



The Rt Yvette Cooper MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department
By Email

6th August 2024

Dear Yvette,

I am writing to you today with my concern and total solidarity with all those communities who are being targeted and attacked by far right, racist, fascist groups.

I also want to welcome you to your role and offer my support in dealing with this issue, along with my fellow Green MP colleagues. What we are witnessing on our streets is fascist violence fuelled by racism and Islamophobia. Only by naming it and understanding clearly what it is can we work to defeat it.

In the immediate term, I urge you to take comprehensive action to protect and support all those subject to fascist intimidation. You have said that the police have the government's full support in pursuing the full range of prosecutions and penalties and I welcome this. I also urge you to make sure that police resources are not only used to protect those targeted and apprehend people taking part, but also that sufficient investigative capacity is deployed to make sure that no-one involved in this horrendous violence and disorder is able to escape the appropriate sanctions.

With a longer perspective, it is clear that the rise of the far right and fascism has been fuelled by toxic rhetoric from the media and politicians in recent years. Indeed, Dame Sara Khan, who worked as Rishi Sunak's independent adviser for social cohesion, has accused politicians of using inflammatory language which has given the green light to those holding racist views.¹ We have also seen worrying evidence that social media incitement and misinformation, from politicians here as well, but with much of it organised from outside the UK, has played a large part in fuelling the current wave of violence. I have also been incredibly disturbed to see so many very young people taking part, and specific action will be needed to respond to this as well.

So, while enforcing the law effectively is important against fascist violence, it won't be enough to fully deal with the causes, or to quell an ideology which uses organised political violence to undermine our society, divide communities and compromise the state and its institutions, including the judiciary and the police.

¹ [Conservatives left UK wide open to far-right violence, says former adviser | UK security and counter-terrorism | The Guardian](#)



Therefore, I would like to ask you the following:

- What plans do you have to provide protection and reassurance for communities that have been left fearful?
- What are you doing to counteract the organised spread of Islamophobia, including investigating the role of elected politicians, the press and social media?
- What is your plan to actively build cohesive communities and what investment will you provide? Given the large numbers of very young people evident within the riots, will this include investment in positive interventions such as restoring the massive loss of youth services under the last government?
- What can you share of the intelligence gathered on the organisation of the far right in the past decade and how does this intelligence inform your response?
- To what extent have you explored and identified the influence of external actors, including countries such as Russia, in fomenting this disorder?

Racism is the engine that drives fascism, so government ministers and MPs need to speak up now with one voice to celebrate and defend our Muslim citizens and all communities of colour, and their place in our diverse society.

Cohesive communities do not just happen by themselves. We need a massive increase in investment to support this and I hope that you and other ministers will also be making a strong case for reinvestment in strengthening communities at the upcoming Budget.

I look forward to your prompt response,

Siân Berry MP
Brighton Pavilion