



# POLICING LONDON

SUBMISSION TO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE  
FOR POLICING AND CRIME



**CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANTISEMITISM**

PO Box 2647, London W1A 3RB

Registered charity 1163790

✉ [info@antisemitism.uk](mailto:info@antisemitism.uk)

☎ +44 (0)330 822 0321

🌐 [www.antisemitism.uk](http://www.antisemitism.uk)

# CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) is a volunteer-led charity dedicated to exposing and countering antisemitism in the United Kingdom through education and zero-tolerance enforcement of the law. It was established in August 2014 and was registered as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) in October 2015.<sup>1</sup>

In January 2015, CAA released its first Antisemitism Barometer survey.<sup>2</sup> With YouGov, we surveyed the British population about their attitudes towards Jewish people, and separately we conducted our own survey of British Jews — the largest ever — to determine how antisemitism affects them.

Antisemitism in the United Kingdom is reaching a tipping point. Incitement against Jews online is now translating into violent attacks on Jews. The survey found that 45% of British adults believe at least one antisemitic stereotype, 26% of British adults believe two or more antisemitic stereotypes, 17% of British adults believe three or more antisemitic stereotypes, 45% of British Jews of British Jews fear they may have no future in Britain, 77% of British Jews have witnessed antisemitism disguised as a political comment about Israel, 25% of British Jews have considered leaving Britain because of antisemitism.

We hope that this submission will provide a useful tool for Mayor Sadiq Khan, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Sophie Linden and all stakeholders in London in the fight against antisemitic hate crime, particularly on social media.

CAA is encouraged by some recent developments in London. We are pleased that the International Definition of Antisemitism (discussed later in this submission) was unanimously adopted by the London Assembly on 8th February 2017 and that the Mayor spoke out firmly against antisemitism at a ceremony at the City Hall to mark Holocaust Memorial Day on 23rd January this year.



1. CAA Website, <https://antisemitism.uk>

2. CAA Antisemitism Barometer Survey, <https://antisemitism.uk/barometer/>, 14th January 2015

# GROWTH OF ONLINE ANTISEMITISM

Social media can be used for good but unfortunately it is increasingly being used as a tool for antisemites. Social media is the engine room of contemporary antisemitism and is fuelling its incredible growth. It has emboldened many to express antisemitic views that they would not disclose publicly. Online anonymity and secrecy further exacerbates the problem as antisemites can render themselves unrecognisable and untraceable. Antisemites can hide behind their keyboard and smartphone, using Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other social media platforms as amplifiers. The social media giants have been slow to recognise their responsibility in combating the antisemitic crime that their platforms are facilitating.

It is difficult to monitor the vast swathes of ferocious and vulgar antisemitic abuse committed online. CAA identifies thousands of hate comments and tweets, week in, week out. There are thousands of Facebook pages, each of which have thousands of likes that are profoundly antisemitic and there are thousands of tweets on Twitter spreading hate and incitement.

Social media is bringing the extreme into the mainstream. Before the advent of social media, fringe groups talked to their own kind, namely neo-Nazis, Islamist extremists and hard-left antisemites. Now, these groups are having conversations outside their clique. Antisemitic posts or tweets are often shared or sent on by the perpetrator,

and when the victims respond, the original antisemitic post or tweet is displayed to the victim's social network, so the impact of such hatred is amplified.

We do not believe that there is a hierarchy of hate, but antisemitism is different from other types of racist hatred. It is no mere prejudice; it endures because it is an ideology. It presents itself as a form of justice. Whereas other forms of racism slur their victims to diminish them, antisemitism does the opposite. Jews are presented as conniving, corrupting, parasites who wield immense power to the detriment of society. Antisemites present themselves as agents of justice, freeing mankind from Jewish dominance.

Like all ideologies, antisemitism has its own antibodies. Every Jewish contribution to society is cast as a bid for power. Every person who does not adopt antisemitism is dismissed as weak and blind. Every opponent of antisemitism is discredited as being part of a Jewish conspiracy or in the pay of Jews. Call an antisemite antisemitic and they will insist that you are smearing them to stop them exposing Jewish power. Social media has enabled antisemitic ideology to become 'open source', allowing it to mutate faster than ever before, combining the strains of far-right antisemitism, far-left antisemitism and Islamist antisemitism into one super-resistant antisemitic ideology that is almost invulnerable to the usual social immune defences of reason and opprobrium.

There has been a dramatic growth of antisemitic themes on internet platforms. These include conspiracy theories that the Jews were behind the 9/11 terrorist attacks and are based on classical antisemitic themes that Jews are greedy, are responsible for economic crises, control banks and the media. Modern antisemitism perpetrated on extreme left-wing websites builds on classical antisemitic themes, for example by comparing Israel to the Nazis, alleging that Israel is inflicting a new Holocaust on the Palestinians and substituting words for Jews, such as “Zionists”. Holocaust denial and trivialisation — claiming the Holocaust was a Jewish invention, as depicted in the recent film, “Denial”, about the David Irving libel trial — is resurgent.

The increase in online antisemitism through the growth of social media and the frenetic pace of technological change requires a quick and well-informed response from the authorities. Antisemitism is often nuanced and camouflaged, so it is important that the authorities comprehend its complexities. It requires a response that is constantly updated and which can draw on the skills of experts in the field. Existing online technologies are rapidly changing and new technologies are continuing to emerge.

There is a frustrating lack of police follow-up in social media cases. Whereas police officers appear to typically take a statement within 48 hours, cases are not investigated as officers do not seem to have received specific training in how to investigate social media cases. For example, when a social media company

fails to supply evidence but there is a reasonable suspicion as to the identity of the individual who operates the social media account, seizing and analysing that person’s electronic devices will usually be a suitable alternative to awaiting the cooperation of the social media company, which is often not forthcoming. Additionally, antisemitism is often expressed on social media using complex coded language.

It is essential that police officers are given detailed and specific training, guidance and education to understand the problem of online antisemitism and how social media operates. They need to learn what antisemitism is, especially its most modern forms, how it manifests, and how it hides itself. It is vital to identify officers who are well equipped with a good grasp of the intricacies of antisemitism and to put them in the frontline to investigate it.

Policing is not uniform in this respect. For example, Essex Police understands the problem well and has put in proper procedures to facilitate reporting. Most other police forces, however, have been abysmal, and sadly the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) falls into that category. Many victims of antisemitism have come to CAA for assistance because they are exasperated by the lack of interest and shown by the police when they have reported severe online antisemitic harassment and hate speech.



# INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION

## INVESTIGATION OF ANTISEMITIC CRIME

There is apparent under-resourcing of hate crime investigations, with officers requiring constant chasing by victims. Combined with wider issues of indifference and avoidance, it is almost impossible for a Jewish layperson to secure a swift and effective investigation into an antisemitic crime. Even when such crimes are investigated, the investigations do not receive the necessary time and care. We have seen officers being so slow to act in the early stages of an investigation that it has effectively closed the case.

The situation is worsened by poor cooperation between the MPS and other forces. Often, when complaints are reported directly to the MPS by a victim who lives outside London, even when the suspect's address is known and supplied, the case is bounced back to the force where the victim lives.

## PROSECUTION OF ANTISEMITIC CRIME

CAA deals daily with police forces, regulators and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). It is our opinion that it is almost impossible for an unaided Jewish layperson to successfully ensure that a non-violent antisemitic crime of which they are victim is prosecuted. Indeed, even in

the cases in which we become closely involved in supporting the victim and dealing with police and CPS, we are often met with flat, unaccountable refusal to act.

This allows antisemitic incitement and low-level crime to escalate and spread as antisemites are emboldened, and as the Jewish community increasingly views reporting antisemitic hate crime as an exercise in futility. The situation has become so desperate that we have now launched judicial review proceedings against the CPS, and have begun launching our own private prosecutions.

Whilst the CPS has announced that it prosecuted 15,442 cases of hate crime in 2015, the last year for which figures are available, and the highest annual total on record, as far as we know, only twelve of those cases were prosecutions of antisemitic hate crime. We cannot know exactly because the CPS refuses to provide any breakdown of its statistics.

Britain has one of the strongest legislative frameworks in Europe for fighting hate crime and extremism but our criminal justice system is not using it effectively. Unless we act now against antisemites as forcefully as the law will permit, then antisemitism will continue to spread, antisemites will become bolder, attacks on Jews will become more common and more ferocious, the Jewish community will become more fearful and the golden era for Jews in Britain will have ended.

# FLAGS OF ANTISEMITIC TERRORISTS

CAA has ongoing problems preventing the flying of terrorist flags at antisemitic marches, rallies and protests in London. Our numerous attempts at engaging with the MPS and the CPS to stop this have been unsuccessful.

In particular, we are troubled by the flying of Hizballah flags at events such as the annual Al Quds Day march in London. Al Quds Day was established in 1979 by Ayatollah Khomeini, the Supreme Leader of Iran, to express support for the Palestinians and oppose Zionism and Israel's existence. Hizballah is a proscribed genocidal antisemitic terrorist organisation, sponsored by Iran, which calls for the annihilation of Jews worldwide and has perpetrated terrorist attacks against Jewish targets around the world for decades.

The Hizballah flag was banned at Al Quds Day marches in other European countries last year. Britain, however, ignominiously stands out for its permissive stance towards Hizballah supporters.

Section 13 of the Terrorism Act clearly states that “A person in a public place commits an offence if he (a) wears an item of clothing, or (b) wears, carries or displays an article, in such a way or in such circumstances as to arouse reasonable suspicion that he is a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation.”

British authorities, however, with flagrant disregard for the broad scope of the offence, consider that flying a Hizballah flag is acceptable because only the “military wing” of the terrorist group is proscribed under legislation. The concept of separate parts of Hezbollah is nonsense; they are inseparable and both ‘wings’ believe that Jews should be sought out wherever they are in the world and murdered.

The MPS and the CPS must adopt a policing policy of zero tolerance for those supporting genocidal antisemitic terrorists.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The MPS should adopt the International Definition of Antisemitism** and train its officers in its various elements. We applaud the Prime Minister's decision to make the British government the first in the world to formally adopt the International Definition of Antisemitism. This definition is clear and detailed, leaving no doubt as to what antisemitism is. In particular, this definition tackles the full spectrum of antisemitism, from ancient slurs to conspiracy myths to antisemitism in discourse about Israel. We worked hard over many meetings for the government to take this step and we thank the Prime Minister for her leadership and recognise the major contribution of the Committee and also of Sir Eric Pickles to this important result. The MPS should make clear that it will use the definition to determine whether an act is antisemitic, and officers should receive training in the definition, which CAA would be very pleased to assist with.

**A quick reference guide on antisemitism should be provided to all frontline officers** which links common antisemitic acts with the relevant offences. At present, only a very detailed pack on Jewish ritual is available to officers and it makes scant mention of common antisemitic acts and the relevant offences. We have developed a draft of a short, simple guide which we would be pleased to develop with the MPS.

**The MPS should set up city-wide hate crime reporting hotline** staffed by specialist officers who have received

detailed training in the International Definition of Antisemitism. It is essential that this information is properly logged and acted on. There should be a pool of investigation officers trained in the complexities of antisemitism and the linguistic coding often employed in antisemitic abuse. These officers must understand that antisemitism is a prejudice that shape-shifts and their training should be regularly updated.

**The MPS should publish even more granular statistics.** Whereas for most police forces, the release of data about antisemitic crime is irregular, the MPS, in collaboration with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, provides detailed monthly statistics, allowing trends in antisemitic crime in each borough to be tracked throughout the year. This is extremely valuable and sets the standard that other police forces should aspire to. We would suggest that such data be further split into broad categories of crime, including violence, non-violent abuse and online crime. Additionally, the MPS's online hate crime reporting forms should include "Jewish" as an ethnicity.

**The MPS should adopt a formal process by which organisations involved in hate crime can point out a flawed investigation** for review by a senior officer. We also suggest that all investigations of cases of antisemitic hate crime be subject to review by a senior officer on a weekly basis.

**The MPS should adopt a policing policy of zero tolerance policing for those flying terrorist flags** at events in London. This should include the flag of Hizballah, a single entity artificially divided in two for the purposes of proscription. Both the proscribed and non-proscribed elements of Hizballah's activity are conducted by the same organisation using the same flag, and flying that flag is an offence under the Terrorism Act. Additionally, the Mayor of London should urge the Home Secretary to proscribe Hizballah in its entirety. In the post-Brexit environment, we have seen the Mayor of London, the MPS and the CPS adopt stances of zero tolerance to hate crime, yet regular flag processions by those supporting genocidal antisemitic terrorists appears not to be of concern. Enforcement action must also be taken against the organisers of these events where terrorist flags are flown.

**The MPS should work with CAA and the Home Office to develop a state-of-the-art monitoring system for online antisemitism**, the benefits of which could be applied to the fight against other forms of hate crime. It may also be useful to draw on open source software models in the private sector as a template; they have been extremely successful and might suit this task. It is also vital that specialised experts, such as those within Campaign Against Antisemitism, are closely involved so that the parameters used by the monitoring system are constantly updated to keep up with changing trends in online hate speech. The quality of the monitoring system will be determined by the quality of its keywords and algorithms, and the frequency with which they are updated.

