, greater fears now about antisemitism than there have been for many decades.”³ Having considered all of the evidence submitted, we are of the opinion that there is much truth in both of these ostensibly contradictory views.

1 The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, Report of an Inquiry by Sir William Macpherson Of Cluny: Volume I: Ch47 (Recommendations), “Definition of Racist Incident” parts 12-14
Definition of Racist Incident

12. That the definition should be:

“A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”.

13. That the term “racist incident” must be understood to include crimes and non-crimes in policing terms. Both must be reported, recorded and investigated with equal commitment.

14. That this definition should be universally adopted by the Police, local Government and other relevant agencies.

2 Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks oral evidence

3 Henry Grunwald oral evidence

6. This, in our opinion, reflects the complexity of antisemitism in Britain today. Antisemitism is not one dimensional. It is perpetrated in different ways by different groups within society and for this reason it is hard to identify. We would suggest that antisemitic words and acts can be separated into the following two groups:
 - Acts of violence and abuse against Jews or their personal and communal property, which we have classified as ‘antisemitic incidents’. These are reported by an identifiable victim to the police or to some other agency, such as the Community Security Trust.
 - Antisemitism in public and private discourse, for example the language and tone adopted by the media, political groups, organisations and individuals. These are harder to identify, often go unreported, but are nevertheless extremely significant.
7. The author Howard Jacobson, writing of today’s Britain, referred to “a certain grinding, low level of antisemitism all Jews learn to live with”.⁴ We hope that this report will go some way to explaining how Jews may feel anxious about their place in an apparently welcoming society in which antisemitism appears not to exist.

The Evidence

8. The evidence submitted (both written and oral) spanned a wide range of opinions on the subject of antisemitism. We have at all times aimed for an objective and dispassionate evaluation of this evidence.
9. We have found that in some areas there is a clear need for more complete statistical data on the issue of antisemitism. We would have found information on antisemitic incidents and some qualitative research on tensions between British minority communities of great benefit. Where the evidence presented was incomplete, this was highlighted in the appropriate section of the report. In our conclusions we have highlighted these limitations and given practical recommendations as to how the extent and nature of antisemitism could more adequately be monitored in the future. However, we must emphasise that, despite the absence of comprehensive data in certain areas, the resources available were more than adequate for the purposes of the report and we are confident that its conclusions are well substantiated.
10. We are most grateful to all those who submitted written evidence, and especially to those who also gave oral evidence. We particularly appreciate the co-operation we have received from Ministers and Government departments, local authorities and public bodies such as the police and the Crown Prosecution Service.

4 Howard Jacobson written submission

2. Background

The Jewish Community

11. According to census data there are now some 268,000 people in England and Wales who describe themselves as Jewish. The true figure is thought to be just above 300,000 for the whole of the UK.
12. Although Jews live in most parts of the UK, approximately two-thirds of the Jewish community live in London and the surrounding counties, and a further ten per cent in Manchester. Most of the remainder live in the larger cities including Leeds, Liverpool, Glasgow, Birmingham, Brighton and Bournemouth.
13. The Jewish community has integrated in a highly successful manner into British life and has made a tremendous contribution to this country since it was readmitted 350 years ago.

Historical Context

14. There has been a recorded Jewish presence in this country since the Middle Ages. Jews were expelled from England by King Edward I in 1290 and readmitted in 1656 under Oliver Cromwell. In the Middle Ages the Catholic Church held Jews responsible for the killing of Christ and they were persecuted as outsiders from mainstream society. Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries led to increased antisemitism. During the First World War Jews were associated with spies and enemy aliens and popular antisemitism was widespread during the Second World War. In the 1930s Jews faced extensive and violent antipathy from right wing political groups, notably the British Union of Fascists. They created an intimidating atmosphere in which the Jewish community and the government felt constrained in offering assistance to persecuted Jews in Europe. There were extensive anti-Jewish riots in Britain as a result of the clashes between Britain and Jews in Palestine, especially following the killing of two British soldiers by the Irgun and the bombing of the King David hotel.
15. During the second half of the twentieth century, particularly following the revelations about the Nazi genocide after the Second World War, overt antisemitism appeared to have largely receded for Britain's Jews. The Jewish community was largely unaffected by occasional outbursts of antisemitism emanating from far right groups like the National Front and the British National Party, whose energies were focused on hostility to the more visible black and ethnic minority communities and frequent bouts of in-fighting. There was vigilance, of course, and an awareness that antisemitism had always existed within some elements of society, but as successive generations struggled for rights, recognition, equal treatment and protection, antisemitism was eventually pushed into the very margins of society and it seemed that decades, even centuries, of progress were set to continue.
16. In many ways, the successful integration of the Jewish community has provided an example and a hope for other minority groups and for government and society as a whole: that the pernicious and dangerous phenomenon of racism can – with time, education and patient effort – be overcome.

17. The evidence we heard has indicated to us that there has been a reversal of that progress since the year 2000. Nevertheless, some witnesses pointed out that the level of prejudice and discrimination experienced by Jews in Britain remains lower than that faced by members of other visible minorities. Reasons for this include the continuous Jewish presence in Britain since the seventeenth century and the fact that the majority of Jews are not visibly different to the population at large.

The Nature of Contemporary Antisemitism

18. Many of those who gave evidence described antisemitism in terms of a constantly mutating virus. Over the centuries it has evolved from prejudice against Jews because they had a different faith from the majority, to a form of racial prejudice. In the aftermath of the Holocaust this overt, racial hatred of Jews became unacceptable in British society.
19. Ironically, the latest form of antisemitism appears to be based on anti-racism. Jews are no longer accused of killing Christ, or possessing sinister racial traits. Modern antisemitism has, out of necessity, become more nuanced and subtle. Many witnesses told us that the latest mutation of anti-Jewish prejudice is now infused with a ‘social conscience’, focused on the role of Israel in the Middle East conflict. Jews are seen as natural supporters of Israel, regardless of whether or not they actually are, and some of those who are hostile to Israel make no distinction between Israelis and Jews. Jews throughout the world are seen by some extremists as legitimate targets in the struggle to establish a Palestinian state or to eliminate the State of Israel.
20. In addition to the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state, another important factor in the evolution of this form of prejudice has been the advance of globalised mass media. Antisemitism can now disseminated faster and further than ever before. Egyptian and Syrian state television broadcast anti-Jewish propaganda to millions of homes, including in the UK, and far right and radical Islamist organisations are using the internet as a key component in their campaigns of hatred. Some witnesses spoke of the ‘globalisation of hate’. News is beamed around the world almost instantly and events abroad no longer occur in isolation; they have a direct effect on attitudes and community relations in Britain.
21. The nature of contemporary antisemitism in Britain is complex and multifaceted. Unsophisticated acts of physical and verbal abuse against Jewish people, for example neo-Nazi graffiti or orthodox Jews being attacked on their way to synagogue, are not a recent phenomenon and are easily identifiable when they occur. Antisemitic discourse, however, is often easier to recognise than it is to define. When the boundaries of public discourse become unclear, antisemitic language can become socially acceptable.
22. Antisemitism, like other forms of racism, is a problem for society as a whole. It is a form of racism directed against one particular ethnic group but it has not always been recognised as such. For example, in her written evidence to us psychologist Golda Zafer-Smith pointed out how antisemitism was often omitted from anti-racism and diversity training, prompting her to speculate whether it was therefore considered to be an “acceptable form of racism”.⁵

⁵ Golda Zafer-Smith written submission

23. The high degree of integration and success achieved by the Jewish community has meant that Jewish people experience a different model of racism and prejudice to other communities. Antisemitism is not always recognised for what is, and Jews are not always recognised as victims of racism.
24. We feel that manifestations of antisemitism, whether originating from the far right or elsewhere, should act as an early warning for other types of discrimination. Historically, where antisemitism has been allowed to gain a foothold in societies, other forms of prejudice have fed off this and flourished.

The EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism

25. Despite the difficulties inherent in defining antisemitism, the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), which monitors racism and antisemitism in EU Member States, produced in 2005 a working definition of antisemitism quoted in full below. The Centre has urged all member states of the EU to use this definition as a basis for dealing with antisemitism.
26. **We recommend that the EUMC Working Definition of antisemitism is adopted and promoted by the Government and law enforcement agencies.**

Figure 1: EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism

EUMC WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

Working definition: “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

In addition, such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective – such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

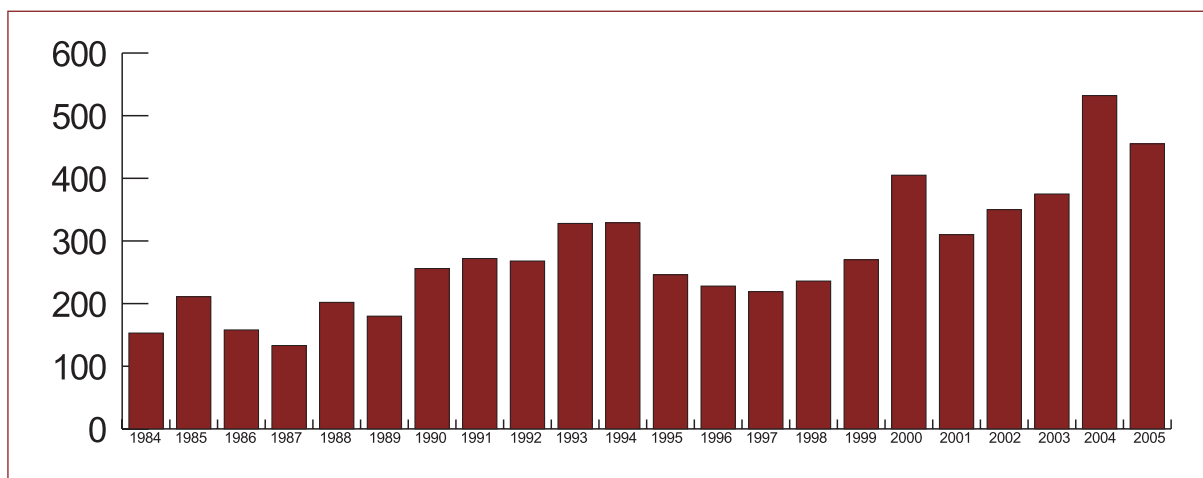
Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

3. Antisemitic Incidents

Introduction

27. The most recognisable aspect of contemporary antisemitism is that of attacks on Jewish people or property. These attacks are criminal offences which can be dealt with by the law enforcement agencies.
28. Many of those who gave evidence recognised that, with the outbreak of the second Palestinian Intifada in September 2000, most agencies monitoring antisemitism throughout Europe and beyond, including the EUMC, have acknowledged a rise in antisemitic incidents. Often these peak at times when there is a particular outbreak of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or somewhere else in the Middle East. Mark Gardner of the Community Security Trust (CST) expressed concern that “the high number of trigger events since September 2000 has led to an increase in the background level of antisemitic incidents that take place when there are no trigger events.”⁶
29. This trend is reflected in Britain. In 2005 the CST, a charitable organisation which provides security and defence services and advice to the Jewish community, recorded 455 antisemitic incidents, a 14% fall from 2004, but the second highest annual total since the Trust began recording incidents in 1984.

Figure 2: Bar Graph of Antisemitic Incidents Figures Since 1984



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Terrorism and the Jewish Community

30. There has not been a terrorist attack on a Jewish community building in Britain since the bombing of Balfour House, the headquarters of the then Joint Israel Appeal and a number of other UK Jewish charities, in 1994. However, the Jewish community is still a potential target for terrorism. We received evidence regarding the threat to the Jewish community from terrorist organisations such as al-Qaeda, who have made no secret of the fact that they regard Jews and Jewish community buildings as legitimate targets.

31. In recent years there have been numerous terrorist attacks on Jewish communities around the world. These include a petrol tanker explosion at the oldest synagogue in North Africa, simultaneous attacks on four Jewish community institutions in Casablanca and attacks on two synagogues in Istanbul. In Germany, terrorists were recently convicted of planning attacks on Jewish community institutions, whilst the perpetrators of the Madrid train bombings in 2004 were alleged to have gathered intelligence against potential Jewish targets there. At the time of writing this report, seven suspects are on trial at the Old Bailey, charged with plotting large-scale terrorist attacks on British targets. Evidence recovered by police included a list of synagogues.
32. In his oral evidence the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews explained the anxiety and vulnerability felt by the Jewish community. For many years the community has had to provide security guards for synagogues, Jewish schools, buildings and events. In addition physical protection measures are provided for Jewish community buildings. The expense, in financial and personnel costs, of such protection costs the Jewish community millions of pounds annually. The Community Security Trust alone spends over £5 million per year on security and protection; in addition to this individual schools and institutions incur their own security costs.
33. In the course of a visit to Manchester members of the panel visited the King David School, which more than one thousand Jewish children attend, and saw first hand the kind of security measures judged necessary based on advice from the police and the CST. The campus is surrounded by reinforced fencing and monitored by CCTV cameras. The windows are fitted with anti-shatter glass and the wall nearest the road is reinforced. Access is controlled and limited to two entry points staffed by full-time security guards and parents are also asked to participate in a security rota. Bomb drills are conducted in addition to the standard fire drills. These measures cost the school around £130,000 annually and it receives no extra allowance from the Department for Education and Skills or the Local Authority. Parents are asked to make a termly contribution towards security but this does not cover the entire cost. We saw similar security precautions during our visit to Merkaz haTorah School in Paris, which was firebombed in 2003, but the French government contributes towards the school's security costs.
34. We also heard evidence of hoax bombs being left outside Jewish community buildings in recent years which reinforce a sense of vulnerability and fear. In 2003 a hoax bomb, complete with wires, timer and a fake stick of dynamite, was left outside a kosher butcher's shop in North London. The perpetrators were thought to be animal rights activists in protest against Jewish methods of animal slaughter.
35. Like other minority communities, British Jews are vulnerable to racism and prejudice, but witnesses gave evidence that the Jewish community has to provide a higher level of security than other minority communities at all of its community events, schools and places of worship. In addition to the obvious cost implications there is an associated emotional and psychological impact.
36. **We recommend that the Home Office provides a greater level of support in addressing the security needs of British Jews, especially with reference to their places of worship and schools.**

Defining Antisemitic Incidents

37. We were told that whenever a Jewish person considers that he or she has been the victim of an antisemitic attack, this should be reported to the local police and to the CST. The CST assess, collate and record all incidents reported to them which they consider to be antisemitic. Although there is debate as to what constitutes an antisemitic incident, the CST adopts a rigorous approach before classifying an incident as antisemitic and requires a clear indication of an antisemitic element, for example language used by the perpetrator at the time of the incident or the fact that antisemitic slogans or literature accompanied the incident.
38. The CST gave evidence that not every incident reported to them is automatically classed as antisemitic, and they did not always accept the belief of a victim that an incident was antisemitic in the absence of some supporting evidence. In 2005 they rejected 194 reports of incidents which could not reasonably be shown to have been motivated by antisemitism.
39. We noted that the basis on which the CST classifies antisemitic incidents differs from that adopted by the police following the recommendation of the Macpherson report, where any incident which the victim believes to be racially motivated is classified as such (see paragraph 3).

Recording Antisemitic Incidents

40. We received written evidence from seven police forces across the UK and heard oral evidence from the Association of Chief Police Officers and a senior officer from the Metropolitan Police. It was made clear to us that different police forces record racist incidents in different ways.
41. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) told us that whilst antisemitism is regarded as a form of racism within the police service, not all forces record antisemitic incidents as a separate category. All but eight forces record such incidents within their figures for racist incidents and do not therefore produce separate figures for antisemitic incidents. The Metropolitan Police and some other forces which have significant Jewish communities do keep separate figures for such incidents, and research is underway to assess the consistency of statistics between police forces and the CST.
42. Both ACPO and the Metropolitan Police work closely with the CST in recording and in investigating antisemitic incidents, and told us that they have confidence in the statistics published by the CST. However, it seems unlikely that victims of antisemitism will all report to both the police and the CST, so neither agency is likely to have a complete picture of antisemitic incidents.
43. Research on antisemitic incidents in London recently published by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research in collaboration with the Metropolitan Police Service⁷ showed that whilst some victims reported incidents to both the police and the CST, a substantial number reported incidents to one but not the other. This is likely to be the case nationally.

⁷ Paul Iganski, Vicky Kielinger, Susan Paterson, *Hate Crimes against London's Jews: An analysis of incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service 2001-2004* (Institute for Jewish Policy Research, London, 2005)

Furthermore, one of the authors of the study, Dr Paul Iganski, a sociologist at the University of Essex, told us that British Crime Survey estimates of the number of racist incidents far exceed the number recorded by the police: four times as many incidents were estimated by the survey for 2003-04 compared with incidents recorded by the police for the same period.⁸ Likewise, the number of antisemitic incidents recorded by police forces and by the CST will considerably understate the true extent of victimisation.

44. The Association of Chief Police Officers told us that they do not collate antisemitism statistics. They pointed out that London is the only area where there are sufficient incidents to enable meaningful analysis: “The number of incidents recorded by individual forces and trends therein are not at a level where statistical significance can be tested. Nevertheless forces demonstrate a heightened sensitivity to antisemitic crime and criminality with respect to that of a general racist nature and they respond accordingly.”⁹
45. We heard from the Attorney General that the Racist Incident Monitoring Report (RIMS), the system used by the Government to monitor race-hate attacks, does not break down racist crime into smaller sub-categories.
46. The provision of appropriate support to victims should be a primary concern in policing incidents. Accordingly, the Home Office’s Code of Practice on Reporting and Recording Racist Incidents (2000) argues that the recording of incidents is a key step in the provision of support to victims:

“Racist incidents are not recorded only to provide statistics at a national level, nor even to provide statistics at a national level... although these are obviously useful outcomes of recording. But recording incidents also allows the victim to be offered support... Accurate and timely information on racist incidents must be collected that provides as much information as possible to deal with the incident, assist the victim and share information with other appropriate agencies.”¹⁰

47. At national level, analysis of the data on antisemitic incidents will in principle enable assessment of the training needs of police officers and an assessment of the need for resources to support the policing of incidents. At the local level, the appropriate recording of incidents and an effective system for retrieval and analysis of recorded information enables intelligence to be gathered and assessed. Such intelligence should assist in the establishment of preventative measures and enable the targeting of resources on areas of need.
48. **Given the potential value of police data on anti-Jewish incidents, we conclude that it is a matter of concern that only a minority of police forces in the United Kingdom have the capability to record antisemitic incidents.**
49. The majority of Jews live in areas in which police forces have established systems to monitor anti-Jewish incidents, namely the areas served by the Metropolitan Police Service and Greater Manchester Police. These two police forces have been at the forefront in the analysis and use of data on anti-Jewish incidents. However, several other forces that do not have the capability to routinely record incidents have substantial Jewish communities in their areas and it is clear from the Community Security Trust’s annual reports, and from

⁸ *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System – 2004*, page 8, (Home Office, 2005)

⁹ ACPO written submission

¹⁰ *Code of Practice on Reporting and Recording Racist Incidents – 2000*, chapters 3 and 6, (Home Office, 2000)

press reports, that anti-Jewish incidents occur in these localities that are not captured by police records. The failure of police forces in these areas to adequately monitor this type of racially motivated crime needs to be addressed.

50. A number of forces have few Jews living in their force areas and therefore there are likely to be less anti-Jewish incidents occurring in these areas, but the full extent of antisemitic crime will simply not be known until adequate recording systems are established.
51. **We conclude that given that all police forces in the United Kingdom are required to have the capacity to record racist incidents and provide annual data to the Home Office irrespective of the size of minority ethnic communities in their areas, it is inexcusable that there is not a similar requirement for the recording of antisemitic incidents.**
52. **We recommend that the police should have one universal and comprehensive recording facility rather than leaving it to the discretion of individual forces and that the model adopted by the Metropolitan Police of categorising incidents as both racist and antisemitic should be introduced across all police forces in the UK.**
53. **We recommend that the Home Office directs research resources to the extent of antisemitism and reports annually to Parliament.**
54. **We conclude that the Community Security Trust performs a valuable role and recommend intensified co-operation between the police and the CST, with particular focus on tackling dual reporting.**

The Opportunistic Nature of Antisemitic Attacks

55. The police and CST statistics indicate that most antisemitic incidents are committed by individuals rather than organised groups. In his oral evidence, Dr Iganski told us that many antisemitic incidents are either opportunistic or aggravated, indicating an undercurrent of anti-Jewish prejudice that is part of everyday life and that comes to the surface when there are tensions or trigger events. What is less easy to assess is how far these individuals have themselves been influenced by undercurrents of antisemitism in society.
56. The research carried out for ‘Hate Crimes Against London’s Jews’ showed that in over one-third of antisemitic incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service there was no suspect recorded on the crime report. However, where information about suspects was known, over four-fifths of the suspects were male, and the age range of suspects is skewed towards the lower age ranges – as is the case for crime suspects in general – with the largest proportion of suspects being aged 16-20.
57. The majority of antisemitic attacks occur in areas with large Jewish communities, mainly London, Manchester and the surrounding areas. This comes as no surprise, given that this is where the great majority of the Jewish community lives, particularly the more easily identifiable communities of Orthodox Jews.

58. A distinction must be drawn between attacks on Jews because they look different and attacks on Jews specifically because they are Jews. We heard from the Metropolitan Police that the victims of hate crime tend to be high visibility targets, that is, those who are clearly identified and obvious to offenders who take the opportunity when they are in the location. The Metropolitan Police believe that antisemitic attacks are generally opportunistic rather than planned politically motivated acts.
59. The Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations brings together a number of the communities in the area of Stamford Hill in North London. They accept that when a Jew is attacked or a Jewish building is vandalised, this should not automatically be classed as an act of antisemitism. In their written evidence they drew attention to the rise in street crime and hooliganism, which leaves any person or building that looks different as an easy target of crime. Whilst acknowledging the real and continued distress caused by their experience of abuse, Chief Superintendent Kane, Head of the Greater Manchester Police Diversity Command, also saw this as part of a wider context of increasing levels of abuse and loutish behaviour in society.

Violence and Abuse

60. The CST gave evidence to us that they categorise antisemitic incidents under a number of different headings, according to whether the incident was enacted against a person or property and according to its severity.
61. The CST reported two incidents of extreme violence, which could potentially have led to loss of life, in 2005:
- A sixteen-year-old Jewish religious student in Manchester was stabbed by a man who chased him shouting “I knew I could get you, you fucking Jewish bastard”.¹¹
 - A Jewish man in London was attacked by a gang of 15 youths who smashed a bottle over his head, kicked and punched him on the ground, and attempted to set fire to him.¹²
62. The CST recorded 82 physical assaults motivated by antisemitism in 2005, the majority of which appear to be random, opportunistic attacks in the street on people who were visibly Jewish due to their religious or traditional clothing. Examples include:
- An 11 year old Jewish boy in North Manchester was attacked by a gang of youths who punched him and called him a “dirty Jew”.¹³
 - Four white men drove up to a Jewish religious school in Salford, North Manchester, shouted antisemitic abuse and attacked one of the students with a baseball bat.¹⁴
 - A Jewish man in North London was attacked by a black youth and an Asian youth who called him a “fucking Jew” and head-butted him several times.¹⁵
 - In January 2005 a spate of attacks occurred in the Stamford Hill area. In total eight men were assaulted including a 15-year-old boy whose hat was knocked off and who was punched to the ground; a fourteen-year-old boy who was attacked as he used a public telephone box and a forty-nine year old man who was headbutted.¹⁶

11 “*Yeshiva Boy, 16, Stabbed*”, Jewish Telegraph Manchester Edition, November 25 2005

12 CST Annual Report 2005

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 “*Met investigate anti-semitic attacks in north London*”, This is local London, 19 January 2005

- Additionally, in May 2006 a Rabbi was kicked and beaten by a gang in Stamford Hill whilst walking back to his home on the Sabbath after dinner with friends.¹⁷
63. Threats and intimidation occur regularly according to evidence presented to the panel by the police and other reporting agencies. These have a number of manifestations including threatening letters and emails to Jewish organisations and politicians and verbal abuse. In the course of our visit to Manchester we met with a group of year ten students, who described the sort of abuse they experience. The majority of students had a story to tell about a time they had felt uncomfortable or had been abused for being Jewish. For example:
- A boy who was walking home from synagogue on a Friday night was verbally abused by some youths in the street calling him “Jew” and “Yid” and threatening him with a cigarette lighter.
 - A girl reported a group of people driving their car directly at her while she was walking to synagogue with her mother.
 - A boy said that he and his friends are abused every day by youths barging into them shouting “Jew” and “Get out of our country”.
 - A pupil said that whilst he was walking home from school a car was driven up and down the road, with the people inside shouting “Where does Hitler live?”
64. Antisemitic abuse appears to be occurring more frequently but being reported less frequently. A representative of the Orthodox Jewish community told us that abuse on the way to synagogue, such as stone throwing, egg throwing, spitting or being shouted or driven at has become the norm leading to a heightened sense of anxiety within the community. Religious Jews do not carry a phone on the Sabbath and in summer are unable to report incidents such as these until after 9 or 10pm, by which time the local police station is closed and they often do not feel it is enough of an emergency to call the central police number. They report events to their local police officer when he visits, but otherwise non-reporting is common. There was a general perception that the situation had deteriorated recently. The police officers we spoke to in Manchester acknowledged the problem of under-reporting and explained how this can make it difficult to get a clear picture of the situation. However, they also felt that apparent statistical increases in antisemitic incidents could be due, at least in part, to increased reporting and changes in recording.

Damage and Desecration of Property

65. We heard evidence that damage to Jewish cemeteries or Jewish sections within cemeteries occurs on a regular basis:
- West Midlands Police reported an attack on the Jewish section of Witton Cemetery in Birmingham, 2003. The attack resulted in over £100,000 of damage and the perpetrator was sentenced to six years in prison.¹⁸
 - In June 2005 over one hundred graves were desecrated at Rainsough Jewish Cemetery in Prestwich.¹⁹

¹⁷ “Rabbi beaten by gang”, Jewish Chronicle, 12 May 2006

¹⁸ West Midlands Police written submission

¹⁹ “100 graves desecrated in Jewish cemetery”, Guardian, 10 June 2005 and Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester written submission

- In 2005 nearly one hundred graves were smashed or daubed with swastikas and antisemitic slogans at West Ham Jewish Cemetery in East London. On one tomb the words “Jew boy dead. Ha Ha” were scrawled in marker pen. The Rothschild mausoleum was vandalised and spray-painted with swastikas. We heard from the United Synagogue that had all of the stones been replaced the cost would have been in excess of £750,000.²⁰
 - Swastikas and SS insignia were daubed on Jewish gravestones in the Aldershot cemetery in 2005, the second time in two months that the cemetery had been desecrated.²¹
 - In March 2006 vandals caused £30,000 worth of damage in the Jewish section of Nottingham Road cemetery in Derby. Two men were arrested on suspicion of causing racially-motivated criminal damage.²²
66. The 2005 report from the Community Security Trust lists forty-eight incidents against Jewish property or community buildings in that year. These include the following:
- Swastikas were carved into the gateposts of a synagogue in Glasgow.²³
 - The website of a Jewish photographer was hacked into and its content replaced with antisemitic abuse and extreme Islamist messages.²⁴
67. In assessing the impact of the incident at West Ham Cemetery, Melvyn Hartog of the United Synagogue commented:
- “...it is very difficult to put into words how our members felt after these attacks. For the elderly it was a frightening time once again with their minds going back to the Second World War. With the younger generation it just made them feel very angry.”²⁵

Prosecution of Antisemitic Incidents

68. As the Attorney General and the Director of Public Prosecutions reminded us, the prosecution of incidents requires evidential proof. Before a prosecution can be brought for a racially aggravated offence, there has to be evidence of intent or surrounding circumstances of manifest racial hostility against the victim which would substantiate a charge of racial aggravation.
69. We acknowledge that in many cases of antisemitic incidents reported to the police, it is not possible for the offender to be identified because of the nature of the offence. Nevertheless, we are concerned that the recent research reported in *Hate Crimes Against London’s Jews* showed that less than one in ten incidents reported to the police resulted in a suspect becoming an accused – that is, they were charged, cautioned or had other proceedings taken against them. **We recommend that the Crown Prosecution Service investigates the reasons for the low number of prosecutions and reports back to Parliament.**

20 “Vandals desecrate Jewish Cemetery”, This is London, 16 June 2005, and United Synagogue Burial Society written submission

21 CST Annual Report 2005

22 “Headstones smashed in racially-motivated crime”, This is Derbyshire (website of the Derby Telegraph) 22 March 2006

23 CST Annual Report 2005

24 Ibid.

25 United Synagogue Burial Society written submission

70. Some witnesses questioned the effectiveness of the prosecution process in cases of incitement to racial hatred. We believe that clarification on this issue would be helpful. **We recommend that the Crown Prosecution Service conducts a review of cases where prosecutions for incitement to racial hatred have been brought, in order to see what lessons can be learned.**

4. Antisemitic Discourse

Introduction

71. Before examining the sources of antisemitism in the UK, it is important to identify what is understood by the term 'antisemitic discourse'. Antisemitism cannot be addressed if it is not recognised for what it is both by those who engage in it and by their audiences. This requires shared understanding of what constitutes anti-Jewish discourse and where the boundaries of acceptability lie in language and conversation.
72. Antisemitic discourse is not normally targeted at an identifiable victim, but at Jews as a group. It may be found in the media or in more private social interaction and often reflects some of the features of historical antisemitism, playing on Jewish stereotypes and myths. The tone in which issues affecting Jewish people are raised or addressed by politicians, the media, educators or the business world affects the way in which Jews are perceived by the wider public.
73. Antisemitic discourse is, by its nature, harder to identify and define than a physical attack on a person or place. It is more easily recognised by those who experience it than by those who engage in it. Many witnesses felt that antisemitism in public and private discourse has become commonplace. It is hard to identify because the boundaries of acceptable discourse have become blurred to the point that individuals and organisations are not aware when these boundaries have been crossed, and because the language used is more subtle. However, veiled or not, it is still an expression of prejudice.
74. It is important to clarify that none of those who gave evidence wished to see the right to free speech eroded in order to curtail racist or antisemitic discourse. What they urged was that those in public positions or positions of influence should take care in their use of language and exercise the right to free speech with responsibility. Words can be deeply hurtful and offensive; they can also breed a climate of fear and intimidation.
75. Only in extreme circumstances would we advocate legal intervention, namely where such speech can be used to incite others to violent action or hatred. In all other cases we advocate heightened awareness and sensitivity as to the offence that can be caused.

Anti-Zionism

76. One of the most difficult and contentious issues about which we have received evidence is the dividing line between antisemitism and criticism of Israel or Zionism.
77. Many witnesses placed the current resurgence in antisemitism within the context of heightened tensions within the Middle East, particularly since the outbreak of the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000. The long-running conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people has undoubtedly caused great confusion in terms of how any particular society is to understand anti-Jewish prejudice and how it should deal with it.
78. Israel is the world's only Jewish State and Zionism its founding ideology. Therefore these are bound to be sensitive issues. Moreover, there is a strong attachment between the British

Jewish community and Israel. Many British Jews have relatives in Israel and it forms one of the key themes of Jewish education and identity.²⁶

79. However, most of those who gave evidence were at pains to explain that criticism of Israel is not to be regarded in itself as antisemitic. It is perfectly possible to be critical of the policies and actions of the government of Israel without being antisemitic. The Israeli government itself may, at times, have mistakenly perceived criticism of its policies and actions to be motivated by antisemitism, but we received no evidence of the accusation of antisemitism being misused by mainstream British Jewish community organisations and leaders.
80. Some witnesses felt that it is misleading to characterise as antisemitic any contemporary attacks on Jews deriving from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They regard it as unhelpful to see such manifestations of anti-Jewish sentiment as a direct continuation of historical anti-Jewish prejudice. Dr Brian Klug submitted that current hostility towards Jews, rooted in the controversial nature of the State of Israel and its policies, should be regarded as an entirely new phenomenon, distinct from classic antisemitism.²⁷ The Mayor of London, in his written submission, quoted from an article by Dr Antony Lerman arguing that the equation of all criticism of Israel's policies with antisemitism "drains the word antisemitism of any useful meaning".
81. It is not the role of this inquiry to take sides in this major debate, but we cannot avoid raising it. In doing so, we would wish to emphasise that our concern lies with the effects of anti-Jewish prejudice and hostility.
82. Rather than explaining the distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate criticism of the actions and policies of the Israeli government, we took the view that anti-Israel discourse can, at times, become polluted by antisemitism and it is more important in each case to identify whether or not this has occurred.
83. For example, criticism of Zionism is not in itself antisemitic. However, in some quarters an antisemitic discourse has developed that is in effect antisemitic because it views Zionism itself as a global force of unlimited power and malevolence throughout history. This definition of Zionism bears no relation to the understanding that most Jews have of the concept; that is, a movement of Jewish national liberation, born in the late nineteenth century, with a geographical focus limited to Israel. Having re-defined Zionism in this way, traditional antisemitic notions of Jewish conspiratorial power, manipulation and subversion are then transferred from Jews (a religious or racial group) on to Zionism (a political movement). This is at the core of the 'New Antisemitism' on which so much has been written. Many witnesses described how anti-Zionism has become the "*lingua franca* of antisemitic movements".
84. The EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism, quoted in full on page 6, identifies some of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel:
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, for example by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
 - Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

26 A report by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, based on a 1995 postal survey of a sample of 2,194 British Jews found that "Overall...43 per cent of the sample felt a strong attachment to Israel, 38 per cent were moderately attached, 16 per cent expressed no special attachment, while 3 per cent had negative feelings towards Israel." Thus while over 80 per cent of respondents expressed special feelings of attachment to Israel, only 3 per cent expressed negative feelings. Barry Kosmin, Antony Lerman and Jacqueline Goldberg, *The Attachment of British Jews to Israel*, JPR Report No. 5, 1997

27 Dr Brian Klug written submission

- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (for example claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterise Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

The EUMC Definition goes on to state that criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.

85. The issue is further complicated by the fact that anti-Zionist discourse can be polluted with antisemitic themes in different ways and with different levels of intent. It can be used deliberately as a way to mask or articulate prejudice against Jews. This is discussed further in chapter five. It is difficult to counter because one must first identify and explain the antisemitism behind the language and imagery. For example, a far right party may use the terms of ‘Zionist’ and ‘Zionism’ instead of ‘Jews’ and ‘Jewish’.
86. Even harder to counter is the kind of antisemitic discourse on Israel that is used unconsciously, either because those who engage in it do not see themselves as antisemitic, or because they are unaware of the historical context and resonances behind their words. This makes it intrinsically difficult to recognise, except for those who experience it as offensive, and therefore Jewish people can feel uncomfortable drawing attention to antisemitism in discussions about Israeli politics.
87. Anti-Zionist discourse that has become polluted by antisemitic themes or content is also difficult to identify because it is often based on at least partial truths which have become inflated or exaggerated to the point that they are held to be typical of all Jews or demonstrative of an antisemitic Jewish stereotype. This makes it difficult to condemn without denying the truth at its heart. An example of this would be remarks about the Israel lobby. No-one would seek to deny that there is well-organised support for Israel in Britain, but in some quarters this becomes inflated to the point where discourse about the ‘lobby’ resembles discourse about a world Jewish conspiracy.
88. Dr Antony Lerman has pointed out the difficulties that arise in monitoring the phenomenon of antisemitism given the complexity of the issue.²⁸
89. **We conclude that ethnically and religiously motivated hatred, violence and prejudice, wherever they occur, should earn unconditional condemnation; sympathy and support for the victims should not be conditional on their alleged behaviour or political convictions. It is increasingly the case that, because anger over Israel’s policies can provide the pretext, condemnation is often too slow and increasingly conditional. Regardless of the expressed motive, Jewish people and Jewish institutions are being targeted.**

Holocaust Denial and Holocaust-related Abuse

90. The central role of the Holocaust in modern Jewish identity has made it a focus for antisemitism. David Irving and others have published research that seeks to challenge the

28 Anthony Lerman written submission

scale, methods and intent of the Holocaust. This body of work has been thoroughly discredited in a series of recent court cases and prosecutions. However, we heard evidence that Holocaust denial is one of the ideological threads that unites groups across the political spectrum, examples of which are discussed in the following chapter. We also received evidence concerning the widespread and state-sanctioned support for Holocaust denial theories in the Middle East, for example President Ahmadinejad of Iran's statement in December 2005 that the Holocaust was a "myth".

91. None of those who gave evidence suggested that denial of the Holocaust or questioning the truth of it should be made a criminal offence in the UK, as it is in some other European countries. However, in certain circumstances the discourse of Holocaust denial may be used in a way that amounts to incitement to racial hatred.
92. Whilst Holocaust denial remains largely in the margins of society, we heard evidence that the trivialisation and relativisation of the Holocaust can occur as part of more mainstream political discourse, creating an atmosphere of discomfort for British Jews. We were told that even when the intent is not antisemitic, when stated in public these comments may nonetheless incite or legitimise anti-Jewish prejudice.
93. We heard evidence that the use of language and imagery of the Holocaust has become increasingly widespread in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We saw satirical cartoons from around the world portraying the former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon as a Nazi, and street protests against Israel commonly feature banners that show a Star of David as a swastika. Over the past three years there has been a continuing debate about the case for boycotting products or people from Israel and we were told that often the language supporting such boycotts has compared the policies of Israel with those of Nazi Germany. This may be political propaganda but it is still objectionable.
94. Jonathan Freedland explained in his written submission why comparisons of Israeli conduct to that of the Nazis are particularly offensive to Jews, with reference to the poet Tom Paulin whose poem 'Crossfire' spoke of the "Zionist SS":

"First, they are hyperbolic: no matter how bad Israel is, it is not the Third Reich. Second, they seem designed to cancel out the world's empathy for Jewish suffering in the 1930s and 1940s: under this logic, the Holocaust has now been 'matched' by Israeli misbehaviour, therefore the Jews have forfeited any claim they might once have had to special understanding. The world and the Jews are now 'even'. Third, and worse, the Nazi-Zionist equation does not merely neutralise memories of the Holocaust – it puts Jews on the wrong side of them... Jews end up with the gravest hour in their history first taken from them – and then returned, with themselves recast as villains rather than victims. If anti-Zionists wonder why Jews find this antisemitic, perhaps they should imagine the black reaction if the civil rights movement – or any other vehicle of black liberation – was constantly equated with the white slave traders of old. It feels like a deliberate attempt to find a people's rawest spot – and tear away at it."²⁹

²⁹ Jonathan Freedland, *Is Anti-Zionism Antisemitism?*, (first published in Paul Iganski and Barry Kosmin (eds.) *A New Antisemitism? Debating Judeophobia in 21st Century Britain*, pages 113-129, Profile Books, London, in association with the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2003).

Conspiracy Theories

95. Jews have long been accused of masterminding secret conspiracies to dominate the media and society. The most notorious example is the so-called ‘Protocols of the Elders of Zion’, a fabrication credited to the Russian secret police at the end of the nineteenth century. Although long ago exposed as a forgery, the idea that the Jews are set to take over this country, the United States or the world is still alive. The President of the Board of Deputies showed us a copy of an Arabic version of ‘The Protocols of the Elders of Zion’ on sale in bookshops in London. He also told us of a 29-part television series broadcast in Syria in October-November 2003 called ‘Al Shatat’ (The Diaspora), which focused on the Protocols. It showed sinister groups of Jews portrayed according to mediaeval stereotypes with long beards, hooked noses and dark cloaks, conspiring to take over the world. Steve Silver of Searchlight, an anti-fascist journal, reminded us that Jewish conspiracy theories are still a major part of far right discourse.
96. We were told that Jewish conspiracy theories have been applied to many contemporary issues and we are particularly concerned by those who make no distinction between Israel and Jews, accusing them indiscriminately of responsibility for all manner of world disasters, from responsibility for the attacks on the World Trade Centre to the Asian tsunami. The Chairman of the panel held a meeting with prominent Muslims in Yorkshire shortly after the 9/11 attacks. He recalled his surprise at hearing professionals of high status claiming that “no Jew reported for work in the Twin Towers on 11th September” and that “Mossad faked the attack to cast Muslims in a bad light”. Attention has also focused on the war against Iraq, including the claim that a Jewish conspiracy in the USA, associated with a group of neo-conservatives close to President Bush, dragged the USA into the war. The essence of these conspiracy theories has been to portray the Jews as sinister and secretive, manipulating events behind the scenes in such a way as to serve their assumed self-interest.

Dual Loyalty

97. Professor David Cesarani described the “conditional tolerance” of Jews which prevailed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Jews were tolerated as long as they resembled other English people, adopted British values and did not raise issues specific to their community. Professor Cesarani stated in his written evidence:

“Jews were not welcomed into a diverse, pluralistic society. On the contrary, the message was: Jews can live freely amongst us if they conform to our values. The ‘antisemitism of tolerance’ conditioned Jewish life in Britain. It induced Jews to minimise their differences, privatising Judaism and shedding many aspects – especially those most visible – of Jewish culture and tradition. It restricted the scope for Jewish political action by establishing a negative relationship between antisemitism and Jewish assertiveness. Jews felt that they had to be represented by non-Jews and hesitated before making political demands that could be treated as ‘exceptionalism’. This hesitancy determined their lukewarm response to Jewish refugees fleeing to Britain from persecution abroad.”³⁰

30 Professor David Cesarani written evidence

As a result of this, Jews seeking to be treated in any way different from the majority were accused of dual loyalty.

98. In modern Britain the experience of multiple identities is common to all minority communities but it has been suggested that Jews face new accusations of dual loyalty. Since the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, there have often been questions raised by the far right as to Jews' loyalties to Britain, with the suggestion that for most Jews support for Israel would take precedence over their loyalty to this country. In her written submission Melanie Phillips expressed the view that, with Israel being blamed for endangering the free world, the only Jews who are considered respectable are those who distance themselves from Israel. She says: "British Jews who try to defend Israel against these calumnies and uphold its right to defend itself against genocide are accused of 'dual loyalty'."³¹

The Blood Libel

99. Some of the written evidence we received noted the revival in some Islamist material of the mediaeval "blood libel" against the Jews. In twelfth-century England there were several notorious cases in which Jews were accused and convicted of killing Christian children for the purpose of using their blood for religious rituals. It may seem extraordinary that anyone could believe such myths in the twenty-first century, but we received video evidence from MEMRI, the Middle East Media Research Institute, that graphic depictions of this blood libel were included in the Syrian television series 'Al Shatat' described in the preceding section of the report. We were told that it would be possible for viewers in the UK to see this series if they had suitable satellite receiving equipment.

Private Discourse

100. It is even more difficult to measure the extent of antisemitism in private discourse, but it was clear from the evidence of those who have experienced it that it is pervasive in many areas.
101. The Union of Jewish Students included in their written evidence various examples of anti-Jewish sentiments expressed by academics towards Jewish students. For example, a lecturer at a London university told a student who sought to explain his absence on religious festivals that he should choose between his religion or his degree.³² The evidence submitted by the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities contains a number of examples of antisemitic abuse in Scotland. These include the case of a Jewish university lecturer who was subjected to an antisemitic tirade from a student in the middle of a lecture and was subsequently asked to explain to the university authorities why he had upset the student. In another case a Jewish student was told that since her university is a secular institution it does not need to take any account of a student's religion and that as she refused to sit exams on the Jewish Sabbath the university would think twice about taking anyone with a Jewish name in future.³³

31 Melanie Phillips written submission

32 Union of Jewish Students written submission

33 Scottish Council of Jewish Communities written submission

102. Several newspaper columnists who gave evidence referred to the abuse they receive after writing something positive about Israel or Jews. Howard Jacobson told us:

“As a columnist for the Independent newspaper, I have only to address the subject of Israel tangentially to receive responses of an unembarrassedly antisemitic temper. The world will never be a safe place as long as Jews run it for their own benefit, they write to tell me: the ways Jews behave towards Palestinians is the way their religion enjoins them to behave towards everybody; Jews play on their past suffering in order to get away with inflicting suffering on others; Jews communicate with others secretly, which explains why there were no Jews in the Twin Towers when they were attacked on 9/11, etc.”³⁴

Nick Cohen, journalist and writer, sent us an essay published in the New Statesman last October in which he described the barrage of antisemitic abuse he received following a critical article about the demonstration against the Iraq war in March 2003.

103. Lord Janner of Braunstone submitted evidence describing some antisemitic remarks directed against him in Parliament including an incident after the arrest of Saddam Hussein. Lord Janner was approached by a fellow peer who said, “Well, we’ve got rid of Saddam Hussein now. Your lot are next.” In response to his questioning her use of “Your lot”, she said, “Yes, you cannot go on killing Palestinians for ever, you know”.³⁵ Oona King, the former MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, was the target of antisemitic rumours during her last two General Election campaigns. She reported that in 2001 many constituents told her that they could not vote for her because they had heard that she was funded by the Israeli Secret Service. During the 2005 campaign, there were widespread rumours that she was seeking to ban Halal meat, and that this was believed to be true because she was Jewish. Although she did not regard antisemitism as the deciding factor in her election defeat, she described it as “one factor that was skilfully manipulated for political ends.”³⁶
104. We were also told of attitudes towards Jews that might not be voiced in public but would be freely expressed in private social interaction. The London Assembly Conservative Group submitted that there is a risk that in some political quarters “views on international events can, almost subconsciously, lead to subtly different attitudes to, and levels of engagement with, different minority groups.”³⁷
105. The journalist Stephen Pollard gave evidence about his sense of shock when long-standing friends made casual remarks accusing Jews of responsibility for the actions of Israel and subsequently resolved to boycott all British businesses that were directed by Jews. He concludes his published article: “The story of the Jews has been the same for thousands of years: apparent assimilation, friendship and trust, all of which can disappear overnight. By what arrogant complacency did I assume that in my generation it could be different?”³⁸ Mr Pollard also expressed his concern at the casual references to Jews made by some politicians. For example, in an interview in Vanity Fair in 2003, the former MP Tam Dalyell described the Prime Minister as “being unduly influenced by a cabal of Jewish advisers”. What particularly surprised Mr Pollard and others was the failure of some portions of the media and political classes to criticise such remarks, despite the offence they caused.

34 Howard Jacobson written submission

35 Lord Janner of Braunstone written submission

36 Oona King written submission

37 London Assembly Conservative Group written submission

38 “*It’s not just Israel that they hate*”, Stephen Pollard, Sunday Telegraph, 19 August 2001

The Significance of Discourse

106. We were told that the significance of public discourse is that it influences attitudes which in turn influence actions. At the most extreme level is the rhetoric of the terrorist groups discussed in chapter five: as a result of what they perceive as Israel's unacceptable policies, every Jew is a legitimate target in the armed struggle to establish a Palestinian state and/or wipe out Israel. Such language reinforces prejudices and exacerbates negative attitudes and tensions between communities. A number of those giving evidence indicated their concern that failure to act against expressions of prejudice or hatred would create a climate where physical attacks could follow. By contrast, we were told that once the police began to act firmly against groups producing offensive antisemitic literature in the mid-1990s, this led to a decrease in antisemitic incidents.³⁹
107. There is lack of research demonstrating the links between apparently opportunistic attacks on those who look visibly different and the undercurrents of antisemitism to which the offenders may have been exposed. But when anti-Jewish slogans are shouted out either in verbal abuse or as part of a physical attack, there is presumably some prior influence which leads the perpetrator to attack or abuse a Jewish victim.
108. Even though the links are not clear, an increase in antisemitic discourse is unacceptable and offensive in its own right. It creates a sense of discomfort and anxiety amongst the Jewish community and must be treated as a serious problem.
109. Many witnesses highlighted ways in which anti-Israeli discourse can, in practice, lead to or be used to justify anti-Jewish discrimination. The President of the Board of Deputies told us that it is Jewish buildings and communities, not Israeli ones, that are targeted by anti-Israeli groups. Dr Jon Pike told us that academic boycotts would affect Jewish studies courses and Jewish academics. The Union of Jewish Students gave evidence that abuse and attacks on Jewish students often peak at times when anti-Israel motions are being discussed on campus.
110. **We conclude that the correlation between conflict in the Middle East and attacks on the Jewish community must be better understood if the problem is to be tackled and would welcome academic research on this issue.**

39 Board of Deputies of British Jews written submission

5. Sources of Contemporary Antisemitism

Introduction

111. Antisemitism is no longer the sole preserve of the political far right, as it was throughout much of the twentieth century. It now occurs across the political spectrum. The antisemitic stereotypes and themes discussed in the previous chapter are utilised by groups with a variety of political and religious perspectives. Groups and organisations that appear to be ideologically incompatible are uniting in their opposition to the actions of the Israeli government and we were particularly concerned to hear evidence that the language and imagery used to express this opposition has, in some cases, become polluted by antisemitism.
112. As stated in paragraph 3 we support the view expressed in the Macpherson report that a racist act is defined by its victim, and the approach adopted in the Race Relations Act that any remark, insult or act the purpose *or effect* [our italics] of which is to violate another person's dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him is antisemitic. It is not our intention or purpose to label individuals or organisations antisemitic, but rather to draw attention to language and action that crosses the boundaries of acceptable public discourse and call on those who are in positions of influence to exercise responsibility.

The Far Right

113. During the twentieth century the far right was the dominant source of antisemitism in the UK. Far right antisemitism was based on Nazi racial ideology and hatred of Jews as immigrants to the UK but the creation of the state of Israel provided further grounds for antisemitism. In the aftermath of the Holocaust overt expressions of anti-Jewish prejudice became unacceptable and far right extremism became marginalised. It now tends to be directed at non-white and immigrant communities, Muslims in particular, but we heard evidence that antisemitism remains at the core of far right ideology.
114. The largest and best-known far right organisation in the UK is the British National Party. Despite a few minor successes, the BNP had, until recently, failed to achieve any major electoral breakthrough. However, it made significant gains in the 2006 local elections, including winning twelve seats in Barking and Dagenham as a result of a campaign focused around immigration and asylum issues.
115. During our visit to Manchester we heard evidence that a campaign had been conducted against the relocation of a Jewish primary school. Antisemitic leaflets, purporting to be from the British People's Party, were distributed in a street near the proposed site saying "No Jew school in Heaton Park...supporting the campaign to defend our English Park". The BPP, which describes itself as a white nationalist party, denied that it was the source of the leaflets and to date the real source has not been found, but this incident illustrates how the far right continues to articulate classic antisemitic attitudes and cause tensions between communities.⁴⁰

40 "Antisemitic leaflets hit Prestwich area", Jewish Chronicle, 17 February 2006

116. Numerous smaller splinter groups, including the National Front, Combat 18 and Blood and Honour, are active although highly marginalised. However, the dangers of far right rhetoric are obvious. In November 2005 five former members of Combat 18 were sentenced to a total of fifteen years for conspiring to incite racial hatred. The group had been involved in an extreme right-wing website and magazine. Material seized during the investigation included an article on how to make a nail bomb, and one entitled ‘Roast a Rabbi’ that had instructions for making an incendiary device and encouraged the reader to torch a synagogue.⁴¹
117. A representative from Searchlight told us that the far right has started to use the language of ‘Zionists’ as a euphemism for ‘Jews’ in order to disguise its antisemitic agenda, a phenomenon that also occurs on the left and among Islamist extremists. We received numerous examples of this including an article in the BNP Voice of Freedom speaking of soldiers risking their lives in Iraq because “Tony Blair swapped British blood for donations from a clique of filthy-rich Zionist businessmen”.⁴² An article in Spearhead Magazine (edited by the late John Tyndall) entitled ‘Vocabulary for the politically Aware’ defined ‘Zionist’ as “One who regards the Jewish race as God’s chosen people above all other racial and religious groups. He/she is always primarily the servant of Jewish interests whatever his/her role in the host society, but will naturally conceal this order of priorities as a matter of expediency.”⁴³
118. The far right continues to articulate Jewish conspiracy theories. We heard evidence from Searchlight that it has been a long standing belief among British fascists that there is an international Jewish conspiracy to destroy the white race and that non-white immigration into Britain is part of a plot to destabilise it, an ideology that goes back to Nazi Germany. ‘Who are the Mind-Benders?’, a pamphlet written by BNP leader Nick Griffin, claimed that “very few people in Britain are aware of the huge influence over the mass media exercised by a certain ethnic minority, namely the Jews”⁴⁴ and went on to list Jews who were alleged to control the media. Jews were accused of “providing us with an endless diet of pro-multiracial, pro-homosexual, anti-British trash”.⁴⁵
119. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 provided a focus for extremists on all sides to promote conspiracy theories about Jewish or Zionist influence on American foreign policy. In its 2005 General Election manifesto, the BNP included a promise not to go to war for “neo-con adventures on behalf of the Zionist government of Israel”.⁴⁶
120. Holocaust denial is also central to far right ideology. In 1998 Nick Griffin was prosecuted for incitement to racial hatred after referring to the Holocaust as the “Holohoax” and claiming that it was “an extremely profitable lie”. Searchlight told the inquiry that the BNP’s current approach is to accept it as a historical fact whilst minimising its severity and importance. After the arrest of David Irving in Austria in November 2005 for offences of denying the Holocaust the BNP issued a statement deploring the arrest and stating that Irving had “merely expressed opinions” on “aspects of twentieth century European history”. It also declared that “the BNP has no position on such matters, which are for historians to debate, as with any other subject”.⁴⁷ The existence of the Holocaust as an incontrovertible historical fact is, of course, not a matter debated by the historical community.

41 Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester written submission

42 “*Blair’s Evil War*”, Voice of Freedom, August 2004

43 Spearhead Edition 416, October 2003

44 Nick Griffin, *Who Are the Mindbenders?* (second edition) (The Right Image: 1999)

45 Ibid.

46 BNP General Election Manifesto 2005, p52

47 Searchlight written submission

121. We heard evidence that the internet has provided a new medium for far right groups to disseminate their antisemitic message to a much wider audience than their immediate supporters. Antisemitic material is available through a range of websites, in some cases via international payments systems. **We recommend that all providers of online payments systems adopt Offensive Material Policies which they undertake to actively police and that these organisations have clear mechanisms for members of the public to report any breaches of the policy. In addition we also recommend these providers strengthen their links with organisations such as Searchlight, which monitor the presence of racist, including antisemitic, material online, and respond quickly to any reports that their systems are being used to disseminate this material.**
122. **We conclude that the overt threat from the far right towards Jews may not be as significant as it once was, but there is no room for complacency. Holocaust denial and Jewish conspiracy theories remain core elements of far right ideology. Any gains in popularity for the BNP are damaging to society as a whole. They seek to stir up tensions between communities and undermine the values of tolerance and multiculturalism that have allowed the Jewish community, and other minorities, to flourish in Britain in the past.**
123. **Given the links between the BNP and similar antisemitic, anti-Muslim and xenophobic political parties in Europe we recommend that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office reports on far right activity as part of its published political reporting to Parliament – possibly as an annex in its annual human rights report.**

Islamist Antisemitism

124. Antisemitism among Islamist extremists is a sensitive issue and it is not our intention to accuse British Muslims of antisemitism. With issues this complex, clearly great sensitivity is needed in addressing and balancing the concerns of Britain's minority communities.
125. The Muslim population in Britain is diverse, encompassing a number of communities and backgrounds, and the great majority of British Muslims are integrating well into British society and consider themselves to be fully British. British Muslim communities are themselves the victims of a serious and growing Islamophobia, and there is much that the Jewish and Muslim communities can learn from one another in tackling racism.
126. We received evidence of an increase in antisemitism within certain fringe elements of the Muslim community. In many cases, these are the actions and words of a small yet radical minority whose views do not represent those of the mainstream majority. However, this cannot simply be dismissed as insignificant and the views of radical Islamists do seem to be entering mainstream discourse. Antisemitic rhetoric of this kind creates a climate of fear and intimidation for Jews in Britain.
127. The roots of this kind of antisemitism are complex. It arises from a mixture of historical attitudes, domestic and political tensions between communities and the globalisation of the Middle East conflict. Oona King, the former MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, gave evidence that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has fuelled a sense of anger and injustice among the British Muslim community and has exacerbated the polarisation of communities in the UK, creating a climate that is more hospitable to radical Islamist ideology.⁴⁸ The actions of the Israeli government have been conflated with the Jewish

48 Oona King written submission

community world-wide. Imam Dr Abduljalil Sajid submitted that: “in the rhetoric of confrontation, many blur the distinction between anti-Judaism, antisemitism and anti-Zionism. Such Muslims make the mistake they accuse others of making about themselves: seeing all Jews as monolithic and threatening.”⁴⁹

128. We heard evidence that much of the current antisemitism is generated in the Middle East where, in certain countries, anti-Jewish rhetoric has become an ingredient of mainstream public discourse in politics and the media. We were disturbed to hear that the language and imagery used is often a direct continuation of that deployed by Nazi Germany. In the modern world of global communications, these are easily imported into Britain via satellite television, the internet and the Arabic press. Islamist terrorist groups have repeatedly spoken of their hatred for Jews, declaring them to be legitimate targets. All of this contributes to a sense of insecurity within the Jewish community.
129. We received material on DVD containing extracts from broadcasts on mainstream television channels in Arab countries. These included various clerics and academics endorsing a conspiratorial link between Jews and the media, the Zionist project behind US foreign policy, Holocaust denial, the veracity of the blood libel, and claims of Zionism and Jews being behind the 9/11 bombings. We also received material broadcast on Arab and Iranian television in which children are incited to engage in jihad against Jews and become martyrs to the Muslim cause through suicide bombings.
130. What is not clear is how far material of this kind is available in the UK. It is clear that Arabic translations of ‘Mein Kampf’ and ‘The Protocols of the Elders of Zion’ are freely available in Arabic bookshops on the Edgware Road and other places in London. We understand that many of the cartoons have been published in newspapers which are on sale in Britain and that satellite television programmes are accessible to those who have the right receiving equipment and also on the internet.

Fringe and Extremist Islamists in the UK

131. The activities of certain extremist Islamist groups have long given cause for concern among local Jewish communities and on university campuses. We were given evidence that many of them have produced or distributed literature of an overtly antisemitic character, some of which has called for the killing of Jews and the destruction of Israel.
132. Extremist clerics such as Omar Bakri Mohammed, Sheikh Abdullah el-Faisal and Abu Hamza al-Masri preached virulent antisemitism to their followers and it is of great concern to us that they were in a position to influence and incite young British Muslims.
133. In February 2003 Sheikh Abdullah el-Faisal was convicted of soliciting murder and inciting racial hatred in the first prosecution of its kind in Britain. Tapes of el-Faisal’s lectures, in which he advocated violence against Britain, America, Hindus and Jews were available in specialist bookshops. In one of his speeches he said: “People with British passports, if you fly into Israel, it is easy... Fly into Israel and do whatever you can. If you die, you are up in paradise. How do you fight a Jew? You kill a Jew. In the case of Hindus, by bombing their businesses.”⁵⁰

49 Imam Dr Abduljalil Sajid written submission

50 “Muslim cleric guilty of soliciting murder”, Guardian, 24 February 2003

134. Abu Hamza al-Masri was jailed for seven years in February 2006 after being found guilty of inciting his followers to kill non-believers and using his influence as a spiritual leader of the Muslim community in North London to become a recruiter of terrorists. The court found Abu Hamza guilty of six charges relating to soliciting others to murder Jews and non-Muslims. Examples of his speeches targeted towards Jews include:⁵¹

“The Jews will never leave Palestine. The Jews will be buried there. We do not want the Jews to pull away from Palestine, but we want them to be buried there. This is God’s decree.”

“[Hitler had looked at Jewish] dealings and treachery. They wanted to deceive him in his war, some were dealing with the allies against him and some were dealing with him, so he killed them and punished them.”

Hizb ut-Tahrir and Al-Muhajiroun

135. Extremist groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir and the now disbanded Al-Muhajiroun have a long history of publishing vicious and violent antisemitic propaganda.
136. Hizb ut-Tahrir is a radical Islamist organisation dedicated to the overthrow of governments in Muslim countries and the creation of a single Islamic state – the Caliphate. Although it does not use violence in its own name, there are several examples when its members and activists have engaged in terrorism or other illegal activities. Omar Khan Sharif, one of the British suicide bombers of the Mike’s Place bar in Tel Aviv in April 2003, possessed Hizb ut-Tahrir literature at his home in Derby and the organisation was banned in Germany in January 2003 for having contact with neo-Nazi organisations and spreading violent antisemitism on university campuses (although at the time of writing they are challenging this ban in Germany).
137. The organisation has been twice banned from campuses in the UK by the National Union of Students who claimed that they were “responsible for supporting terrorism and publishing material that incites racial hatred” and that their “statements about Jews, the LGB Community, Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and others are offensive and have no place in a movement which respects liberation politics”.⁵²
138. In 2002, the organisation reproduced a leaflet on its website saying: “Kill them wherever you find them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out... The Jews are a people of slander... a treacherous people... they fabricate lies and twist words from their right context.”⁵³ Leaflets with similar quotes have been distributed on university campuses in Britain, causing Jewish students to feel harassed and threatened. In 2005 the Government announced that Hizb ut-Tahrir was being considered for proscription.
139. We received evidence from the Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester concerning the activities of Al-Muhajiroun including public protest marches and demonstrations organised by the group where violent anti-Jewish rhetoric was used. These included the defacement of Jewish residential areas and synagogues in 2000 with posters

51 “The Preachings of Abu Hamza”, Guardian, 7 February, 2006 (Source: Press Association)

52 NUS No Platform Policy Briefing, January 2000

53 Reported on BBC Newsnight, 22 August 2003

bearing the slogan “Israelis, God says kill them wherever they are”⁵⁴ and a demonstration in London outside a celebration of Israel’s Independence Day where members of the group chanted such phrases as “Dirty Jews we want your blood”, and “All Jews burn in hell”.⁵⁵ Al-Muhajiroun is now disbanded but it is thought that its members established al-Ghuraba and The Saved Sect as successor organisations, both of which were proscribed by the Government in July 2006.

MPACUK

140. The activities of the Muslim Public Affairs Committee, MPACUK, have given cause for concern. Although its rhetoric is often extremist, MPACUK identifies itself as part of the mainstream British Muslim community, describing itself as “the UK’s leading Muslim civil liberties group, empowering Muslims to focus on non-violent Jihad and political activism”. Originally set up as a web-based media monitoring group, MPACUK’s declared first mission was to fight the perceived anti-Muslim bias in the media and to redress the balance. However, MPACUK has been criticised for publishing material on its website promoting the idea of a worldwide Zionist conspiracy, including the reproduction of articles originally published on neo-Nazi and Holocaust Denial websites, and is currently banned from university campuses under the NUS’s ‘No Platform’ policy. MPACUK are known to have removed an offensive posting from their website on one occasion, after complaints were made, but thereafter continued to publish similar material.
141. The use of ‘Zionist’ as a replacement for ‘Jewish’ is common on the MPACUK website. The CST submitted evidence that in one explicit case of this the Talmud, a Jewish religious text written many centuries ago, was described as a “Zionist holy book”. The website also posed the question: “Is this the most Powerful and Racist book in the world?!”⁵⁶
142. MPACUK has also articulated Jewish conspiracy theories through the language of Zionism describing it as an “octopus that now penetrates every western nation and pushes it to start world war three upon Muslims”⁵⁷ and warning that “Any man who knows anything of Zionists, knows that they will not stop until the Muslims ‘followed by mankind’ are dead or enslaved”.⁵⁸
143. We heard evidence that MPACUK were involved in a campaign to unseat Lorna Fitzsimons, the Labour MP for Rochdale, during the 2005 general election. Leaflets written and distributed by a local Rochdale Muslim group and sponsored by MPACUK claimed that she had done nothing to help the Palestinians because she was a Jewish member of the Labour Friends of Israel. Although Ms Fitzsimons was a member of the LFI, she is not Jewish. MPACUK later apologised for the inaccurate description but it is concerning to see the ‘accusation’ of being Jewish being used in such a way in the context of an election campaign.

Islamists and the Far Right

144. The representative of Searchlight magazine drew our attention to a ‘symbiotic relationship’ between far right and Islamist extremists who, although ideologically

54 Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester written submission. “*Islam posters call for Israelis’ Death*”, Jewish Telegraph, 12 May 2000; “*Racist poster threat*”, Bury Journal, 17 May 2000

55 Cited in HC Deb 20 April 2004 C13WH

56 CST written submission

57 “*MPACUK Receives Death Threat From Zionists*”, <http://www.mpacuk.org>, posted 25 November 2005

58 *The MPAC ABC*, <http://www.mpacuk.org>

opposed on practically every other issue, are united in their hatred of Jews, Zionism and Israel.

145. We saw evidence of shared use of materials. For example the same news articles referring to the Jewish community have appeared on the MPACUK website and white nationalist websites. In one case MPACUK published a photograph of George Bush standing next to an Israeli flag with the caption “Some say Lobbying the Government doesn’t make a difference. We humbly disagree.” The same picture appeared on the National Front website with the caption “There is no Zionist conspiracy”. Far right and Islamist groups also share material on Holocaust denial and each organisation’s website has published articles by the other’s authors in order to propagate their agenda.
146. **We conclude that a minority of Islamist extremists in this country do incite hatred towards Jews. The undoubted prejudice and difficulties that British Muslims feel and their justified sense of increasing Islamophobia cannot be used to justify antisemitic words and violence.**

Tensions between Communities

147. The groups described above represent a marginal section of the Muslim community but occasionally the relationship between the Muslim and Jewish communities is tested in the mainstream.
148. In his oral evidence, the then Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Britain, Sir Iqbal Sacranie, made clear his intolerance of antisemitism. He regarded it as contrary to Muslim teachings to promote antisemitism. However, he believed that Muslims who held hostile attitudes towards Jews in the UK were explicable in terms of the strong feeling amongst British Muslims about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We are mindful of a public opinion poll of 500 Muslims conducted by Populus in December 2005 and published in The Times in February 2006: 53 per cent of those questioned considered that the Jewish community had too much influence on UK foreign policy; 46 per cent believed that the Jewish community in Britain was in league with the Freemasons to control the media and politics; and 37 per cent said that the Jewish community in Britain is a legitimate target as part of the struggle for justice in the Middle East.
149. These striking proportions were mentioned by several of those who gave written evidence. Even allowing for the size of the sample they reflect a certain level of anti-Jewish sentiment among some Muslims. The Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips, told us that what mattered far more than attitudes and rhetoric was the question of whether people were likely to act upon their prejudices:

“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.”⁵⁹

59 Trevor Phillips oral evidence

No parallel polling of Jewish attitudes to the Muslim community has yet taken place.

150. Professor David Cesarani told us that one of the problems in Muslim-Jewish relations in this country 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. It’s going to take a great deal of dialogue and education with Muslims to try and explain the ambivalences... 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.”⁶⁰
151. The relationship between discourse and action on Jews, Israel and Zionism is difficult to define. There is clearly a lack of quantitative evidence on antisemitism in the Muslim community and this must be better understood if the problem is to be addressed. In his written submission the Mayor of London stated that he knew of no evidence that perpetrators of antisemitic attacks are disproportionately Muslim, nor that perpetrators of attacks on Muslims are disproportionately Jewish.
152. There is also a need for research into the dynamics of anti-Jewish hostility among the Muslim communities and the patterns of Muslim-Jewish relations and mutual perceptions.
153. No comprehensive study has been undertaken of the roots and historical origins of antisemitism among Muslim communities. Professor Cesarani suggested that “If classic European antisemitism has fed into Islamic cultures and compounded with indigenous prejudices, then it will in all likelihood have spread to Britain.”⁶¹ But there is a lack of research on which to evaluate this possibility.

Holocaust Memorial Day

154. In his written evidence Professor David Cesarani submitted that it can be difficult to balance the sometimes conflicting needs and values of minority communities in a multicultural society. When the agenda of one minority cuts across that of others, attempts to defend one side over the other can lead to accusations of racism, Islamophobia or antisemitism. A key example of this is the tension between the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and the Jewish community over Holocaust Memorial Day.
155. One of the issues which we pursued with the MCB related to their unwillingness to participate in the national Holocaust Memorial Day which is commemorated each year on 27 January. Whilst some prominent Muslims have attended, the MCB has refused to participate and none of its senior officers have attended.
156. In his oral evidence Sir Iqbal Sacranie made a distinction between the Holocaust, which he condemned unreservedly, and Holocaust Memorial Day, which he described as a political issue. In the view of the MCB, the Day should be renamed as the EU Genocide Memorial Day and dispel what Sir Iqbal Sacranie described as “the racist notion that some people are to be regarded as being more equal than others”. He refused to express a personal

60 Professor David Cesarani oral evidence

61 Professor David Cesarani written submission

view on this matter and although we understood the difficulties of his position, the MCB plays an important role in shaping attitudes, and participation in Holocaust Memorial Day would underline its commitment to an important national event which seeks to commemorate the fate of both the Jews in Europe and all the communities who suffered as a result of the Holocaust, and to remember the victims of other subsequent genocides. All examples of genocide are equally unacceptable, but the organised, methodical, planned execution of European Jews and others from many different countries who were transported to gas chambers to be killed using advanced industrial methods was a unique historical event and merits its day of commemoration. British citizens and representative organisations that boycott the Holocaust Memorial Day are wrong to do so.

157. **We note that the boycott of Holocaust Memorial Day is not motivated by antisemitism but we conclude that it gives out the wrong signals. We call upon the MCB, under its new leadership and as a representative body of British citizens of Muslim faith, to rethink its approach to this national event which seeks to commemorate the victims of genocides throughout history as well as the Holocaust.**

Antisemitism on the Left

158. We heard evidence that contemporary antisemitism in Britain is now more commonly found on the left of the political spectrum than on the right. Professor Cesarani submitted that this has made it harder to define and contest “because it no longer has any resemblance to classical Nazi-style Jew hatred, because it is masked by or blended inadvertently into anti-Zionism, and because it is often articulated in the language of human rights.”⁶²
159. Some witnesses spoke of a specific ‘left wing antisemitism’ which arises when the language used to criticise Israel exceeds the boundaries of genuine political debate and evolves into an attack on Jews generally.
160. There is little doubt that since the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in the late 1960s there has been, particularly on the left, a shift in sympathy away from Israel. Criticism of Israel has been fuelled further by the second Palestinian Intifada and by the invasion of Iraq in 2003 which has exacerbated tensions in the Middle East. Again we wish to restate that criticism of Israel is not in itself antisemitic but were concerned that within this context the boundaries between antisemitism and legitimate expressions of support for the Palestinians have become blurred in some quarters.
161. In his evidence, Dr Emanuele Ottolenghi gave many examples of individuals, groups or media associated with left wing positions making use of classic antisemitic symbols or stereotypes, some of which are discussed in the section below.

62 Ibid.

Identifying Antisemitism on the Left

162. Dr Ottolenghi wrote that:

“The left in particular sees itself as immune from antisemitism, which it considers the exclusive province of the xenophobic right. Those crying wolf over left criticism of Israel are depicted as seeking an excuse to uncritically justify Israel’s actions. As evidence, Israel’s critics cite their stance alongside Jews in the common struggle against Fascism whenever it raises its ugly head. Commitment to Palestinian independence comes not from anti-Jewish prejudice but from a sense of justice and the need to redress grievances in what is increasingly seen as unfinished post-colonial business.”⁶³

163. As discussed in the previous chapter, the difficulty of defining the boundaries between anti-Zionism and antisemitism makes it even harder to recognise antisemitism when it occurs and take action concerning the groups and individuals involved. Many on the left are firm in their condemnation of racism and would almost certainly not accept that they were guilty of antisemitic discourse. Ignorance of the history of anti-Jewish prejudice means that some perhaps do not even realise that the language and imagery they have used has resonances of a long tradition of anti-Jewish discourse and stereotypes. However, here again we wish to draw a distinction between antisemitic motivation and effect and to set out some of the evidence we received of discourse that has caused the Jewish community to feel unfairly demonised.

164. As a starting point, we note that the Labour Party itself was accused of insensitivity during its 2005 election campaign when it circulated an email to supporters containing potential election posters, one of which appeared to depict Michael Howard as a Fagin-like character. Several articles in the national press criticised the poster for flirting with antisemitic stereotypes, although those responsible denied any such intent and may well have been unaware of the historical resonances which these images evoked.

The Anti-Racist Left

165. We were told by the anti-fascist organisation Searchlight that anti-Israel feeling is so strong in some sections of the left that other organisations actively involved in confronting racism are refusing to work with Searchlight because they falsely perceive it to have links with Israel and, more disturbingly, because they believe it is funded by Mossad or the Israeli government.

Left Wing Alliances

166. Alliances between extremist and fundamentalist groups have created links between groups on the far left and radical Islamists who do not share traditional left wing views on issues such as the rights of homosexuals and ethnic groups and women’s suffrage. This highlights the need for cross-party political discourse on what is acceptable in terms of political activity and campaigning.

63 Dr Emanuele Ottolenghi written submission

167. One issue on which strong feelings were expressed to us concerned actions taken by the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone. In 2004 Mr Livingstone hosted the European Council for Fatwa and Research, headed by Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, a controversial Muslim cleric who has reportedly forbidden Muslims from engaging in dialogue of any kind with Jews.⁶⁴ His presence offended many minority groups, who took exception to his reported views on other religions, interfaith dialogue, homosexuality, and domestic violence.
168. The Respect Party, which closely allies itself to the Stop the War campaign, was set up to articulate concerns about the war in Iraq but has also acted as a platform for anti-Zionist groups and the campaign for Bethnal Green and Bow during the 2005 General Election was marred by antisemitic campaigning on the part of some of its supporters.
169. The war in Iraq became a focal point for some on the left to form alliances with Muslim communities but it also provided a pretext for a minority to engage in antisemitic discourse. The anti-war demonstrations in 2003, led by the Stop the War Coalition, were tainted by anti-Jewish rhetoric and imagery. We were told that Jewish participants in the march through London were shocked to see banners equating the swastika with the Star of David. Participants included some pro-Palestinian activists dressed as suicide bombers. Professor Cesarani submitted that this encapsulates the notion of the conspiracy theory that US and British policy towards Iraq was being driven by a group of mainly Jewish neo-conservatives acting in Israel's interests.
170. **We recommend that the Electoral Commission draws up a contract of acceptable behaviour which outlines the duty of all election candidates to exercise due care when addressing issues such as racism, community relations and minorities during political campaigning.**

The Media

171. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has become the dominant theme of political discourse in British society's understanding of the problems of the Middle East and beyond but, as has already been discussed, the tone in which issues affecting Jewish people are reported or addressed in the media affects the way in which Jews are perceived by the wider public. We received evidence alleging a lack of balance in the reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as the use of anti-Jewish stereotypes.
172. There is a clear statistical relationship between events in the Middle East and the level of antisemitic incidents in the UK. Dr Emanuele Ottolenghi contended that the connection between news items and an increase in attacks against Jews is not confined to the Israel-Palestinian conflict. For example, antisemitic incidents also increased in conjunction with the bombing of the World Trade Centre in September 2001, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. This highlights the point that public discourse is not merely a passive reflection of the thoughts and opinions of the British public and also suggests a worrying perception of Israel's conduct in the Middle East, and by extension Israel's supporters, as the cause of the world's problems.

64 July 13, 2004, Al-Jazeera television, "There is no dialogue between us [Muslims and Jews] except by the sword and the rifle"

173. Professor Shalom Lappin submitted to us that the conflict itself is not reported with the detachment applied to other areas of conflict such as Darfur or Chechnya:
- “The Israel-Palestinian encounter has been largely denaturalised and removed from its political and regional context. It is no longer seen as a political and military struggle between two nations with a long and complex history... Instead, it has been endowed with the peculiar status of an iconic clash between good and evil. Israel has increasingly come to be construed as the purest embodiment of imperialism, racism and oppression whose sole national purpose is to dispossess the Palestinians.”⁶⁵
174. Dr Ottolenghi submitted to us that the effect of this is that Jews are targeted for their attachment to and support for Israel and are asked to relinquish these in exchange for legitimacy. Criticism of this philosophy is often dismissed as an attempt to stifle legitimate criticism of Israel.
175. The front cover of the *New Statesman* on 14 January 2002 showed a gold Star of David impaling a supine Union Jack under the heading “A Kosher Conspiracy?”. This evoked a number of classical anti-Jewish stereotypes: gold implying Jewish wealth; the charge of conspiracy; and the piercing of the Union Jack implying an accusation of disloyalty. Dr Ottolenghi suggests that no other article in the national press has since inquired about other minorities or lobbies trying to exert influence over the media or policy. What matters more than the subject of the article is the way in which it was illustrated by antisemitic imagery that would have been unacceptable twenty years ago. This implies a decline in awareness of Jewish racial stereotypes and the boundaries of acceptable public discourse.
176. The intention of the author may not be antisemitic for the piece to have antisemitic themes. For example, Dave Brown’s cartoon in the *Independent* in 2003 showed the then Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon devouring a baby whilst wearing a “vote Likud” fig leaf, echoing historical images of the blood libel. The cartoon was subsequently awarded first prize in the British Political Cartoon Society’s Annual Competition for that year.
177. The spread of antisemitism on the internet and in the media is a problem with wider ramifications for society. In the modern world of instant globalised news and interactive opinion, the media has a responsibility to present a fair and balanced picture of world events and not to use inciteful or irresponsible language, the effect of which is to increase tensions between Britain’s minority communities.
178. There needs to be a greater understanding of the cultural importance of language and its power to shape and influence attitudes and actions. We do not believe that the vast majority of discussion surrounding the Israel-Palestinian conflict is inherently antisemitic; rather we are concerned that the currently popular discursive tools need to be deployed with greater responsibility and understanding of the historical resonances that they evoke. A legitimate opinion on the political decisions of the Israeli state may be expressed in an antisemitic manner, even if its author did not intend it to be, if it uses phrases and imagery which tap into antisemitic discourse.

65 Professor Shalom Lappin written submission

179. **We conclude that a discussion needs to take place within the media on the impact of language and imagery in current discourse on Judaism, anti-Zionism and Israel and we call upon them to show sensitivity and balance in their reporting of international events and recognise that the way in which they report the news has significant consequences on the interaction between communities in Britain.**
180. **Furthermore, we conclude that whilst many have pointed out that criticism of Israel or Zionism is not necessarily antisemitic the converse is also true: it is never acceptable to mask hurtful racial generalisations by claiming the right to legitimate political discourse.**

The Internet

181. The Chief Rabbi referred in his evidence to the possibilities of ‘globalising hate’ brought about in part by increased access to the internet. The internet can be a positive tool, a way to share knowledge and to increase understanding, but it can also provide an easy way to disseminate racist opinions and falsehoods to a mass audience without any means of restriction or clarification. This is certainly the case with antisemitic material.
182. There are dedicated antisemitic websites, websites of racist organisations such as the BNP, and websites that have no intrinsic antisemitic content but provide discussion forums which can become a platform for the anonymous expression of antisemitic opinions and comments.
183. The internet has also provided a tool for the distribution of antisemitic literature to millions of potential customers. Antisemitic material is sold on far right and radical Islamist websites and ‘The Protocols of the Elders of Zion’ as well as several other classic and modern antisemitic works are freely available for ordering on the Amazon.com website.
184. Currently, the publication of anything that would be considered illegal in hard copy form is also illegal on the internet and action can in principle be taken against the owner of the website. However, the Attorney General told us that one of the major challenges in tackling racism on the internet is the issue of jurisdiction. The host of a website or the webmaster of a discussion forum can legally deny responsibility for content that is posted on their site but not written by them. A further challenge is that of websites hosted abroad – no powers exist to close down foreign websites or to prosecute those who are responsible for them.
185. We received evidence submitted by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), a body that receives complaints from the public and IT professionals about potentially illegal content online, notably in relation to criminally obscene or racist material. The IWF told us that in 2004 it received 378 reports alleging criminally racist content, of which seven were assessed to be specifically antisemitic and potentially illegal. However, the fact that they were not hosted in the UK prevented it from taking any action. In 2005, the corresponding figures were 446 reports of racist content, of which six were assessed to be antisemitic, but again none was hosted in the UK.

186. The former Home Office Minister Paul Goggins MP gave evidence of a model which could possibly be applied to racist material on the internet. In the case of child pornography it is now an offence to download images from the internet, and it may be possible to develop a similar law in regard to material which could incite racial or religious hatred.
187. The Terrorism Act 2006 provides specific powers in relation to terrorism on the internet that will force providers to be responsible for the content of their websites. This may also provide a model that could be applied to racist material.
188. The evidence submitted to us suggests that both the monitoring of racist material on the internet and co-operation between national governments in relation to regulating internet providers are essential.
189. **We recommend that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office examines ways of convincing the governments of countries where antisemitic internet sites originate to take action to close them down. The United States in particular has been slow to take action in this area. We conclude that a new approach is needed in terms of freedom of expression that allows some limit on the public dissemination on the internet of material aimed at stirring up race hate and antisemitism.**
190. We were concerned by some of the media evidence emanating from Middle Eastern broadcasting outlets, as well as the wealth of antisemitic material hosted by servers in various countries but freely available to anyone with access to an internet connection in the UK. We feel that prosecution for antisemitic material disseminated or hosted via the internet and satellite could be strengthened through a Europe-wide approach. **We recommend that the relevant Government departments convene an international conference to agree a clear position on the current situation and to discuss objectives for targeting offensive material received in the UK from overseas sources.**

6. Antisemitism on Campus

Introduction

191. Among the evidence that particularly concerned us, one theme was the issue of antisemitism on campus. Jewish students are integrated into university life and the majority are able to proceed with their studies uninterrupted. However, we heard evidence from the Union of Jewish Students (UJS) that the current situation in the Middle East is causing tensions between student bodies on some campuses and, in the worst cases, Jewish students are being intimidated or harassed.

“Jewish students have become increasingly alarmed by virulent and unbalanced attacks on the state of Israel and the failure of student bodies and organisations to clearly and forcefully condemn antisemitism when it occurs.”⁶⁶

192. The UJS informed us that the Young BNP claims to be active on at least fifteen university campuses and their aim is usually to overturn No Platform policies in order that their leadership can speak on campus. Although this is of concern, the student body is united in its condemnation of the far right.

193. However, when left wing or pro-Palestinian discourse around the Middle East is manipulated and used as a vehicle for anti-Jewish language and themes, the antisemitism is harder to recognise and define and Jewish students can find themselves isolated and unsupported, or in conflict with large groups of their fellow students.

194. We look for high standards in our universities because they have a public role and therefore a public duty to be responsible for the welfare and learning of their students.

No Platform Policies

195. We received evidence from the UJS that a number of university campuses are being used as recruiting grounds by extremist groups which have a history of antisemitic rhetoric and behaviour.

196. The NUS No Platform policy is designed to prevent racists and fascists from speaking on university campuses and abusing the right to free speech but the implementation of this policy is not always straightforward.

197. Individual student unions are responsible for passing No Platform policies. A student from University College London (UCL) submitted that the university has not done this and it has resulted in an inability to deal with extremist elements on campus.

198. He submitted that in 2005 spokespeople for Hizb ut-Tahrir were invited to the campus to give presentations. Although UCL has an equal opportunities policy, without a No Platform policy the University was unable to prevent them from speaking. The student had spoken to sabbatical officers at UCL who sympathised with the concerns of Jewish and other minority students, including Muslim students who had also raised concerns, but the University did not take any action.

199. Although they are banned from most campuses under the NUS No Platform policy, Hizb ut-Tahrir have reappeared under a number of aliases. A 2003 BBC Newsnight documentary exposed their activity at Kingston University and they have also been active at UCE Birmingham and Queen Mary, University of London amongst others.

Visiting Speakers

200. It can be a matter of some controversy, and sometimes even a trigger for antisemitism in universities, when pro or anti-Israel speakers are invited on to campus by the student societies. We received evidence from the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) that relations between Jewish students and the Students' Union at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London have been particularly strained and in the past the Israel Student Society was banned by the Union. In February 2005, the SOAS Students' Union attempted to ban Mr Roey Gilad of the Embassy of Israel from addressing the University's Israel Society. He was allowed on campus after negotiations between the SOAS management and Jewish students but 300-400 protesters attempted to stop the proceedings and the Chair of the CRE, who happened to be present on campus, intervened personally in order to ensure that the meeting went ahead.
201. The UJS gave evidence that the Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK was banned in 2004 because of the racist, antisemitic and homophobic material which appeared on its website, but in December 2005 MPACUK organised a debate at Westminster University entitled "Zionism: The Greatest Enemy of the Jews". Some of the speakers were known to have expressed antisemitic opinions on previous occasions and the university authorities cancelled the event. MPACUK posted a response on its website which equated 'Jewish Societies' with 'Zionist Societies' and accused Jewish students of working for Mossad, and another response with a picture of Spiderman drawing on the classical antisemitic motif of Jews 'spinning a web' of control.
202. Concerns were expressed about this lack of consistency in tackling extremism on campus. It is left to individual Vice Chancellors to decide who should and should not be allowed to speak on campuses, and there seems to be a lack of centrally-formulated policies to guide them. This can lead to minority students feeling vulnerable and unprotected. A further issue is that although the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a positive duty on education and public authorities to promote racial equality, it is not clear whether students' unions are bound by this obligation.

Student Union Motions

203. Tensions and incidents on campus often peak around students' union votes concerning Israel and Zionism. In 2002 the University of Manchester Students' Union proposed a motion that anti-Zionism or criticism of Israel was not antisemitism, and that Israeli goods should be boycotted. The Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester told us that a leaflet from the General Union of Palestinian Students, quoting from a neo-Nazi propaganda forgery entitled 'Prophecy of Benjamin Franklin in Regard of the Jewish Race', was distributed amongst students queuing up to vote. The leaflet reproduced historic antisemitic slander describing Jews as vampires, and warning that unless they

were expelled from the United States they would enslave the country and control its economy. Further incidents occurred following the defeat of the motion – a brick was thrown through the window of a Jewish student residence and a poster bearing the words “Slaughter the Jews” was pasted on its front door. A knife was stuck in the door of another Jewish student’s residence. A series of similar motions were proposed across the country, six of which were passed, comparing Israel to apartheid South Africa and calling for a boycott of Israeli goods.

204. Jewish students naturally feel threatened by such motions as they could, if enacted, restrict the activities of the Jewish society as well as Jewish students’ ability to practise their faith and take part in Jewish cultural activities. A ban on Israeli goods, for example, would restrict the availability of kosher food on campus, whilst a ban on ‘Zionists’ could mean that Jewish speakers would be unable to come on campus even to speak to students about Jewish issues that do not relate to Israel. After an Israel-related motion was passed at SOAS, intervention became necessary to ensure that a Jewish Society was permitted to exist.
205. **We recommend that Jewish organisations like the CST and the UJS set up reporting facilities that allow unchallengeable, evidenced examples of abusive behaviour especially on universities. University Authorities should also record all examples of students reporting behaviour, statements, speeches, or acts which they consider to be antisemitic.**

Academic Boycotts

206. We received evidence regarding the attitudes of a small number of academics whose critical views of Israel have adversely affected their relations with Jewish students. Particular tension has been caused by rare cases of academics who have crossed the line between personal interest or activism, and academic abuse of power. We also received evidence concerning the collective activities of academic teachers’ unions.
207. At its annual conference in 2005 the Association of University Teachers (AUT) passed a motion boycotting two Israeli universities, Haifa and Bar Ilan. The panel heard oral evidence on this from Dr Jon Pike, Chair of Engage, an organisation that successfully opposed and overturned the boycott.
208. In May 2006 a motion was passed at the annual conference of NATFHE, the larger of the two higher education unions, calling upon members to boycott all Israeli academics. The motion criticised “Israeli apartheid policies, including construction of the exclusion wall, and discriminatory educational practices”, and invited members to “consider their responsibility for ensuring equity and non-discrimination in contacts with Israeli institutions or individuals and to consider the appropriateness of a boycott of those that do not publicly dissociate themselves from such policies”. Three days later NATFHE merged with the AUT to create a new union, the University and College Lecturers Union (UCU). The policy is not binding upon the UCU and it is expected that a boycott motion will be debated by the new union in 2007.

209. Some witnesses noted that even though the motivations of the boycotters may not in themselves be antisemitic, the effect of their actions would be to cause difficulties for Jewish academics and students. The majority of those who have institutional affiliations to Israeli universities are Jewish, and thus the consequences of a boycott would be to exclude Jews from academic life. A boycott would have a detrimental effect on Jewish studies departments in the UK leaving them potentially unable to continue teaching. Jane Ashworth, Director of Engage, has also spoken publicly on this issue, pointing out that policing such a boycott, for example monitoring email contact with foreign universities, would in effect target Jewish academics since they would be most likely to have contact with their Jewish counterparts.
210. The singling out of Israel is also of concern. Boycotts have not been suggested against other countries. Also of particular concern to witnesses was the concept of a ‘loyalty test’ for Israeli Jews, described by some as ‘McCarthyite’, signifying as it does the assumption of collective responsibility and collective guilt.
211. Dr Pike told us that the discourse around the boycott debate gave cause for concern, as it moved beyond reasonable criticism into antisemitic demonisation of Israel. He commented on the continual use of Nazi analogies and suggestions that Israel was “a fascist state”. After the boycott had been overturned, Engage was falsely described as a well-funded and well-organised Zionist operation, organised through a Zionist Federation meeting in Manchester. It was said that the “Zionists” turned up in large numbers to block the boycott, that the “campus Jews” had turned out purely to block the boycott, and that they were not considered to be “proper trade unionists”.⁶⁷
212. A side-effect of the attempt to boycott Israeli universities is that it has the effect of closing down debate on Israel within the Jewish community. British Jews can feel under siege and this leads to a desire among many to show a united front and defend Israel in the face of demonisation. Instead of organising debates on the two-state solution and encouraging free discussion, Jewish student activists are forced to spend the majority of their time confronting efforts to delegitimise both Israel and their own presence on campus.
213. **We conclude that calls to boycott contact with academics working in Israel are an assault on academic freedom and intellectual exchange. We recommend that lecturers in the new University and College Lecturers Union are given every support to combat such selective boycotts that are anti-Jewish in practice. We would urge the new union’s executive and leadership to oppose the boycott.**

Good Practice

214. There are, however, positive examples of university authorities responding to student concerns, for example the Vice Chancellor of the University of Westminster’s decision to cancel the MPACUK debate in 2005.
215. We also heard evidence that the University of Birmingham now has a policy that the Students’ Union must give the University two weeks’ notice of any external speaker coming to the campus so that they can respond to concerns. The Union has an elected

⁶⁷ Dr Jon Pike oral evidence

press council that deals with complaints about published material. In the light of a controversy surrounding academics whose web pages contained links to antisemitic websites or material, the University now has a policy restricting the content of academics' websites to matters related to their work.

216. We received a letter from Professor Colin Bundy, the Director and Principal of SOAS, detailing the positive steps that the School has taken regarding Students' Union activities with a strong emphasis on equality and diversity, including ensuring that Students' Union sabbatical officers are briefed by a legal firm on the Higher Education Act and the Race Relations Act and on the nature and limits of freedom of speech. New Student Union Societies guidelines have been introduced and society officers are expected to sign up to the School's Code of Conduct for meetings held on its premises. Professor Bundy met with the Board of Deputies of British Jews and an officer from the NUS last year, and was pleased to receive a comment from the Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies that the atmosphere in the student body had shown a marked improvement.⁶⁸
217. It seems that the manner in which accusations of antisemitism on campus are dealt with depends very much on the views of individual Vice Chancellors. The Chair of the CRE, Trevor Phillips, acknowledged that dialogue with university authorities is 'patchy' to say the least. There is no central policy guidance to which students have recourse when they feel that their concerns or complaints have not been taken seriously. Witnesses suggested that this leads to Jewish students feeling that not enough is being done to protect them on campus. In his oral evidence the then Home Secretary, Rt Hon Charles Clarke, told us that he was aware of the concerns and problems faced by some Jewish students on campus. He expressed the view that a firm lead is needed both from Vice Chancellors and from presidents and executives of Student Unions.
218. **We conclude that consistent attempts to boycott and delegitimise Jewish Societies and their activities on campus have diverted the attention and resources of Jewish students away from opportunities to conduct internal debates on Jewish issues, including Israel. These discussions should be encouraged and facilitated.**
219. **We conclude that Jewish students feel disproportionately threatened in British universities as a result of antisemitic activities which vary from campus to campus. Attacks on Jewish students and their halls of residence, and a lack of respect shown for observant Jewish students and their calendar requirements amount to a form of campus antisemitism which Vice Chancellors should tackle vigorously. While criticism of Israel – often hard-hitting in the rough and tumble of student politics – is legitimate, the language of some speakers crosses the line into generalised attacks on Jews.**
220. **We conclude that lecturers and university authorities have in some cases reacted firmly to examples of anti-Jewish activity on campus but we agree with the CRE Chair, Trevor Philips, that the response of Vice Chancellors is at best 'patchy'. We recommend that Vice Chancellors take an active interest in combating acts, speeches, literature and events that cause anxiety or alarm amongst their Jewish students. We recommend that Vice Chancellors set up a working party to make clear that British universities will be free of any expression of racism, and take robust action against antisemitism on campus.**

68 Professor Colin Bundy written submission

7. Addressing Antisemitism

Introduction

221. Although we have made recommendations throughout the report, a range of measures have already been adopted by government departments, law enforcement agencies and other official and non-governmental bodies to tackle antisemitism
222. There are few specific policies or solutions targeted exclusively at antisemitism or the Jewish community. For the most part, antisemitism is dealt with as a part of the general law or educational policy. It is only in the past few years that any government policies have been directed towards minority faith communities as a whole.
223. We believe that existing policies and mechanisms are largely adequate but there are some serious deficiencies that need to be addressed. We have sought to identify these areas of weakness and recommend improvements.

The Role of Government

224. Until recently the Home Office was primarily responsible for addressing antisemitism. Its remit included criminal law, policing, prosecutions, community relations and interfaith relations. The Home Office has worked hard to develop working relationships with Jewish community organisations, particularly the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Both the Home Secretary and his Parliamentary Under-Secretary gave oral evidence to the inquiry.
225. We also heard oral evidence from the Attorney General regarding his responsibility for the Crown Prosecution Service and his personal role in granting consent before any prosecution for incitement to racial hatred can be initiated.
226. In May 2006 the Race, Cohesion and Faiths Directorate was transferred from the Home Office to the new Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), and the new position of Minister for Local Government and Community Cohesion was created. At the time of writing it is still too soon to identify all the benefits of this change in terms of the Government's handling of antisemitism but we trust that the new department will work together with the Home Office and all communities in tackling racism, including antisemitism.
227. **We recommend that both the Home Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government should work together to combat the antisemitism we have reported on and consider setting up a cross-departmental task force to achieve this.**

Existing Legislation

228. The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 places a general duty on public authorities to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups. For the purposes of the Race Relations Act 1976 and subsequent amendments and additions, Jews are regarded as

an ethnic or racial group and covered by all the provisions of this legislation. The protection offered to Jews through this law came about through a 1980s appeal to the House of Lords that upheld the judgement that Sikhs and Jews were ethnic as well as religious groups (*Mandla v Lee*).

229. Under Part III of the Public Order Act 1986 it is an offence to use threatening, abusive, or insulting words with the intention or likelihood that racial hatred be stirred up. This is the offence of incitement to racial hatred. It has been strengthened by the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, which makes it an offence to stir up hatred against people on religious grounds, although Jews were already covered as a racial group.
230. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced specific racially aggravated offences, with higher penalties for such 'hate crimes'. In 2001 the Act was extended to include religiously aggravated offences. This means that antisemitic crimes of violence can be dealt with more severely by the courts.
231. The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 offer increased protection against discrimination on grounds of religion, including perceived religion. The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service has further recommended that employers should consider whether their policies, rules and procedures indirectly discriminate against staff of particular faiths and if so whether reasonable changes might be made.
232. The Equality Act 2006 outlaws discrimination on grounds of religion and belief (among other grounds) in the provision of goods, facilities, services, premises, education and the exercise of public functions.
233. Antisemitism is also addressed by various official bodies as part of existing codes of standards. Public bodies and agencies such as Ofcom, the Advertising Standards Agency and the Press Complaints Commission have a responsibility to ensure that these codes are enforced and antisemitic material is not tolerated within the broadcast and print media.

Law Enforcement

234. Antisemitic incidents are dealt with by the police and Crown Prosecution Service. The strengths and limitations of the current mechanisms were discussed in chapter three. Although some police forces have taken the issue of antisemitism seriously, we believe that overall there is a lack of consistency in the approach of the police and have identified serious deficiencies in the recording and prosecuting of antisemitic incidents. Our recommendations are set out in that chapter.
235. We believe that it is essential that the Home Office ensures that a complete picture of antisemitic incidents in the UK is available to the Government and the police.
236. We believe that law enforcement authorities need to take the threat of antisemitic incidents seriously in all instances, just as they should for all race-hate incidents.

Community Relations

237. We heard evidence on community relations in Britain from the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). The CRE is a publicly-funded, non-departmental public body set up under the Race Relations Act 1976 to tackle racial discrimination and promote racial equality and good race relations. Their mission statement is: “We work for a just and integrated society, where diversity is valued. We use both persuasion and our powers under the law to give everyone an equal chance to live free from fear, discrimination, prejudice and racism”.
238. The CRE submitted that they have a long history of engaging with the Jewish community in tackling racial discrimination and promoting good race relations. The current Chair, Trevor Phillips, gave oral evidence to us regarding the Safe Communities Initiative that was set up in the wake of the 2001 riots in Burnley, Bradford and Oldham. Its primary purpose is to examine community tensions and to develop models of conflict prevention that result in the lessening of tensions, as well as to monitor community relations and support organisations that are involved in conflict prevention.
239. Through the Safe Communities Initiative the Commission hosted a Jewish communities seminar in December 2004 in response to the increasing attacks on the Jewish community. The seminar revealed that there were concerns about the rising levels of antisemitism in the UK. Much attention was given to the spilling-over of tensions from the Middle East. Particular concerns were raised about the treatment of Jewish students on campuses in the United Kingdom.⁶⁹
240. In its written submission to this inquiry the CRE proposed that the Government establish a new body to deal with citizenship and integration which could take up the ‘good community relations’ work currently undertaken by the CRE. This would include taking a leading role in conflict avoidance and resolution in race and ethnic relations, including antisemitism. This new body would also play a part in combating the racist activities of extremist groups.
241. The Commission also drew our attention to existing models in promoting relations between the Jewish and Muslim communities. Some of these groups are doing positive work that needs supporting and in certain cases expanding.
242. **We conclude that community cohesion is vital to combating antisemitism and recommend that increased levels of public funding should be directed towards promoting good community relations projects that encourage an environment of respect and understanding.**
243. **We recommend that the Department for Communities and Local Government takes the lead in commissioning an annual survey investigating attitudes and tensions between Britain’s communities and produces a report on the trends over time, to be monitored by the Commission for Racial Equality.**

69 CRE written submission

244. **We recommend that the Jewish and Muslim communities and interfaith groups promote joint leadership programmes for young Muslims and Jews.**

Interfaith Relations

245. In recent years there has been an increased awareness of the importance of teaching about other faiths and about interfaith dialogue. Any moves to break down barriers between faiths and develop more cohesive communities are to be welcomed. There are many interfaith initiatives around the country which have a significant role to play in developing relationships and in helping people to learn about other faiths.
246. We acknowledge the lead that the Government has taken, including setting up the Race, Cohesion and Faiths Directorate to co-ordinate and develop the Government's engagement with faith communities. Earlier this year the Government set up a new Faith Communities Consultative Council as a forum where ministers and faith leaders can discuss issues primarily related to community cohesion. The Council, which is to meet three times a year, is now part of the Department for Communities and Local Government.
247. The Inter Faith Network brings together more than a hundred local, regional and national bodies around the country and provides a forum for leaders of faith communities to come together to discuss issues of shared concern.
248. On our visit to Manchester we were told that the Lord Mayor, a Muslim Councillor, had taken a lead in promoting interfaith dialogue and was joint chair of the Manchester Muslim Jewish Forum. We believe that organisations that seek to improve relations between Muslims and Jews, including Alif-Aleph and the Stamford Hill Muslim Jewish Forum, should be supported in their work.
249. In recent years the Catholic and Anglican Churches have overtly distanced themselves from the themes of traditional theological antisemitism, for example the accusation that Jews were responsible for the death of Christ. We received constructive written submissions from the Catholic Church, the Church of Scotland and the Church of England, all of which support a range of interfaith forums. The Bishop of St Albans described the steps taken by the Church of England in recent years to develop a positive relationship with the Jewish community, in particular through the Council of Christians and Jews.
250. The Catholic Conference of Bishops Committee for Catholic Jewish Relations submitted that it tries to ensure that statements issued by the Catholic Conference of Bishops are even-handed in criticism concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict. Its Department for International Affairs is working to establish a dialogue with the Embassy of Israel in order to gain a deeper understanding of the thinking of the Israeli people.
251. The Catholic Conference of Bishops also submitted evidence that they try to combat antisemitism through education by presenting Jews and Judaism in a positive light. They do this through leaflets at various times of the year, for example Advent and Lent, when

the liturgical readings can be misinterpreted negatively against Jews or Judaism. Judaism is now taught in all Catholic primary and secondary schools and there are optional courses on Judaism and Christian-Jewish Relations at tertiary level.

252. **We believe that the Government has a critical interest in and role to play in ensuring that interfaith dialogue is undertaken by key leaders in all minority communities. We recommend the Department for Communities and Local Government supports the work of the Faith Communities Consultative Council and uses it to facilitate bi-annual meetings between the leaders of all the major faith communities, with special emphasis on improving understanding between the Board of Deputies, the Muslim Council of Britain and other, newer leadership groups.**

Education

253. Many of those who gave evidence stressed the importance of education as a way to reduce antisemitism. This includes specific education on antisemitism and Jewish faith and culture, and wider education around issues of racism, tolerance and discrimination. The Holocaust Educational Trust reported that many school teachers consider antisemitism to be part of a wider pattern of intolerance and suggested that the increase in xenophobic, anti-Muslim, homophobic and antisemitic incidents needs to be addressed in the classroom and in other educational frameworks. We note the crucial role that education can play in passing on knowledge and shaping attitudes.
254. In this section we concentrate on education in schools but in the previous chapter we noted the problem of antisemitism on campuses and the importance of Britain's universities being places of tolerance, learning and excellence.
255. The National Union of Teachers (NUT) expressed concerns that antisemitism is not always incorporated into wider educational initiatives regarding race equality, for example the Department for Education and Skills' work on tackling racist bullying in schools does not cover antisemitism.⁷⁰
256. Following the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, schools have a duty to promote good race relations and equality of opportunity and to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination. All schools should therefore have a Race Equality Policy in place which should include addressing the issue of antisemitism. However, schools have been relatively slow to implement these requirements, principally because of lack of resources and appropriate expertise.⁷¹
257. The training of teachers is an important component in tackling antisemitism, both in terms of lesson content and antisemitic incidents in the classroom. The NUT has issued guidance to teachers and schools about dealing with racism, including antisemitism and Islamophobia, and stresses the need for school staff to respond to any antisemitic language they hear, even if there are no Jewish pupils directly involved: "allowing racist language to go unchallenged, whichever group it is directed against, gives racism a degree of legitimacy".⁷²

70 National Union of Teachers written submission

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid.

258. We note the importance of education in the training of those who may come across antisemitism in their professional lives, including police officers and prosecutors as well as teachers and those engaged in teacher training and diversity training. Lack of understanding about the Jewish community and its concerns is comparatively widespread. All of us, as members of the panel, have learned new information about the Jewish community and the nature of antisemitism as a result of the evidence presented to us during this inquiry. We feel certain that members of the public reading this report will do likewise.

Education on Antisemitism

259. Stephen Smith of the Aegis Trust and the Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial and Education Centre submitted that Holocaust education in schools combined with the presence of Holocaust Memorial Day has meant that young people are motivated to learn and, as a result, are more able to speak about attitudes and actions toward Jews and other minority groups.

260. The Holocaust Educational Trust told us of the work which they are doing in schools to promote greater awareness and understanding of the Holocaust and also made some specific recommendations suggesting how schools might tackle the issue of antisemitism in a classroom context. Their other recommendations included instant and robust responses to attempts to politicise and demote Holocaust Memorial Day, and continued government support for visits to Auschwitz. They highlighted the importance of taking racially and religiously diverse groups to Auschwitz. The Trust also highlighted the importance of effective citizenship education in all schools so that students are empowered to speak out against all forms of discrimination, including antisemitism.⁷³

School Twinning

261. Many children in Britain will grow up without having met a Jewish person; therefore education is crucial to fostering a sense of tolerance and understanding in young people. Oona King submitted that there is a problem where children are educated separately and highlighted the importance of joint activity in these instances, for example citizenship classes that bring primary school children together from faith schools or schools with particularly high proportions of Muslim and Jewish pupils.⁷⁴

262. A worrying trend towards community isolation is reflected in some of Britain's schools. Several communities have encouraged a move to faith-based schooling and in some parts of the country schools can be dominated by a particular faith group or community due to the demographics of the area. Although many schools work hard to ensure that their pupils are educated about other faiths and communities, we believe that it is vital for schools to interact with each other and that only through engagement and interaction will genuine social cohesion be achieved.

⁷³ Holocaust Educational Trust written submission

⁷⁴ Oona King written submission

263. **We conclude that initiatives such as twinning schemes between schools in different communities can have a lasting impact on cross-cultural understanding and recommend that the Government, through the DfES and the DCLG, take a lead role in ensuring that there is a duty on schools to promote contact, engagement and joint curricula.**

Wider Issues

264. Education is not always the only, or even the most appropriate, solution to antisemitism. When antisemitism can be found in educated sections of society, including universities and the broadsheet press, clearly education alone will prove inadequate to tackle it. We believe that this ‘education’ should take a broader form; a combination of more extensive academic research in order to increase our understanding of the challenges and potential solutions, and also a wider understanding of cultural values and the effects of different types of discourse on different communities.
265. Action in schools should be integrated with action to combat other forms of racism. In her written submission psychologist Golda Zafer-Smith emphasised the relative neglect of antisemitism as an issue in diversity training and considered that this omission has been a factor in the rise in contemporary antisemitism.
266. **We conclude that there is a new awareness of the need to explain to school-children the history of antisemitism. We recommend that the Department for Education and Skills, working with the Commission for Racial Equality, should update its guidance to local authorities and place upon them a greater duty to provide effective anti-racist education.**

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

267. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has devoted particular attention to antisemitism in recent years and its work on this issue helped to provide the impetus for this inquiry. With 56 participating states drawn from Europe, Central Asia and America, the OSCE is the world’s largest regional security organisation. Although it continues to engage in the fields of military security, economic and environmental co-operation, and human rights and humanitarian concerns, its main focus is on initiatives designed to prevent, manage and resolve conflict within and among the participating states.
268. In July 2002 a forum was held in Berlin to address the rise in antisemitism in the OSCE region and to consider possible collective action in order to reverse this trend. This was the start of an ongoing programme of work, including follow-up events and conferences, culminating in the Berlin Declaration of 2004 in which participating governments unanimously condemned without reservation all manifestations of antisemitism and all other forms of intolerance, incitement, harassment and violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief. They also declared that international developments or political issues, including those in Israel or elsewhere, never justify antisemitism. In the Berlin Declaration, OSCE participating states committed themselves to:
1. Strive to ensure that their legal systems foster a safe environment free from antisemitic harassment, violence or discrimination in all fields of life;

2. Promote, as appropriate, educational programmes for combating antisemitism;
3. Promote remembrance of and, as appropriate, education about the tragedy of the Holocaust, and the importance of respect for all ethnic and religious groups; Combat hate crimes, which can be fuelled by racist, xenophobic and antisemitic propaganda in the media and on the internet;
4. Encourage and support international organisation and NGO efforts in these areas;
5. Collect and maintain reliable information and statistics about antisemitic crimes, and other hate crimes, committed within their territory, report such information periodically to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and make this information available to the public;
6. Endeavour to provide the ODIHR with the appropriate resources to accomplish the tasks agreed upon in the Maastricht Ministerial Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination;
7. Work with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to determine appropriate ways to review periodically the problem of antisemitism;
8. Encourage development of informal exchanges among experts in appropriate fora on best practices and experiences in law enforcement and education.

269. The Declaration tasked the ODIHR with liaising with other international bodies to make use of all reliable information available. It also required the ODIHR systematically to collect and disseminate information on best practice for preventing and responding to antisemitism and, if requested, offer advice to participating states in their efforts to fight antisemitism.

270. Following the conference it was agreed that the chairman-in-office should appoint a Personal Representative on Antisemitism (together with two other personal representatives to deal with Islamophobia and other forms of racism, which have also been the subject of conferences organised by the OSCE). The current representative, Professor Gert Weisskirchen, submitted oral and written evidence to the inquiry. He is responsible for promoting better co-ordination between participating states and overseeing the implementation of the Berlin Declaration.

271. Professor Weisskirchen gave us a number of important insights, not least by confirming that whatever problems we face in the UK in dealing with rising levels of antisemitism, the situation in a number of other European countries is more serious and that they often lack the means we have in this country to monitor and assess the scale and nature of the problem or the political will to do so.

272. Member states have been encouraged to implement the Berlin Declaration, in particular by:

1. Developing effective methods of collecting and maintaining reliable information and statistics about antisemitic and all other hate-motivated crimes and following closely incidents motivated by intolerance in order to develop appropriate strategies for tackling them;

2. Recognising that legislation and law enforcement are essential tools in tackling intolerance and discrimination and that the authorities have a key role to play in ensuring the adoption and implementation of such legislation and the establishment of effective monitoring and enforcement measures;
3. Recalling the importance of education, including education on the Holocaust and on antisemitism, as a means for preventing and responding to all forms of intolerance and discrimination, as well as for promoting integration and respecting diversity;
4. Recognising the important role of the media, including the internet, in combating hate speech and promoting tolerance through awareness-raising and educational programmes as well as highlighting positive contributions of diversity to society.

273. **We conclude that international treaty-based organisations like the OSCE, the EU and the Council of Europe are fully seized of the problem of contemporary antisemitism and we welcome the appointment of an OSCE Special Representative on antisemitism. We recommend that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office gives full support to this work and avoids the temptation to bury the specific problem of antisemitism in a wider context of anti-racism. We recommend that the Prime Minister appoints a special envoy on antisemitism from amongst serving parliamentarians who can co-ordinate this work and represent the UK worldwide and in Britain.**

274. **We recommend that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Home Office issue a joint statement annually to the House of Commons in order to update Members on the progress made in the UK in implementing the objectives of the Berlin Declaration.**

Final Conclusions

275. Just as the problem of antisemitism is complex and multifaceted, so too are the solutions. We believe that the solutions lie in a combination of:
- Richer statistics
 - More effective policing and prosecution
 - Education and community engagement
 - A greater exercise of responsibility and sensitivity in public and private discourse
276. Racism and intolerance must be challenged wherever they exist. We believe that Britain is at risk of becoming complacent in this respect and that antisemitic abuse, be it physical or verbal, must be condemned in the same unqualified terms as other forms of discrimination.

8. Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

Background

1. We recommend that the EUMC Working Definition of antisemitism is adopted and promoted by the Government and law enforcement agencies. (Paragraph 26)

Antisemitic Incidents

2. We recommend that the Home Office provides a greater level of support in addressing the security needs of British Jews, especially with reference to their places of worship and schools. (Paragraph 36)
3. Given the potential value of police data on anti-Jewish incidents, we conclude that it is a matter of concern that only a minority of police forces in the United Kingdom have the capability to record antisemitic incidents. (Paragraph 48)
4. We conclude that given that all police forces in the United Kingdom are required to have the capacity to record racist incidents and provide annual data to the Home Office irrespective of the size of minority ethnic communities in their areas, it is inexcusable that there is not a similar requirement for the recording of antisemitic incidents. (Paragraph 51)
5. We recommend that the police should have one universal and comprehensive recording facility rather than leaving it to the discretion of individual forces and that the model adopted by the Metropolitan Police of categorising incidents as both racist and antisemitic should be introduced across all police forces in the UK. (Paragraph 52)
6. We recommend that the Home Office directs research resources to the extent of antisemitism and reports annually to Parliament. (Paragraph 53)
7. We conclude that the Community Security Trust performs a valuable role and recommend intensified co-operation between the police and the CST, with particular focus on tackling dual reporting. (Paragraph 54)
8. We recommend that the Crown Prosecution Service investigates the reasons for the low number of prosecutions and reports back to Parliament. (Paragraph 69)
9. We recommend that the Crown Prosecution Service conducts a review of cases where prosecutions for incitement to racial hatred have been brought, in order to see what lessons can be learned. (Paragraph 70)

Antisemitic Discourse

10. We conclude that ethnically and religiously motivated hatred, violence and prejudice, wherever they occur, should earn unconditional condemnation; sympathy and support for the victims should not be conditional on their alleged behaviour or political convictions. It is increasingly the case that, because anger over Israel's policies can provide the pretext, condemnation is often too slow and increasingly conditional. Regardless of the expressed motive, Jewish people and Jewish institutions are being targeted. (Paragraph 89)
11. We conclude that the correlation between conflict in the Middle East and attacks on the Jewish community must be better understood if the problem is to be tackled and would welcome academic research on this issue. (Paragraph 110)

Sources of Contemporary Antisemitism

12. We recommend that all providers of online payments systems adopt Offensive Material Policies which they undertake to actively police and that these organisations have clear mechanisms for members of the public to report any breaches of the policy. In addition we also recommend these providers strengthen their links with organisations such as Searchlight, which monitor the presence of racist, including antisemitic, material online, and respond quickly to any reports that their systems are being used to disseminate this material. (Paragraph 121)
13. We conclude that the overt threat from the far right towards Jews may not be as significant as it once was, but there is no room for complacency. Holocaust denial and Jewish conspiracy theories remain core elements of far right ideology. Any gains in popularity for the BNP are damaging to society as a whole. They seek to stir up tensions between communities and undermine the values of tolerance and multiculturalism that have allowed the Jewish community, and other minorities, to flourish in Britain in the past. (Paragraph 122)
14. Given the links between the BNP and similar antisemitic, anti-Muslim and xenophobic political parties in Europe we recommend that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office reports on far right activity as part of its published political reporting to Parliament – possibly as an annex in its annual human rights report. (Paragraph 123)
15. We conclude that a minority of Islamist extremists in this country do incite hatred towards Jews. The undoubted prejudice and difficulties that British Muslims feel and their justified sense of increasing Islamophobia cannot be used to justify antisemitic words and violence. (Paragraph 146)
16. We note that the boycott of Holocaust Memorial Day is not motivated by antisemitism but we conclude that it gives out the wrong signals. We call upon the MCB, under its new leadership and as a representative body of British citizens of Muslim faith, to rethink its approach to this national event which seeks to commemorate the victims of genocides throughout history as well as the Holocaust. (Paragraph 157)

17. We recommend that the Electoral Commission draws up a contract of acceptable behaviour which outlines the duty of all election candidates to exercise due care when addressing issues such as racism, community relations and minorities during political campaigning. (Paragraph 170)
18. We conclude that a discussion needs to take place within the media on the impact of language and imagery in current discourse on Judaism, anti-Zionism and Israel and we call upon them to show sensitivity and balance in their reporting of international events and recognise that the way in which they report the news has significant consequences on the interaction between communities in Britain. (Paragraph 179)
19. We conclude that whilst many have pointed out that criticism of Israel or Zionism is not necessarily antisemitic the converse is also true: it is never acceptable to mask hurtful racial generalisations by claiming the right to legitimate political discourse. (Paragraph 180)
20. We recommend that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office examines ways of convincing the governments of countries where antisemitic internet sites originate to take action to close them down. The United States in particular has been slow to take action in this area. We conclude that a new approach is needed in terms of freedom of expression that allows some limit on the public dissemination on the internet of material aimed at stirring up race hate and antisemitism. (Paragraph 189)
21. We recommend that the relevant Government departments convene an international conference to agree a clear position on the current situation and to discuss objectives for targeting offensive material received in the UK from overseas sources. (Paragraph 190)

Antisemitism on Campus

22. We recommend that Jewish organisations like the CST and the UJS set up reporting facilities that allow unchallengeable, evidenced examples of abusive behaviour especially on universities. University Authorities should also record all examples of students reporting behaviour, statements, speeches, or acts which they consider to be antisemitic. (Paragraph 205)
23. We conclude that calls to boycott contact with academics working in Israel are an assault on academic freedom and intellectual exchange. We recommend that pro-democracy lecturers in the new University and College Lecturers Union are given every support to combat such selective boycotts that are anti-Jewish in practice. We would urge the new union's executive and leadership to oppose the boycott. (Paragraph 213)
24. We conclude that consistent attempts to boycott and delegitimise Jewish Societies and their activities on campus have diverted the attention and resources of Jewish students away from opportunities to conduct internal debates on Jewish issues, including of Israel. These discussions should be encouraged and facilitated. (Paragraph 218)
25. We conclude that Jewish students feel disproportionately threatened in British universities as a result of antisemitic activities which vary from campus to campus. Attacks on Jewish students and their halls of residence, and a lack of respect shown for observant Jewish students and their calendar requirements amount to a form of campus antisemitism which Vice Chancellors should tackle vigorously. While criticism of Israel – often hard-hitting in the rough and tumble of student politics – is legitimate, the language of some speakers too often crosses the line into generalised attacks on Jews. (Paragraph 219)

26. We conclude that lecturers and university authorities have in some cases reacted firmly to examples of anti-Jewish activity on campus but we agree with the CRE Chair, Trevor Philips, that the response of Vice Chancellors is at best ‘patchy’. We recommend that Vice Chancellors take an active interest in combating acts, speeches, literature and events that cause anxiety or alarm amongst their Jewish students. We recommend that Vice Chancellors set up a working party to make clear that British universities will be free of any expression of racism, and take robust action against antisemitism on campus. (Paragraph 220)

Addressing Antisemitism

27. We recommend that both the Home Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government should work together to combat the antisemitism we have reported on and consider setting up a cross-departmental task force to achieve this. (Paragraph 227)
28. We conclude that community cohesion is vital to combating antisemitism and recommend that increased levels of public funding should be directed towards promoting good community relations projects that encourage an environment of respect and understanding. (Paragraph 242)
29. We recommend that the Department for Communities and Local Government takes the lead in commissioning an annual survey investigating attitudes and tensions between Britain’s communities and produces a report on the trends over time, to be monitored by the Commission for Racial Equality. (Paragraph 243)
30. We recommend that the Jewish and Muslim communities and interfaith groups promote joint leadership programmes for young Muslims and Jews. (Paragraph 244)
31. We believe that the Government has a critical interest in and role to play in ensuring that interfaith dialogue is undertaken by key leaders in all minority communities. We recommend the Department for Communities and Local Government supports the work of the Faith Communities Consultative Council and uses it to facilitate bi-annual meetings between the leaders of all the major faith communities, with special emphasis on improving understanding between the Board of Deputies, the Muslim Council of Britain and other, newer leadership groups. (Paragraph 252)
32. We conclude that initiatives such as twinning schemes between schools in different communities can have a lasting impact on cross-cultural understanding and recommend that the Government, through the DfES and the DCLG, take a lead role in ensuring that there is a duty on schools to promote contact, engagement and joint curricula. (Paragraph 263)
33. We conclude that there is a new awareness of the need to explain to school-children the history of antisemitism. We recommend that the Department for Education and Skills, working with the Commission for Racial Equality, should update its guidance to local authorities and place upon them a greater duty to provide effective anti-racist education. (Paragraph 266)

34. We conclude that international treaty-based organisations like the OSCE, the EU and the Council of Europe are fully seized of the problem of contemporary antisemitism and we welcome the appointment of an OSCE Special Representative on antisemitism. We recommend that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office gives full support to this work and avoids the temptation to bury the specific problem of antisemitism in a wider context of anti-racism. We recommend that the Prime Minister appoints a special envoy on antisemitism from amongst serving parliamentarians who can co-ordinate this work and represent the UK worldwide and in Britain. (Paragraph 273)
35. We recommend that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Home Office issue a joint statement annually to the House of Commons in order to update Members on the progress made in the UK in implementing the objectives of the Berlin Declaration. (Paragraph 274)

Appendix: Full List of Witnesses

Written Evidence

Academic Friends of Israel
 Advertising Standards Authority
 Rabbi Alex Chapper
 American Jewish Committee
 Dr Antony Lerman
 Association of Chief Police Officers
 Avon and Somerset Constabulary
 Birmingham City Council
 Board of Deputies of British Jews
 Bournemouth Borough Council
 Bournemouth Jewish Representative Council
 Dr Brian Klug, University of Oxford
 Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales
 Church of England
 Church of Scotland
 City of Edinburgh Council
 City of London Police
 Professor Colin Bundy, Director and Principal, School of Oriental and African Studies
 Commission for Racial Equality
 Community Security Trust
 Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France
 Council of Christians and Jews
 Professor David Cesarani, Royal Holloway, University of London
 Dr David Hirsh, Goldsmiths College
 Department for Culture, Media and Sport
 Department for Education and Skills
 Mr Edwin Moore
 Professor Emanuele Ottolenghi, University of Oxford
 Embassy of the Argentine Republic
 Embassy of Austria
 Embassy of Germany
 Embassy of Israel
 Embassy of the USA
 Embassy of Turkey
 European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia
 European Jewish Congress
 Gateshead Council
 Professor Gert Weisskirchen, OSCE Personal Representative, Bundestag Member
 Glasgow City Council
 Ms Golda Zafer-Smith
 Greater London Authority
 Greater Manchester Police

Hertfordshire County Council
Holocaust Educational Trust
Home Office
Mr Howard Jacobson
Imam Dr Abduljalil Sajid
Institute for Jewish Policy Research
Internet Watch Foundation
Jacob Blaustein Institute
Jewish Care
Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester
Jews for Justice for Palestine
Jews Free School
Dr John Pike, Engage
Jonathan Freedland
Leonard Sokolic
Liberal Democrats
London Assembly Conservative Group
London Jewish Forum
Lord Janner of Braunstone QC
Ms Luciana Berger
Luton Borough Council
Manchester City Council
Ms Melanie Phillips
Metropolitan Police
Mr Michael Rosie and Dr Celia Clegg, University of Edinburgh
Middle East Media Research Institute
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education
National Union of Students
National Union of Teachers
Newcastle City Council
NGO Monitor
Mr Nick Cohen
Nottinghamshire Police
OfCom
Office of the Attorney General
Office of the Chief Rabbi
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Crown Prosecution Service
Office of the Mayor of Paris
Ms Oona King
Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly
Professor Robert Wistrich, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Professor Roger Eatwell, University of Bath
Scottish Council of Jewish Communities
Scottish National Party
Searchlight Magazine
Professor Shalom Lappin, King's College London
Mr Stephen Pollard

Street Games
 Student – Name and Address Supplied
 Sussex Police
 Tel Aviv University
 The Academic and Media Watch on Antisemitism
 The Aegis Trust
 Rabbi Tony Bayfield, Movement for Reform Judaism
 Union of Jewish Students
 Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations
 United Synagogue Burial Society
 Welsh Assembly
 West Midlands Police
 Yad Vashem
 Mr Yair Zivan

Oral Evidence

Session 1: 6 February 2006

Mr Henry Grunwald QC – President, Board of Deputies of British Jews
 Mr Mark Gardner – Director of Communications, Community Security Trust
 Mr Mitch Simmons and Ms Jess Kosmin – Union of Jewish Students
 Professor David Cesarani – Royal Holloway, University of London
 Mr Steve Silver – Searchlight Magazine

Session 2: 13 February 2006

Rt Hon The Lord Goldsmith QC – Attorney General
 Professor Gert Weisskirchen – OSCE Personal Representative, Bundestag Member
 Dr Paul Iganski – University of Essex
 Dr Brian Klug – University of Oxford
 Professor Robert Wistrich – Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Session 3: 27 February 2006

Mr Paul Goggins MP – Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Home Office
 ACC Robert Beckley and DCS David Tucker – Faiths Unit, Association of Chief Police Officers
 Commander Steve Allen – Metropolitan Police
 Dr Jon Pike – Engage

Session 4: 6 March 2006

Rt Hon Charles Clarke MP – Home Secretary
 Mr Trevor Phillips – Chairman, Commission for Racial Equality
 Sir Iqbal Sacranie – Secretary-General, Muslim Council of Britain
 Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks – Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth

**Further copies of this report are available from
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