

Home Affairs Committee

Oral evidence: [The Work of the Home Secretary](#),
HC 138

Wednesday 7 September 2016

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 7 September 2016.

[Watch the meeting](#)

Members present: Tim Loughton (Chair); James Berry; Mr David Burrowes; Nusrat Ghani; Mr Ranil Jayawardena; Stuart C. McDonald; Naz Shah; Mr Chuka Umunna; Mr David Winnick.

Questions 1-109

Witnesses

I: Rt. Hon. Amber Rudd MP, Home Secretary, and Mark Sedwill CMG, Permanent Secretary, Home Office.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Rt. Hon. Amber Rudd MP and Mark Sedwill CMG.

Chair: Home Secretary, welcome.

Amber Rudd: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Q1 **Chair:** First, apologies that we are in this room, where the air conditioning is not terribly good, rather than our normal room. We are looking very informal already, so gentlemen may remove jackets and ladies can do as they wish in that respect. We will try to keep as cool and collected as possible.

Anyway, welcome to your first session with us, Home Secretary. The Permanent Secretary has been in front of us many times. You will have seen that there is a small change in regime at the moment and I have been asked to act as Chairman as best I can for the next few weeks until a new permanent Chairman is elected. We know you have to be away by 5 and we certainly want to finish before then. This is a bit of a tour d'horizon of your huge responsibilities within your Department and there are various issues that colleagues want to focus on. We will try to keep it as organised as possible.

Perhaps you could just kick off with a few opening words on what your priorities are going to be—is it business as normal?—and on the strengths and weaknesses you may have picked up from your predecessor, who has obviously gone on to even greater things and is now even more your boss.

Amber Rudd: Indeed. Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I am delighted to be here today and to have the great honour of having this office to execute on behalf of the Government. I am also delighted that you have been able to take over as temporary Chair so swiftly, so that the business of the Committee can continue.

I think the priorities of the Home Secretary are always going to be about safety—about keeping the communities and the country safe and making sure that all our efforts are focused on delivering that. Straightforwardly, that means looking after police and fire and following through on the reforms there; it means looking after issues to do with counter-terrorism and extremism; and it means focusing on issues of immigration. Those are the three pillars that everything else comes through.

I have made two discoveries that I would like to share with you. One is that I am in awe of the work that our police service and our security and intelligence services do to keep us safe. We are very fortunate with the high level of expertise that they have and the excellent work they do. The second is that in terms of my priorities, apart from the key one of keeping everybody safe, I am going to try to focus on vulnerable people, building on some of the work that the former Home Secretary did, but also, I hope, making some of it my own in terms of working out how we can assist the



HOUSE OF COMMONS

people in society who are most left behind. I want to see where we can focus our efforts, and potentially funds, to assist them.

- Q2 **Chair:** Thank you. I will kick off with the child sexual abuse inquiry, which of course was set up by Theresa May as Home Secretary. Some 16 months ago we had a hearing with Lowell Goddard on her appointment. When we were looking to have her back in front of the Committee to give us a progress report, which we hadn't got round to organising, lo and behold, out of the blue, she tendered her resignation in a very short resignation letter, which had a very short acceptance by you, and with very little explanation of why she had gone and what had happened. She was then summoned before this Committee and declined to come. Instead, on Monday of this week, she furnished us with a comprehensive statement giving her side of why she had left and what, in her view, was going wrong with the inquiry. Why did she go?

Amber Rudd: The answer to that lies in the full letter that the Committee received from her. She sent a not dissimilar letter to me basically pointing out where she thought the strengths were, where she thought the flaws were and what she thought she had added. I looked at the letter that she sent to you this week—I was shown a copy of it—and my attention was drawn to some of the areas where she felt she couldn't deliver. I was particularly drawn to her comment that she felt it was a lonely existence. I think she went—I have to say that it is a matter for her, but I have the information that you have—because she found it too much and, although she could contribute to it and some good work was done in the past year, ultimately she found it too lonely, she was a long way from home and she decided to step down. That is all the information I have about why she decided to go.

- Q3 **Chair:** Was she out of her depth?

Amber Rudd: I have to say that I never met her, so I can only conclude from what she set out in the letter that she knew what she was doing. I thought the letter was pretty well informed about what the issues were, and it really showed that she cared about the issues, but she did set out in the letter that she didn't feel that she could actually deliver on it. As I say, I never met her. I have the information that you have. Clearly, as a professional, she made the judgment that she couldn't continue with it.

- Q4 **Chair:** Do you think her letter is an accurate representation of the facts?

Amber Rudd: I can only say that I think so, because I only have the information that you have. It is quite a substantial letter that she wrote to you setting out what she thought was right and what she thought wasn't right, and it seemed to me that coming through that letter was a personal decision that she couldn't continue in this enormously important role.

- Q5 **Chair:** There are very clear things within that letter that could be challenged by knowledge that is either in the public domain or certainly in the domain of the Home Office. For example, one of the reasons why she criticises the inquiry, and one of the reasons why she couldn't carry on, is because she claims it was under-resourced. Is it not the case that last



HOUSE OF COMMONS

year the inquiry refunded £2.5 million to the Home Office because it had underspent its budget?

Amber Rudd: It is correct that last year was underspent, and I think it is incorrect to suggest that the inquiry would be under-resourced because the Home Office and the now Prime Minister were always determined to ensure that there were sufficient resources available.

Q6 **Chair:** In that respect at least, her letter is factually incorrect and is a misrepresentation of the circumstances that may have led to her resignation.

Amber Rudd: The fact that there was an underspend last year does suggest that.

Q7 **Chair:** There are a number of other allegations and accusations in that letter that, when more information becomes available, may be challenged. My concern in terms of your role in all this as Home Secretary, as the Department responsible for having set it up, is, exactly what is the relationship between the Home Office and Home Secretary and the inquiry and, indeed, what is the remit of this Committee in having any oversight over that? I preface that with the caution that this is of course an independent inquiry.

Amber Rudd: Yes.

Q8 **Chair:** And part of the target of that inquiry, as we know, is institutions that include political institutions and Westminster itself, so we must be very careful not to try to compromise the independence and integrity of that committee to look at people within this building and connected with this building. However, what this Committee would like to understand more is, first, what is the relationship between the Home Secretary and the independent inquiry in terms of the fact that somebody has to have oversight of whether the inquiry is doing the job it was set up to do and is fit for purpose to do it—there have been question marks about whether it has been achieving that—and, secondly, whether it is spending the not inconsiderable amounts of public money in a suitable fashion? So what do you think your role is, without compromising the integrity of the inquiry, to make sure it is doing the job it was set up for?

Amber Rudd: Mr Chairman, you have pointed to the very difficult balance which is there, because you're right: it is an independent inquiry. It is essential that those of us in Government do not have extreme oversight over it, because it must be independent. This independent inquiry has to be able to operate without feeling that it has to defer to the Home Office or to Government at all in order to fully deliver on its independence.

The terms of reference are unchanged and were set up previously. My immediate role, when Lowell Goddard decided to resign, was to appoint a new chairman. That was the acting role that I had to take to make sure that the independent inquiry could continue, and I'm happy to comment on the new chair if we move on to that. But you asked me what particularly is my role, and I think that that was the key role. I have then looked at the terms of inquiry and inquired about what further role I have,



HOUSE OF COMMONS

and it's very little, although we have been told that we will get an interim report by 2018. I will, as far as I can, ask for reports as we go, although it's up to the inquiry whether they give them to me, just to be kept up to speed with progress.

Q9 **Chair:** So who is responsible for making sure the inquiry is doing its work properly and in a timely fashion?

Amber Rudd: We have the expert panel, the four expert panellists, of which Alexis Jay was one. We now have three, because she is going to be chairing it. So they will have the prime responsibility. I don't know whether my Permanent Secretary, if I may ask him, has any further—

Mark Sedwill: I think, Mr Chairman, it's simple. It is clear in statute and it is the chair. The chair is independent and the chair is responsible for delivering the inquiry and the terms of reference set by the Secretary of State.

Q10 **Chair:** You see the concern here is that this is a very important inquiry.

Amber Rudd: Yes.

Q11 **Chair:** The Committee realises it is an important inquiry and wants it to succeed. There is a lot riding on it. We have done interviews with survivors of the exploitation that the inquiry was set up to look into, and I personally, as you know, was one of those MPs who were lobbying for it to be set up in the first place and very much welcomed it when Theresa May did so.

But given the slowness, on the face of it, with which the inquiry appears to be conducting its work—the public hearings have not started yet—and given the fact that we have now lost a third chairman and all sorts of criticisms have come out, the public and in particular the survivors clearly need to be reassured that this is still the right committee, fit for purpose, able to do its job, and it will continue in a revised fashion or in its current fashion.

So we would just say that, without trying to compromise the job the inquiry is doing, some clear messaging needs to go out to assure everybody that this is still the right body, under the right chairman, getting on with the job that it was tasked to do and spending its money in the best interests of achieving that task.

I think we will want to interview the new chair of the inquiry as well, but there is an interesting demarcation as to what role the Home Secretary can have to give assurances without appearing to be in some way trying to influence the work.

Amber Rudd: I agree, and one of the things I did do before I appointed Alexis Jay was to discuss with her how she saw the inquiry continuing, so I could satisfy myself that she would proceed in a way that did convey that confidence.

I note that the phrase Alexis Jay used this week, in answer to some questions from people about timing and about reassuring people, was that



HOUSE OF COMMONS

she intended to make sure that the inquiry proceeds “with pace, confidence and clarity”, which I think is an encouraging description of how we hope it will proceed. I also point out that, just before I appointed her, I called the former chairman during August to let her know that this was the plan.

Mark Sedwill: Perhaps I might just add a point. Home Secretary, I think you also spoke to the survivors—

Amber Rudd: The survivors and victims panel. I did. I spoke to them; they came into my office and we had a discussion about who might be the best chair. They supported—largely—the choice of Alexis Jay.

Q12 **Chair:** Given the problems with previous false starts in the chair, for all sorts of reasons, it is very important that the survivors are part of that decision making.

Amber Rudd: Exactly. She was somebody who they knew and had already developed confidence in.

Q13 **Mr Winnick:** It would be useful, of course, if Judge Goddard, who is not in the UK, was willing to give evidence to this Committee—but that is not an issue for you, Home Secretary. Am I right that the salary and general package given to her amounted altogether to half a million a year?

Amber Rudd: That is correct.

Q14 **Mr Winnick:** And is it also correct that Judge Goddard, for whatever reason, spent 44 working days out of the UK since taking up that post? She took up the post, as we know, in April last year, so in effect it seems her absence amounted to a total of three working months. Were you aware of that?

Amber Rudd: I have been told that that is the case. I expect I have seen the same information as you, Mr Winnick; I haven’t checked it.

Q15 **Mr Winnick:** Would it be possible, before I ask you any more questions on this subject, for us to be given information—say within the next week—on how much public money has been spent on Judge Goddard’s salary, housing and the rest? Would that be possible?

Amber Rudd: Of course. I will write to you on that matter.

Q16 **Mr Winnick:** If the Chair is willing to accept that, perhaps by sometime next week?

Amber Rudd: If I may say so, I think her salary and her package are a matter of record already, but I am happy to further confirm them and write to you.

Q17 **Mr Winnick:** Well, not the package, but how much was actually spent.

Amber Rudd: How much has been spent during the time she has been here?

Mr Winnick: Yes, precisely.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Q18 **Chair:** Because there have been some suggestions that she might like to refund some of that, given the amount that was spent on not being able to see her job through. To latch on to that point, before I come back to Mr Winnick, has it been agreed what Alexis Jay will now be paid?

Amber Rudd: Not quite, but we are shortly hoping to arrive at a settlement. There is another Department that needs to be fully consulted on this matter, as I am sure you are aware, Mr Chairman.

Q19 **Chair:** The salary package for Lowell Goddard was something of a moot point in the first place, and it was some time before it was reported to us, despite several requests. So, as soon as they are available, we would be grateful to see the figures, which we assume will be substantially lower than the package agreed for Lowell Goddard.

Amber Rudd: You would be right. I will probably not have the final numbers for a few weeks—just to let you know, Mr Winnick—but I am nearly at the final stage of concluding both the final terms with Judge Goddard and the final terms with Alexis Jay, which will be substantially less.

Q20 **Mr Winnick:** Well, as soon as is possible. In a statement—not, interestingly, in the letter sent to the then Chair of the Committee—Judge Goddard said that taking the job on was incredibly difficult, as it meant leaving her family in New Zealand. I don't know whether you have seen the oral evidence that Judge Goddard gave us on 11 February last year.

Amber Rudd: I have.

Q21 **Mr Winnick:** She was asked, "So you will come and live here?" She said, "Yes." The Chair asked, "We know that your husband is also a very distinguished lawyer. Will he and your family come with you or will they remain in New Zealand?" She said, "My husband will come with me for as much of the year as he can each year that the inquiry takes. I am afraid the family will not relocate. They all have their own lives." Well, that is understandable.

Later on, the Chair said that to come "halfway round the world... you must be very committed to taking on this task, giving up so much, arriving with such huge challenges. Are you absolutely sure this is what you want to do for four years?" Judge Goddard said, "As I said earlier, I don't think 'want' is quite the most accurate word but I am prepared to undertake this."

Q22 I quote all this because it does seem to be a contradiction between the commitment that she gave, recognising that she would not be able to live in New Zealand for a period of time, and the rest, and the statement that I have already quoted.

Amber Rudd: I share your confusion on that, and I am afraid that the only person who can answer that accurately would be Judge Goddard.

Q23 **Mr Winnick:** Perhaps if Judge Goddard is reluctant you may wish to suggest to her that it would be useful if she did give evidence to us.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Amber Rudd: I would be happy to do that.

- Q24 **Mr Winnick:** Can I just ask you about the inquiry itself, because the absolute need for justice to be done to the victims of child abuse is so obvious? One of the points made by Judge Goddard, which I have some sympathy with, is the time scale. Is this an inquiry which could last for five years, 10 years, 15 years, and is it practical?

Can I just say to you, Home Secretary, that I asked a question of your predecessor in the Chamber about how long it would last? Perhaps I was wrong at the time to suggest a short period of two or three years, and your predecessor, now the Prime Minister, obviously said it would probably be longer. But how much longer? Is this the sort of inquiry that can go on endlessly?

Amber Rudd: I certainly hope not. As you rightly say, this is a very serious inquiry with a substantial remit, because it is a big issue and a major problem, and one that we all take very seriously, and needs to have proper justice done to it. I think it is something that the new chair is acutely aware of—that she does not want it to go on, as you put it, endlessly, which is why she said that she wants to proceed with pace. I think the evidence is that she is very aware of that. I don't think it is for me to suggest a time frame for it, but I have certainly conveyed to her that we hope that it can be done with, as she put it, pace, confidence and clarity.

- Q25 **Mr Winnick:** My last question: are you fully committed, as your predecessor was, that justice should be done—that the victims should have every opportunity of putting their case, albeit with, in my view, a time scale; that the promise and the pledge that was given, supported by the whole House of Commons, should be carried out?

Amber Rudd: I am completely committed to ensuring that we do that.

- Q26 **Mr Umunna:** Congratulations on your appointment, Home Secretary. My interest in this comes from the fact that I am a Member of Parliament for Lambeth, and Lambeth is one of the 13 investigations that forms part of the overall independent inquiry.

Some of the representatives of the primary survivors group, the Shirley Oaks Survivors Association, are sitting to your left. I have two queries: one is in relation to time frame. In her memo, Judge Goddard appears to suggest that there needs to be a narrowing in the scope of the inquiry, so that it tends to focus more on the present and the future, as opposed to incidents that happened in the past. I have to say, Home Secretary, that that would not be acceptable to my constituents who are still living with the gross, awful injustice of what happened to them and still have not had redress.

What is your view on what the focus should be? Do you agree with Judge Goddard that there needs to be a move away from looking at events that happened in the past to more future orientation?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Amber Rudd: I do not, no. I think that the terms of reference that were set up originally were the right ones; that we must be frank and look at the historic elements of these abuses. There are survivors and victims who are older than me who want to see that justice is done, and they should be able to see that that is ensured.

The fact is that understanding what happened, however long ago it is, is important to getting right what we think is going to help, now and in the future, so there is no plan to change that. I have discussed it with other people. Judge Goddard did raise this, and other people—some Members of Parliament—have raised it with me; but I share your view that it is very important to leave it as it is, to ensure that we use the past to learn for the present and the future.

Q27 **Mr Umunna:** That will be of great comfort to them. My second question is this. It seems—please correct me if I am wrong; your Permanent Secretary might want to step in—that the overwhelming majority of personnel who have been assigned to the inquiry are actually Home Office officials of some type or form.

Given that part of the concern is, as revelations tend to suggest, that there was an establishment stitch-up on an industrial scale in this case, would it not make more sense to have personnel drawn from a greater variety of organisations?

The Home Office itself and its role—I know, for example, that it approved certain things that happened at children’s homes in Lambeth in the past—is going to be the subject of this inquiry, so there is a bit of a danger of the appearance of a conflict of interest if you have an inquiry staff dominated by Home Office officials. I mean no disrespect to any particular individual, but I make a general point.

Amber Rudd: It is a fair point. The only thing I would say is that the chair can appoint who they want. One of the things that Judge Goddard pointed out in her letter to this Committee was that she did not have enough independence to do that. In fact, that is not correct. The chair, apart from appointing the expert panel, which is in place, can appoint who they want, so I would urge you to consider putting that to the chair if you think it is of such importance. I would not want to interfere, obviously, but it is up to the chair to draw those staff from where they want.

Mr Umunna: Thank you.

Q28 **Mr Burrowes:** On the hiring of staff, Justice Goddard says in her submission to the Committee that she was “handicapped” by not being able to hire the sort of staff needed to run a major inquiry—this is why it is particularly relevant to seek your assurance and response—because the Home Office required civil service appointments to be prioritised. Is that true?

Amber Rudd: I was very surprised to see that statement, because the chair has the authority to appoint who they want, apart from the expert panel. We will see how the new chair decides to execute that independence, but it would be quite wrong for us to limit the amount, the

type of the people or the sources of where they want to recruit the expertise from.

- Q29 **Mr Burrowes:** Perhaps you could confirm whether it was the case during Justice Goddard's chairmanship that the Home Office were handicapping her in appointments.

Mark Sedwill: Absolutely not. We were very clear. As you know, I went through this entire process, and we were very clear to pick up the point that the acting Chair made earlier, that not only the actuality but the clear public confidence in the independence of the inquiry was crucial following some of the false starts and allegations about the establishment, Government, Parliament and so on in the past. As the Home Secretary said, as Secretary of State, she appoints the chair and the panel. The chair then appoints the statutory offices, the secretary to the inquiry, counsel to the inquiry and the solicitor to the inquiry. Those are statutory appointments set out in the Act. Then you have all the staff to the inquiry as well.

Usually, in most inquiries, the secretary takes that burden on from the chair but will do it under the chair's authority, and subject to the usual public appointments rules—that is just standard rules about propriety, openness, transparency, fair competition and so on in appointing people—it is the responsibility of the inquiry to do so. They can draw them from wherever they wish. Of course, there are people in the Home Office who care deeply about this issue and who have expertise in it, so it is natural that people from the Home Office volunteer to go and help out with this inquiry, but in the end the appointments were made by the inquiry themselves.

- Q30 **Mr Burrowes:** Finally, to nail the concerns expressed by Justice Goddard, you would say there is no "inherent problem" in the sheer scale and size of the inquiry—those are the words of Justice Goddard. She considers there is an inherent problem, but as far as you are concerned, there is not.

Amber Rudd: No, I don't believe there is. I say that not with any expertise in an inquiry of this size, but because the person who does have the expertise and is going to be chairing it has taken that view, and that is Alexis Jay.

- Q31 **Mr Burrowes:** And therefore there is no need for any review or recalibration.

Amber Rudd: Of the terms? No.

- Q32 **James Berry:** Welcome, Home Secretary, and congratulations. Welcome back, Mr Sedwill. I want to pick up on something that the Chair covered at the outset. Having been involved as a lawyer in part 1 of the Leveson inquiry, I want to confirm that I am right about this: in terms of the public inquiry, the sponsoring Department is responsible for calling the inquiry, setting the terms of reference, appointing the chair and for the budget. All other matters are for the chair of the inquiry and if there are



HOUSE OF COMMONS

any complaints about how the inquiry were being run—and in terms of our standing as a Committee—those complaints would not go to the Home Secretary. The way those complaints should be made are by an interested party to the inquiry making a complaint to the chair or by someone else with standing, or who thinks they have standing, making a claim for a judicial review. That is how a challenge would be made.

Amber Rudd: That is exactly right. The other part that the previous Home Secretary was involved in appointing was the expert panel. But it is as you say. It is a complete unit in how it is set up.

- Q33 **Chair:** Home Secretary, it sounds as though there is a good deal of variance in terms of fact and interpretation of what was wrong or not wrong with the inquiry—between what you have heard here and the evidence you have given and what Lowell Goddard stated in her submission. That makes it even more important to impress upon her that she might want to give us oral evidence. If she is now back in New Zealand, I am sure we could fix up a video conference link to facilitate that so, in your continued discussions with her severance terms, we would be grateful if you might impress that upon her.

Amber Rudd: I will certainly do that.

Chair: Can we move now to the usual suspect of Brexit? Mr Jayawardena will kick off on that one.

- Q34 **Mr Jayawardena:** Home Secretary, congratulations on your new role. In respect of the UK's exit from the European Union, could we first look at security? The director of Europol previously said that if the United Kingdom left the EU, we would no longer be able to share our intelligence with Europol. But this Committee visited Europol and we were told that, actually, many countries that are not part of the EU already do so. What is your view, and what is the Home Office doing, in preparation for Britain's exit?

Amber Rudd: Thank you. During the past few weeks, one task I have had is to speak to my opposite numbers in various European countries. The area they have been most keen to talk to me about is security. Europe has had a difficult summer with some dreadful incidents in France and Germany, and I have learned that we are considered the leading European country in addressing and stopping terrorism. The European counterparts are very keen—and we share this view—that we continue to have an active role in keeping the UK and Europe safe.

Specifically, you asked about Europol. I do believe that Europol has played an important role in keeping us safe and we will be having discussions about how to continue some form of involvement within the agencies of the EU that help to keep us safe. It is too early to say what form that will take but I can say that there is a strong desire from the Government and from other European countries to ensure that we find a way of working together so that they can have the benefit of our expertise and we can have the benefit of shared intelligence.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Q35 Mr Jayawardena: I share entirely the sentiment that you outlined. We should work together in our common interest. The Permanent Secretary told us in July that we are almost the biggest contributor of intel to Europol. So this Government's position is that we want to continue that position and share intelligence with our friends, whether or not we are in the European Union.

Amber Rudd: I can't be drawn quite yet on how that would work and what role we would have within Europol but I can say that we want to have an arrangement within other agencies like Europol—like, perhaps, the European arrest warrant—where we can get the same benefit.

Q36 Mr Jayawardena: There are already various other European data and intelligence sharing mechanisms such as the Schengen information system. Although we are not part of Schengen, we operate the ability to exchange information in that way. Those systems should, I am sure, be able to be used by us in the future. Do you have any comment about some of the other examples, such as Prüm, which we have opted into? Do you have any other comments to make on other intelligence sharing systems?

Amber Rudd: What you have drawn attention to is the fact that there are a number of European intelligence systems that are very effective for keeping us safe. The Schengen information system is certainly one of them. As part of leaving the European Union, we will want to find a way of giving the UK the benefits of being able to access as many of those systems as possible. It is my understanding, from my early conversations with other Interior Ministers, that they will want our participation as well because, as you rightly say, we are, for instance, one of the biggest contributors of information to Europol. I think there is a common interest in making this work. How that will actually work we don't know yet, but the good intention is there.

Q37 Mr Jayawardena: Lastly on security, one other related area is Five Eyes, which of course remains very important to the United Kingdom. Will you outline how we are strengthening relationships through Five Eyes?

Amber Rudd: We hope that our relationship with Five Eyes will continue to be a strong one and an effective one for delivering us the information and the shared intelligence services that we get from it. Leaving the European Union will just probably reinforce the fact that it is an essential part of our overall international intelligence.

Q38 Chair: Can I come in on that? Why would Brexit weaken the Five Eyes arrangement as it stands now?

Amber Rudd: I don't think it necessarily will, but I am just sharing with the Committee the fact that those arrangements have not been put in place yet. It is our intention to make sure that it continues, possibly stronger not weaker, but we need to have those discussions with our partners.

Q39 Chair: What possible benefit to our EU partners is there from that Five Eyes relationship not remaining at least as strong as it is now?



Amber Rudd: I cannot see any, but because the terms of our relationship with the European Union are changing, I don't want to say something that may or may not take place. I share your view that they share the same interests we do in making sure that their countries are kept safe by sharing intelligence.

- Q40 **Mr Jayawardena:** Turning to migration or immigration, the Prime Minister rejected the Australian-style points system as a vehicle to control immigration into the United Kingdom at the G20. Given that that was a key component of the Brexit campaign, that many people understood it to be the mechanism under which we could regain control of our borders and that the public are, I believe, rightly concerned about immigration—you may wish to comment on that—how do you propose controlling migration and immigration if a points-based system is not the way forward?

Amber Rudd: I think what the Prime Minister drew attention to was that the points-based system has not been a successful system for limiting migration into a country. In Australia, it was introduced in order to have a more selective approach to migration, but to have greater numbers. In the UK Government's experience of having a points-based system, which was originally the non-EU system, it did not control numbers in the way that was expected. What we had instead were people gaming the system. It gave a clear route for people wanting to avoid the regulations that we had set out, and it was not effective at controlling or limiting migration. Although the Prime Minister is committed, as I am, to making sure that we reduce migration and that the public get what they have voted for, which is more control over their borders with European countries, the points-based system is not going to be the way to deliver it. We need to find a different way.

- Q41 **Mr Jayawardena:** Two questions. First, the points-based system could well be used, as in Australia, to increase migration in certain areas, but it could also be used to control migration if the bar were set high enough. Perhaps that is a failing of points-based systems in the past here and not a reason to rule it out. I would welcome your comment on that. Secondly, if it is not a points-based system, how do you propose that migration is controlled going forward?

Amber Rudd: I would not want to mislead you. The fact is that the points-based system has been ruled out by the Prime Minister in her statement, as you rightly quoted, because of the evidence that it has been ineffective in achieving what it sought to achieve originally for the UK in the non-EU standards and was used in Australia for a different purpose.

In terms of how we are going to look at limiting migration from Europe going forward, the Home Office is looking at the various alternatives. I cannot reveal anything more than that at the moment because we want to make sure we explore all the different options and that the Prime Minister is armed with all the information she needs, although it is fair to say that she has a fairly substantial expertise in this area. Then she will be able to proceed with the negotiations with the European Union, but I want to be



HOUSE OF COMMONS

absolutely clear that leaving the European Union will mean having control over our borders in a way that we haven't to date when engaged with the European Union.

Q42 Mr Jayawardena: So are we still going for the tens of thousands?

Amber Rudd: We are still going to be looking to achieve tens of thousands, but it may take some time.

Q43 Mr Jayawardena: Lastly, in terms of EU nationals already here, while it remains a matter of discussion between the United Kingdom Government and the European Union, I am sure our Government's aspiration is to make sure EU and EEA nationals already here and perhaps contributing to the economy—certainly contributing to our society—have the ability to continue to reside here going forward, subject to the agreement at a future date. Can you confirm that?

Amber Rudd: That is correct. We hope to have that arrangement. It must be reciprocal so that we always put the interests of UK citizens first.

Q44 Mr Umunna: I have two follow-up questions. First, we will have to make a decision about our involvement with Europol before we exit the European Union. EU regulation 2016/794 on Europol will come into force in May 2017 and we will have to opt in to remain a full member of Europol. We are deeply involved with it and Britain heads it. Will we opt in to remain a member in the interim between that regulation coming into force and us leaving?

Amber Rudd: It is too early for me to confirm that, but I share your view that Europol is an essential tool for keeping people safe and for sharing intelligence.

Q45 Mr Umunna: Okay. My second question is to ask you about the wall in Calais that your Immigration Minister was talking to us about yesterday and which has been announced. If I may say so, it has a whiff of the Donald Trump about it. Lorry drivers and hauliers are saying they don't think it will make any difference. There is already barbed wire and a fence. They are saying the real issue is lack of policing in and around that area. What difference do you think the wall will make and don't you think resources would be better directed to the policing issue the hauliers have raised?

Amber Rudd: Two points, if I may. First, the wall was discussed back in the Amiens agreement in March 2015 and in the summer in meetings between the Prime Minister and President Hollande. It is not a new initiative. It is about making sure the French have the right amount of security to prevent illegals from trying to get to the UK. We support the French with money to help them do that because it is in our interest. It is up to them how they decide to secure their borders in and around Calais. We support them; it is up to them to decide where they will build a wall, a fence or whatever they want.

Q46 Mr Umunna: So they were inspired by Donald Trump and not the British Government?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Amber Rudd: I couldn't possibly comment on that.

Mr Umunna: Thank you.

- Q47 **Chair:** A couple of people will be coming to talk about Calais and migration. On Brexit generally, do you think the Home Office was wrong not to make any contingency arrangements for the possibility of a Brexit vote in June?

Amber Rudd: Mr Chairman, I recall that the Government were very clear that they would campaign to stay in the European Union and decided not to make contingency plans.

On the timing, the Prime Minister has said she won't be invoking article 50 until next year. We have time in the Home Office to prepare different alternatives and to look at what will work best so that she can prepare herself for the negotiations within the European Union.

- Q48 **Chair:** But isn't it normal practice when there is a major question that fundamentally affects constitutional issues and others in this country—one can reference the Scottish independence vote—that a responsible Government and Departments of that Government will make contingency arrangements in case the result goes the opposite way from that which the Government were recommending, let alone expecting? Not a single Department of Government, other than the Second Church Estates Commissioner, who assesses the viability of its investment portfolio, made any contingency arrangements for the possibility of what actually happened. Is that not irresponsible?

Amber Rudd: Well, I would look at the outcomes. The fact is that having voted to leave, we now know what we are doing in preparing a suite of options the Prime Minister may want to have from the Home Office. Not making the preparations you refer to hasn't inhibited us because we have the time and this will take some time. It hasn't stopped us from being able to do an effective job in arming the Prime Minister with the information she will need in future negotiations.

Chair: We come to Mr McDonald, and then we will have some questions on Calais.

- Q49 **Stuart C. McDonald:** Welcome back, Mr Sedwill, and a very warm welcome to you, Home Secretary. To start on a positive note, may I say that I thought you got off to a great start when you appeared to bin the net migration target, with the apparent support of the Foreign Secretary as well? Has the Prime Minister put her foot down? If so, is that why you seem to be going back to sticking up for the net migration target now?

Amber Rudd: I would draw your attention to the additional phrase, "It will take some time". I would point out that and I would also point out that it is a net figure. Some people question why we have a net figure, but it just draws attention to the fact that when we look at which contingency within the migration figures would like to come here and do us some good—you know, we want to have a migration policy that benefits the UK—there are people who leave. So we can flex it to make sure that we



HOUSE OF COMMONS

have more of certain types of migration inward to the UK that are to our benefit, as long as there are some people who are choosing, for instance, to study abroad.

- Q50 **Stuart C. McDonald:** Sure. So let's take both of those points. First of all, "some time"—are you saying that it's probably not going to happen by 2020 now, which is not what has been said up until now?

Amber Rudd: I don't think I can be drawn any further on what I've already said.

- Q51 **Stuart C. McDonald:** "It may take some time." You make a valid point as well, because in itself net migration of tens of thousands is fairly meaningless when it comes to sustainability. Hypothetically you could have 900,000 people emigrating abroad from Wales in one year and a million people all moving to Essex from abroad, and that would give you your net migration target, but it would be clearly unsustainable. Altogether, we need to be much more subtle about what we're trying to achieve in terms of migration. Isn't that just another reason to move the focus away from this target all together?

Amber Rudd: It's a good point. The fact is that migration takes so many different forms in terms of what works for the UK, for instance, perhaps in terms of certain types of students, or in terms of people coming here to work who add to our economy. But when you look at what it is that people voted for on 23 June, I believe that what has concerned them is the additional pressure on public services.

If you think about the additional pressure on public services that is brought by having high levels of migration, then it is right that we look at a net figure, because when people talk about their concerns about migration they talk about the schools and hospitals. So making sure that we don't put too much pressure on public services is going to be essential for getting the figure to a sustainable level.

- Q52 **Stuart C. McDonald:** You have talked about different types of migration, but is there not then also a case to talk about different parts of the United Kingdom? There are clearly different pressures in different parts of the United Kingdom? During the EU referendum, one of the key proponents of UK exit said that if Brexit were to win, there would be the possibility of, say, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and perhaps regions of England having a greater degree of flexibility.

I will give one example. The £18,000 threshold for spouse visas from outside the EU excludes over half the population of Northern Ireland from bringing a spouse in. It's a level that is completely unsuitable for Northern Ireland. Is there scope now, as suggested by the Brexiteers, for greater flexibility for different parts of the United Kingdom?

Amber Rudd: I have to say that I have not looked into that; I hadn't heard that particular proposal. I do think it's right that we have a policy that covers the whole of the Union.

- Q53 **Stuart C. McDonald:** The other fundamental issue about immigration and



HOUSE OF COMMONS

the EU is this: what priority do you give access to the single market in comparison with your determination to restrict free movement? If the price of access to the single market is staying part of the free movement agreement, what do you prioritise?

Amber Rudd: I appreciate your desire to have me rule things in or out and to show more clarity on these important subjects, but I don't think it's in the best interests of this country to start a running commentary on any desire that we have for certain things more than other things. As the Prime Minister has said, she wants to be able to negotiate with the best interests of this country coming first, and therefore we're not going to provide any more comments on our intentions and what we value—one over the other—so that we can get the best deal for the United Kingdom when we have those renegotiations.

Q54 **Stuart C. McDonald:** Okay. Moving on to the issue of the migration crisis, Mr Umunna has already referred to the new wall at Calais. It is a sort of groundhog day, because we had Mr Brokenshire appear here in July of last year and he talked about the new fence, and how everything would be under control by the end of that summer. Ultimately, you could build a fence or a wall all the way from Calais to Greece, but you're just moving the problem around.

Mr Umunna suggested spending some of that money on policing. Another suggestion would be spending some of that money on improving security and safety in the camps there. There are food shortages now in the Calais camp, by all accounts. Most fundamentally, recent research, which was published a couple of days ago, shows that half the people in that camp, at least, have no idea about their legal rights to claim asylum in France. What amount of money has been spent on improving safety in the camps and knowledge of people's legal rights?

Amber Rudd: Mr McDonald, I met last week with my French counterpart, Bernard Cazeneuve, and we discussed at some length the situation in the camps, and shared our view that they are dangerous, difficult places for anybody to be. He added that he wanted to make sure that the camps were cleared in a phased way by the end of this year.

Q55 **Stuart C. McDonald:** That has to be done in an incredibly planned manner, because there have been two different attempts at camp clearances in France recently, and there has been a stark contrast: in Dunkirk you had a very carefully managed process, where people were moved from a sort of Jungle-type situation into a new camp managed by Médecins Sans Frontières. In contrast, in Calais, they just had the place bulldozed. A couple of hundred children went missing in the process. Can you seek assurances that it is going to be the former type of move, rather than the latter?

Amber Rudd: It is not really for me to seek assurances from a French Minister on French territory. We have worked with the French in order to assist them to manage the camp, and we have assisted, largely with funds, in order to make sure that the juxtaposed border is robust and stays in place; but it is their decision, given that it is French territory, to



HOUSE OF COMMONS

decide how to proceed. One thing that I would agree with you on, though, is that everybody at that camp has the right to apply for asylum in France, and I just want to always repeat that when people say "What are you doing about the camp?" People can apply for asylum in France, where they are.

Mark Sedwill: May I just add a point, Home Secretary? It goes to one of the earlier points you were making, Mr McDonald. You are absolutely right that this needs to be a multi-layered approach, as well as the focus on Calais itself. The UK has therefore got Border Force officers in Greece, helping them deal with the flows into the islands. Of course, through the DFID programme we are either the biggest or the second largest contributor to dealing with refugees in the region. It is worth keeping in mind that of course it is only a tiny fraction of the 4 million refugees outside Syria and the 8 million refugees within Syria who make it to Calais. So the UK's approach does seek to address the problem at every level. That was a point I thought you might want to register.

- Q56 **Stuart C. McDonald:** Sure, absolutely; and we should look at the different ways the UK can try and stop the problem in Calais arising. First of all, as you mentioned Greece, am I right in thinking that there are something like 75 UK staff currently based in Greece, assisting with the implementation of the EU-Turkey agreement?

Amber Rudd: Correct.

- Q57 **Stuart C. McDonald:** In contrast, there are only two UK staff who are based with the European Asylum Support Office helping with Dublin transfers. That Dublin process would be absolutely pivotal in making sure people could access family in the United Kingdom without having to pass through Calais. Why only two?

Amber Rudd: I met with our staff while I was in Paris seeing the Interior Minister. They have told me about the work they do. As was pointed out, for instance, by Mr Burrowes in House questions earlier in the week, there are children who are waiting for transfer. We know who they are. There are 30 who have been approved under the Dublin regulation. We only have half of them here so far. We hope the other half will come in September—during this month. The key thing is not the identification of the children but actually working sufficiently swiftly with the French—French law, EU law, French territory; it is the French who then supervise the transfer. We are proceeding as fast as we can. Those conversations with the French are critical to actually removing the children.

- Q58 **Stuart C. McDonald:** The point is that we don't want them to end up in the camps in Calais in the first place. If processes work properly in Greece they can be identified as having family members in the United Kingdom and a safe transfer can be arranged without having to go through that hell.

Amber Rudd: That is why we have seconded people to Greece.

- Q59 **Stuart C. McDonald:** But there are only two on Dublin transfers



HOUSE OF COMMONS

compared to 75 focusing on—

Amber Rudd: I see your point. We think that there are plenty of children who will qualify in Greece. Having two people there, we believe, will be sufficient to identify the right children and then to begin the process of repatriating them; but rest assured, you raised it with me—I will take a look.

Mark Sedwill: I will put an important additional point, if I may. Mr McDonald, it is just worth keeping in mind that the Syrian vulnerable persons scheme, which of course reaches beyond Greece into the camps where the UNHCR identifies people, including children, whom they think are appropriate to come to the UK, has been under way for just over a year. Of course, we particularly want to stop the most vulnerable making the journey to Greece, and then into Europe, in the first place because of the risk that they fall into the hands of traffickers, smugglers and so on. That is what that scheme is fundamentally designed to do.

Q60 **Stuart C. McDonald:** That scheme is very welcome. Another way you can avoid them having to make that trip in the first place is family reunion, and my last couple of questions are on that. Do you accept that family reunion has a similar role to play to the scheme that Mr Sedwill has just mentioned in allowing people with family in the United Kingdom to avoid having to make the trip? It is maybe four or five years since the family reunion rules that we have now were fundamentally reconsidered, and a lot of organisations are now saying that the rules are so restrictive that it means that, say, 21-year-olds who were previously part of a family unit in Syria do not qualify for family reunion. The ones with family here are the ones who are most likely to try to get to the United Kingdom. Can't we have a more fundamental rethink of the family reunion rules to make sure that they are appropriate for current exceptional circumstances?

Amber Rudd: Mr McDonald, I am not familiar enough with the details of how they have moved over the past few years. Can I write to you with how they are at the moment? In doing so, I will take a look at whether they need reviewing.

Q61 **Stuart C. McDonald:** The other day you announced £10 million in funding for ESOL classes for people resettled under the Syrian resettlement scheme. Why is it restricted only to Syrians under that scheme? Why not a broader attempt at integration?

Amber Rudd: Because this is a particular scheme where we are asking communities, who are being guided by their local councils, to welcome families. Half of these people coming over under the scheme are children, and it is so important that this group, who are going to come from the most difficult circumstances and who are sent to us by the UNHCR, are well integrated into the community in which they arrive. It is because of that that we decided they needed a bespoke fund to ensure that the adults are well looked after.

Q62 **Stuart C. McDonald:** But will you look at expanding it to other refugees as well if it is seen to be a success?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Amber Rudd: Other refugees have different routes to try to learn English—obviously the children tend to go to school—and we think it is important that people mostly contribute to their own learning of the language in order to integrate here. It is just that we thought this scheme particularly needed the additional language support, because we are asking local authorities to step forward. Within those local authorities we have community groups, churches and mosques stepping forward to say how they want to participate and help. We felt that in order to support that particular group, which we need to be a success, they need this extra support.

- Q63 **Chair:** Whilst you have been talking, you have issued a press release saying that 100 Syrians under the scheme have arrived at Stansted airport today, which is the first anniversary of the scheme's launch.

Amber Rudd: Excellent.

Chair: I believe that some of them are coming to my constituency.

- Q64 **Mr Burrowes:** I just want to follow up on the last point about the £10 million commitment to English classes, which is very welcome. The Immigration Minister said yesterday that he would look at the issue. I understand from the previous Immigration Minister that a review was being looked at to seek to harmonise the basic issue, which is that the Syrian refugees are coming from the same area of conflict but have come through the asylum system in either an irregular way or a regular way. We must look at them in a consistent way, obviously subject to resources. Will you undertake still to look at that carefully to see whether there is a need to harmonise our support?

Amber Rudd: Certainly. If the Minister has already said that he will take a look at it, I will be interested to see what he finds.

- Q65 **Mr Burrowes:** Back to the Calais issue. Recognising that it is such a small part of a global concern, it is nevertheless one that is close to our doorstep. Can I focus particularly on where we have a legal responsibility? First, in relation to the Immigration Act and the Dubs amendment on children at risk, can you confirm how many in the Calais area we have screened who come within that category? It is now several months since that legal commitment. Given the prospect of the Calais Jungle being dismantled and the wall going up, by the end of the year will we be in a position to be able to fulfil our legal commitments to those children in Calais in relation to that particular Immigration Act commitment?

Amber Rudd: One of the things I discussed with Bernard Cazeneuve last week was how we make sure that we can speed up the process, and how we can make sure that, when he does try to phase out the camp, we do take the children who, as you rightly say, we have a legal obligation to take. That is an ongoing piece of work. We recognise our obligation and will do our best to ensure that we deliver on the fact that we want those children who have a family representative here to be brought here.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

I am not running away from our obligations at all, but I ask you to appreciate that we always have to go through the French. We have no way of going directly to the children who are in Calais. We have to make sure that it is they who begin the process. We will work with them, and they are now working helpfully with us—we do it partly through working with their organisations, but partly through seconding our people to their organisations—but we have to work at their pace.

- Q66 **Mr Burrowes:** I was there at the last dismantling as it was happening. It was chaotic, and children were traumatised. It was not the appropriate way to do a phased removal of a camp. Doesn't there need to be some assurance? We have not only our legal obligations to what we can call the Dubs children, but our Dublin legal commitments, and there are also those children who are in the application process—there are 170 or so who claim a link to the United Kingdom. Surely it would also be in France's interest that every effort is made to clear up our legal responsibilities to those children in Calais. It is obviously very different for those who have been drawn into the camp for different reasons.

Amber Rudd: We will do our best to do that.

- Q67 **Chair:** Before we move on, you are aware, Home Secretary, that your new Immigration Minister came before us yesterday. There was a particularly interesting line of questioning—I thought Mr Umunna would repeat it today—which effectively showed that we have no idea how many European nationals are currently resident in the UK. That is the case, isn't it?

Amber Rudd: According to the ONS it is 3.2 million.

- Q68 **Chair:** Based on what evidence?

Amber Rudd: The ONS do a statistical review, and they tell us it is 3.2 million.

- Q69 **Chair:** And what is that evidence based on? How do they assess it is 3.2 million?

Amber Rudd: Well, I suppose it depends on—do you know the answer to that, Permanent Secretary?

Mark Sedwill: It is essentially population surveys. It is done on the same basis on which they produce a whole series of other data. They do a passenger survey at the border, they do population surveys internally and they analyse other data. So it is survey data and statistical analysis, as the Home Secretary says, but it wouldn't be right to say that that means there is no idea; it is a statistical figure in which they are confident.

- Q70 **Chair:** Well, it is a sample survey.

Mark Sedwill: But this is the independent Office for National Statistics. It is a statistic that they produce and verify.

- Q71 **Chair:** Understood, but a wide range of figures have been given for exactly how many European nationals are in this country. Given that the



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Government's immigration target remains based on a net migration figure, we should be just as interested in those people coming into the country from the EU as we are in those who are actually in this country and staying in this country for whatever period of time, for whom we have no way of getting empirical evidence on how many are here.

If the Prime Minister is going to be using the intelligence of those figures in her negotiations as to what form of migration policy we will have with the EU in future, we are lacking the detail of exactly how many people, and from which EU nations, that involves. Given the fact that that is such an important figure to the Home Office because you base it on net migration figures, we are surprised that the Home Office does not have some other, more accurate way of assessing, among those EU nationals, exactly who is here and on what basis. Do you think you should be doing a better and more sophisticated job of finding out exactly how many EU nationals are here and how many are therefore more likely to add to the net exit figures if the future arrangement with the EU does not suit their purposes?

Amber Rudd: I should point out that we have now put in exit controls, so we know who is leaving. Secondly, we do have the figures for nationalities who are working here, because those are collected when they register to work. Thirdly, when you consider the significance of this, it is, of course, a reciprocal arrangement. There is also a wide range of figures for how many UK citizens are living in the rest of the European Union.

Q72 **Chair:** What do you think that figure is?

Amber Rudd: I haven't looked at this since I have become Home Secretary, but I had a certain interest in the referendum campaign, and I have seen figures between 1.5 million and 2 million. Because of the nature of the freedom of movement, there is not as much accurate information as we will surely have in future, once we set up a system for monitoring it much more carefully.

Q73 **Chair:** Your Minister yesterday gave us a figure of 1.2 million, so that is outside the parameters of the range you have just given as well. Do you not think that some more work needs to be done with this, to get some greater intelligence at least on those whom we can try to count in some form, if they are within our borders?

Amber Rudd: I certainly think that as part of our planning for leaving the European Union, we will need to be clearer about how many we think are here and how many are in the rest of Europe as well.

Q74 **Chair:** And that is the primary responsibility of the Home Office, isn't it?

Amber Rudd: Yes, it is.

Q75 **Chair:** So that is work you will be looking to commission.

Amber Rudd: We will be looking at what we have got, to see how much evidence there is existing, and at what we will need as we proceed with leaving the European Union.



Mark Sedwill: May I add one point? There is a stock and flow question here, Chair. The ONS survey gives the number of people—the number that the Home Secretary quoted of 3.2 million—it believes to be EU citizens resident here in the UK. We have data, as the Home Secretary says, now complemented with exit checks, about the flow—the entry and exit flows—across our borders, which are more accurate. We are bringing that data together, so that in the long term we can track individuals as well as overall numbers. So we are already building the systems to monitor the flows much more accurately, to know whether the totals are going up or down—of course the net migration figure is a flow figure—but as the Home Secretary says, we will obviously need to understand the total numbers here and overseas as best we can. We do not have a population registration scheme, we never have in this country, and therefore we are reliant on statistical methods to assess these numbers.

Chair: I think Mr Umunna has suddenly realised that he wants to further a line of questioning.

- Q76 **Mr Umunna:** I couldn't resist. The fact is, isn't it, Permanent Secretary, you are flying blind here? You are flying blind because not everyone who is here, or if you want to be more specific, who has the right to be here—anyone who has been here for more than five years—has national insurance numbers. Equally, you do not know how many people on the national insurance system have left. So really you are flying completely blind. The point that I was making—this is for the Home Secretary, if that counts as a first question—is that this is why it is a completely empty threat to be somehow pretending that we are not in the end going to have to guarantee the right of those who worked in the UK at the time of the referendum the ability to stay here, because if you wanted to eject them from the United Kingdom, you do not know who they are and you have no way of identifying them in order to be able to eject them. So why carry on this pretence, which is causing untold worry for British citizens who have parents, partners and other family who are EU citizens? Why not relieve them of that worry, forget this pretence and move on to the serious stuff in the negotiation, instead of this fictional business?

Amber Rudd: I do not see it as fictional business, and that is because we have a similar situation with UK residents in other European countries. They may well have committees like this, where members like you are saying—

Mr Umunna: And no doubt they are telling them, "Stop this ridiculous pretence."

Amber Rudd: So the obvious thing to do is to arrive at a conclusion where we both guarantee each other's. Until we get to that stage, it would be a mistake for us to step forward unilaterally.

- Q77 **Chair:** We heard yesterday from Mr Goodwill that he does not have a counterpart in France. There is no Immigration Minister in France—is that the case?

Amber Rudd: That is the French political system. They have one Minister, and then they have a political civil service underneath them—interesting approach.

Chair: Right. We are going to leave Brexit for the moment, you will be relieved to hear, and go on to counter-terrorism, extremism and related subjects.

Q78 **Nusrat Ghani:** I welcome you to your new role, Home Secretary. We will be seeing you many times over the next couple of years.

I am referring mostly to the Committee's report, "Radicalisation: the counter-narrative and identifying the tipping point". We took a lot of evidence over the past year on how and when young people become radicalised. One of the themes that came through was of being radicalised online. The Committee came to the conclusion that social media companies are consciously failing to combat the use of their sites to promote terrorism and killings. What more can be done to convince companies that network, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, not only to take down content frequently and regularly, but to report content to the police?

Amber Rudd: Thank you. I am grateful for the Committee's report. I have seen it, and it has raised some important points. I do think more can be done, and we are in discussions with industry to see what more they are prepared to do. What we would like to see is a form of industry standards board that they could put together, in order to have an agreement to have oversight and to take action much more quickly on sites that do such damage to people in terms of making them into terrorists or communicating terrorist information. We are cognisant of what the Committee has drawn attention to. We are working with industry to see if they will set up an industry standards board, which is what we have for children. On child sexual exploitation, there is already such a board. I would like to see the same thing in this area.

We are also looking internationally. Minister Baroness Shields is in discussions with US counterparts to see what we can do on a global level to get international service providers to agree an international standard. There is more we can do with them. I think they need to take responsibility more, because the speed at which these damaging YouTube videos, for instance, get put up—at the moment, my Department takes down through RICU about 1,000 of these sites a week, which is too slow compared with the speed at which they get communicated. So we are working with industry to persuade them to take more action themselves.

Q79 **Nusrat Ghani:** What was interesting to hear from these companies—Twitter, Facebook and YouTube—was that they were very good at collecting data on who is using the sites for promotion, but somehow they were not that good at or tended to have not enough staff to take down content that was radicalising people. They wanted to be told this content was online, instead of them being responsible for it. I felt personally that they were prepared to use their brand as a social media site where



HOUSE OF COMMONS

people can go on and chat, but they were not prepared to have their brand tinged with the fact that people are using the sites to radicalise others. Is there any way we can calculate or get them to tell us how many sites they are taking down? We could then publish those and make them far more responsible for the content that is available on their platforms.

Amber Rudd: It is a very good point. I certainly share the direction in which you are going, which is that they need to take more action themselves and take more responsibility for the damage being done, rather than just focusing on customers. So we are going to have those conversations with them, and I will certainly let the Committee know whether we manage to progress what you have suggested.

- Q80 **Nusrat Ghani:** The evidence provided was that young people especially tend to use their mobile phones and iPads a lot more, but there is always the good old-fashioned TV. There are broadcasting companies that put together programmes that are involved in radicalising people or preach content that we would not deem appropriate. You have a number of TV channels that are broadcast or available in the UK. One channel, which I don't want to name because I don't want to promote it in any way, has been banned in a number of countries, including Bangladesh, but is still available here in the UK on satellite. Is there any way that we can sue, take down or stop these sites being promoted within our country?

Amber Rudd: I suggest that the hon. Lady might write to me with the details, if she quite rightly does not want to share them in an open Committee. I will certainly look into it.

- Q81 **Nusrat Ghani:** We took evidence from the sister of Siddhartha Dhar, who is sometimes called Jihadi Sid in the newspapers. She told us she was in a very difficult situation coming to terms with what her brother was doing overseas. She felt there was nowhere for her to go to get any counselling. That also came forward from some of the families involved in the Trojan Horse incident in Birmingham. We had a discussion with your predecessor on what more can be done to support families who feel they have nowhere else to go to get support. How can we get local authorities to provide these families with some support over a long period of time, especially if someone within their family has become radicalised? There is nowhere for them to deal with the emotions that come with this. Is there any way the Department could be involved a bit more in providing this help?

Mark Sedwill: Of course we have the Channel programme, where there is a particular case concern around an individual. I think that is a very effective programme. It works with families who are concerned about their children and with local education authorities, housing and so on. The broader point that I think you are making, Ms Ghani, is one we should probably talk to local government and potentially the devolved Administrations about. I sense you are making a point about supporting families where the risk is more the impact on them of a child already having been radicalised and gone overseas.



Q82 Nusrat Ghani: Yes, it is not about the families themselves becoming radicalised, but the fact that they have reported a member of the family or the community and then feel ostracised within that community. They have nowhere to go and are never going to leave that community. They are not going to find another home or a job elsewhere, so they need to be supported through this process, especially if they are helping us identify young people who have become radicalised or have come back from being involved in terrorist activities overseas.

Mark Sedwill: We have a lot of relationships with local non-governmental organisations, community groups, local mosques and religious leaders, and it may well be that that kind of programme is the vehicle for the issue that you are raising. I suggest that if you are okay, Home Secretary, we will take a look at that and respond to you separately.

Chair: We are waiting for the formal response to the report, which was published a few weeks ago.

Nusrat Ghani: If the Committee would oblige me, I just want to read out a definition of an act of terror: "the calculated use of violence... against civilians in order to attain goals that are political or religious or ideological in nature; this is done through intimidation or coercion or instilling fear."

At Theresa May's first PMQs, I raised the issue that the term "honour" should be removed from "honour killing", and that we should use the term "an act of terror". The victims are not only being terrorised, but are victims of domestic violence. The term "honour killing" might have been appropriate in the 1960s and '70s, when the broader British community wasn't aware of the cultural nuances in this kind of domestic violence, but it has now moved on. The woman is not only a victim of domestic violence; she is also being controlled ideologically. I know it is very early days, Home Secretary, but I wonder whether you have any thoughts on that.

Amber Rudd: I recall Ms Ghani raising it at PMQs, and I think it is an important point. I think that most people who refer to it tend to share your views—and, indeed, mine and the Government's—about these despicable acts of terror and violence. They tend to call them "so-called honour killings" to make the distinction between what they actually are and what they are not, so people understand what we are talking about. People understand what it is when they say "an honour killing". I would reflect on the fact that, by referring to them as "so-called honour killings", you explain to people in that phrase what it is and highlight the fact that you don't think there is any honour in it at all. I think that is an important point, and I will reflect on it.

Q83 Nusrat Ghani: What I was trying to encourage the Prime Minister to do, which is very difficult in a PMQ, is to see whether we can stop using the term across all Government documentation, and use either "the act of terror" or "domestic violence". It is an initiative that has been championed by many organisations, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2014 and many charities globally. I feel that it is something on which we, as a country, can lead the way by saying we will



HOUSE OF COMMONS

stop using that term because it diminishes the role of the woman within that situation. She then has to reflect on the fact that someone's honour somewhere is being removed. All we are doing is reinforcing the notion that she is the property of the male who has perpetrated the crime. I believe that the psychology of those men is very close to those who are involved in other terrorist activities, given that they want to ideologically control the other individual. I look forward to continually challenging you on this, Home Secretary.

Amber Rudd: You make a very compelling case.

Nusrat Ghani: Thank you so much.

Chair: One final point.

- Q84 **Nusrat Ghani:** Finally, I was able to ask the previous Home Secretary about sharia councils, and we have also set up our own inquiry, which we hope will take evidence later in the year. We have struggled to get women to come forward and give evidence, because they were incredibly concerned about the impact on their families and their community. Mr Sedwill, can you give an update about where that inquiry is going, or when it might be taking place?

Amber Rudd: The inquiry is ongoing, as you are aware. We think it is an important inquiry; it will get to the bottom of what is actually happening. As you will be aware, Mona Siddiqui is chairing it—I will be meeting with her shortly—and we expect it to conclude by the end of the year.

Chair: A very patient Naz Shah.

- Q85 **Naz Shah:** Thank you. Congratulations on your role, Home Secretary, and welcome back, Mr Sedwill. Moving on from Ms Ghani's questions, the first few of my questions are linked to extremism and terrorism. The first issue to raise is Prevent. As part of the inquiry, we listened to lots of young people and communities. You will be aware that the Prevent strategy was described as "toxic". We heard that its programmes and agenda lack transparency and oversight. Instead of being inclusive and grassroots-led, it has created a "them and us", particularly in the Muslim community. It has created a great deal of suspicion in the Muslim community, and rightly so. What is your position on Prevent? How do you intend to restore confidence in the communities and, in particular, the Muslim community, which experiences a lot of Islamophobia, which Prevent also contributes to?

Amber Rudd: I don't think we should run away from the fact that we need to have a community-based initiative, which Prevent is, to try and address the difficulties that we have in the community. My belief is that Prevent is a success. It has trained over 550,000 front-line people who are working in the communities so that they can help identify the people who are going to become the victims otherwise. It would be enormously helpful if people would talk up Prevent and its advantages, so that communities can have confidence in it, because the fact is that it has been set up in order to help people. It has been helping people. The people we have



trained, like the teachers, generally—mostly—appreciate the fact that they now have the ability to engage more successfully and spot difficulties and help the people who are going to be victims. The Channel programme, of course, is part of that. You know about that; it has helped over 1,000 people. Although an organisation of the scale of Prevent is never going to please everybody, I believe that it has been a success and will continue to be so.

- Q86 Naz Shah:** Can I put this situation to you? You have a Muslim woman going into work in the NHS—a constituent has relayed this experience to me—and her manager pulls her in and asks her whether she has issues at home, because she is wearing a hijab. Even a Select Committee recently reported how women bear the brunt of Islamophobia and Prevent has contributed to that. How does that build trust in communities, when it is assumed that simply because people—women in particular—choose to wear a hijab, there must be some kind of radicalisation going on? I have had a doctor say to me that she dare not have conversations about terrorism, even though it is on the news day in, day out, because if her child goes to school and mentions it, he might be referred to Channel. These are people who are from middle-class Muslim communities who do not have the confidence to address this in their own home, so I would argue that Prevent is failing. As a member of my community and my constituency, how can I up-talk a programme that people are telling me has created a “them and us” situation?

Amber Rudd: We have a number of initiatives. I am not aware of whether there are any in your constituency, but after we have finished, I will go and look specifically at it to see if there are any initiatives that tend to give support and funding to local groups—local Muslims—who can work and promote Prevent within their community.

On your particular point about Islamophobia, that must be viewed as a completely separate issue. I launched a hate crime agenda package at the end of July. We want to stamp out any sort of hate crime, any sort of racism, and of course, any sort of Islamophobia. I am aware that it is often the women who get the brunt of it, but this is separate. It is unacceptable and we need to make sure that people know that this great country will not tolerate Islamophobia in any way. I would ask for your support as a Member of Parliament in trying to be clear that we can do that without shying away from the need to have a programme like Prevent that will also reach into communities and help people identify who the victims are.

- Q87 Naz Shah:** Thank you, I will contact you outside this Committee for that. While we are talking about the subject of Islamophobia, I would like to ask you a question regarding Douglas Murray. I understand that up until recently, you were a member of the Political Council of the Henry Jackson Society. Douglas Murray, the associate director, has spoken approvingly of two notorious Islamophobes, Robert Spencer, the co-founder of Stop Islamisation of America, and Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, the former leader of the English Defence League. He has also been recorded as saying, “All immigration into Europe from Muslim countries must stop,” and,



HOUSE OF COMMONS

"Conditions for Muslims in Europe must be made harder across the board: Europe must look like a less attractive proposition." He has never fully retracted those comments. In hindsight, do you have any regrets about having any association with an organisation whose subsidiary organisation, Student Rights, has also been denounced by the NUS for its witch hunt of Muslim students on campus? The NUS labelled the group "insidious" and responsible for the demonisation of Muslim students.

Amber Rudd: I haven't met the people you have referred to. This country has a noble tradition of free speech, but I am no longer a member of that organisation.

- Q88 **Naz Shah:** Thank you. Moving on, I wrote to the Chair of the Home Affairs Committee as well as to you regarding MQM. On 23 August, the Met police launched an investigation into whether the London-based, Pakistani politician, Altaf Hussain, has incited violence in Karachi. Despite a receipt for weapons found in Altaf Hussain's home, previous investigations have been hampered by the failure to use terrorism legislation. Can you confirm that the abject failure of the Foreign Office to list the MQM as a terrorist outfit should have no bearing on the CPS's decision on whether to use terrorist legislation in relation to MQM? Can you also confirm that the CPS should consider only the evidence that it is presented with, and resist the pressure from other parts of the British state to go soft on MQM, which is how it appears?

Amber Rudd: Permanent Secretary, can you address that one?

Mark Sedwill: Of course. First, on your last point, there is no pressure from any part of the British state to go soft on MQM. Indeed, I have been in touch with my Pakistani counterpart about precisely this investigation to ensure that we provide the Metropolitan police with all the evidence they will need to pursue a proper criminal investigation. It is also the case that the police can pursue terrorism offences—offences under TACT or the Terrorism Act—whether or not somebody is a member of a prescribed organisation.

Of course there are offences, some of which were highlighted in the press quite recently, about being a member of a proscribed organisation, but offences of incitement, violence and engagement in terrorist activity are separate from whether you are a member of an organisation or not. The police will investigate according to whatever they think is the appropriate vehicle—whether it is a traditional criminal investigation or an investigation heading towards a TACT offence—accordingly. So there is an operational decision for that.

- Q89 **Naz Shah:** While we are talking about the legislation: Anjem Choudary. The law against the glorification of terrorism is more than 10 years old. From what I have learned over the past few weeks—and certainly since Anjem Choudary's five-year sentence and the trial being reported on—although the law is 10 years old, it has only been used in seven instances by the CPS. Of those seven instances, they have only been used six times in the past few years. That begs the question: are the CPS and our police



HOUSE OF COMMONS

forces confident in using that legislation when we have allowed people such as Anjem Choudary to spew his vile hate on the streets of Britain and to affect other countries? Are we not confident enough to use that? That is one part of the question.

I would also like to hear your thoughts on the fact that the media shamefully gave this guy a platform on which to spew his hatred—on the BBC and lots of prestigious anchors. How will you, as Home Secretary, address that issue?

Amber Rudd: I would like to start by congratulating the police and the security services for getting this prosecution together. This man—Anjem Choudary—and his colleague said terrible things and, as you rightly say, vile words in this country. It is good news that the country is safer now we have that conviction. The legislation is in place. The police and the Crown Prosecution Service worked together and got this conviction. I am not going to propose any changes to that given that it is in place and that they have achieved that. I do not really have any further comment on whether that is sufficient for them.

The second point is on media coverage. Again I would say that we have free speech so it is for the media to make those judgments. We need to encourage them, as much as possible, to act responsibly and not to give coverage, but it is an independent media.

Q90 **Naz Shah:** The media gave this guy a platform. It was not free speech; it was inciting hatred and terrorism, and we allowed it for more than 10 years on British soil. He skirted the law, so does that mean that the law needs tightening around what free speech is?

Amber Rudd: Well, I don't blame the media for this. The fact is that it was he who committed those offences and he has been brought to trial and convicted. I just would urge the media to act responsibly and not to give people like him too much air time, but it is up to them. They are an independent media.

Q91 **Naz Shah:** Finally—

Chair: Yes, finally.

Q92 **Naz Shah:** On honour crime, you might be aware of the recent case of Samia Shahid, which is being investigated. She was a constituent of mine who was killed in Pakistan. Her father and ex-husband are in custody. A senior officer has also been implicated in corruption, as well as a family member, and the police are looking to question the mother and the sister who have returned to the UK. I have had more than 20 years of experience of working on what we call "honour crime", and I would argue that there has to be a change, whether that is, as my colleague has said, in terms of terrorism, but the crime is more about the shame of the man, not the honour of the woman. The woman is never dishonoured. It is the shame of the man and how he perceives it. These are, as Baroness Warsi has commented, crimes of control. During my experience of the last few years, I must commend the Pakistani authorities in terms of how they have responded. It has been unprecedented. There is a connection



HOUSE OF COMMONS

between the forced marriage unit at the Home Office and the whole concept of violence against women because of shame and cultures. I think we have to highlight the different drivers and mitigating circumstances that are pertinent to certain communities, and in this case it is that shame. You only fund the forced marriage unit with £200,000. The last time I asked a question, which was before recess, it was £200,000 over two years. Do you think that is sufficient? I am not convinced, certainly after this experience, that people are confident, even though we have had over 1,000 forced marriage orders issued, in dealing with the Government. Do you think we should be doing more? What are your thoughts on that?

Amber Rudd: It's a very interesting question. Clearly, this Committee is passionate and has a lot of experience on this issue of honour-based killing, or whatever we decide to call it: terrorist-based killing, or whatever your proposals are. It is clearly incredibly important and I hope you feel the Government are doing a lot. We are trying to step forward in how we protect women from all communities. I was not aware of the exact numbers in terms of how we fund the forced marriage unit. I will certainly take a look at it and ensure that it is sufficiently funded to do the important job that it does.

Q93 **James Berry:** Home Secretary, one of the distinctive parts of the Prime Minister's tenure as Home Secretary was modern slavery. She identified the issue, she led the debate, and she took great steps to tackle it. Is that something you will continue as one of the centrepieces in your tenure as Home Secretary?

Amber Rudd: Yes. It is one of the scourges of modern society. The UK has provided very important leadership in this. I know that when the Prime Minister is at UNGA at the end of September, she will be working with other countries to make sure that we continue that leadership. It is incredibly important to address it. I have other countries asking us about our Modern Slavery Act so that they can follow our lead.

Q94 **James Berry:** In terms of so-called honour-based violence, forced marriage and FGM—I should declare I am a trustee of a charity dealing in honour-based violence—do you agree that funding should continue for the very important work of educating and training the teachers, social workers, nurses, police officers and doctors that we rely on to identify these terrible crimes? From what I can see, your predecessor and the previous Labour Government did a lot of work to put the mechanism in place to deal with these cases when we identified them, but identifying them is very difficult. That is what is holding us back. Do you agree that funding needs to be continued to train the people we rely on to identify cases?

Amber Rudd: I certainly think that training the people on the front line to spot these situations and that they are sufficiently trained so that they know how to address them and assist the women in those situations—it is so often women—is absolutely essential.

Q95 **James Berry:** Picking up on something that Ms Ghani mentioned, do you



HOUSE OF COMMONS

think there is something amiss when we have dozens of police officers in New Scotland Yard and police officers in Europol scouring the internet for extremist material on platforms put up by social media companies, who make huge amounts of money from those platforms, but, from what we can tell as a Committee, do precious little to control extremist material?

Amber Rudd: I do think that the industry needs to do more itself. I think it can do more. That is why I am having conversations with them to ensure that there is some sort of industry regulatory board. It will be similar to the one that is already in place for child sexual exploitation. That is what we are asking them to put together.

Q96 **James Berry:** I can tell you that my suggestion that they should pay for those police officers did not go down very well, but you might want to revisit it.

Amber Rudd: I can imagine.

Q97 **James Berry:** In terms of integration, I should say I am vice-chair of Mr Umunna's APPG on social integration, which is doing very good work at the moment. The Prime Minister spoke about the importance in countering radicalisation of providing English language lessons, particularly for women. I think, and I certainly think our all-party parliamentary group thinks, that English language is vital for social integration more generally. Can you update us on how the funding that the Prime Minister outlined for English language lessons is being distributed, and how much has been distributed so far?

Amber Rudd: I am afraid I do not have that material, but I am happy to write to the Committee and update you.

James Berry: Finally, on Brexit—

Chair: We are returning to Brexit.

Amber Rudd: Top subject for you.

James Berry: I apologise. I asked Mr Goodwill this, and he was unable to answer.

Amber Rudd: What a snitch!

Q98 **James Berry:** Well, it's all on the record. What is being demanded of you by Mr Umunna and others is to give a unilateral and unequivocal guarantee of the continued rights and status of EU citizens living in the UK. Many in my constituency play a fantastic part in our community. Can I check with you whether any of your counterparts have given the same unilateral and unequivocal guarantee about British citizens living in their country?

Amber Rudd: It is a very good point, and no, they haven't.

James Berry: Thank you.

Q99 **Chair:** Before we come to the next subject, knife crime, on the Prevent



HOUSE OF COMMONS

strategy, our report is with you, and will be the subject of a formal Government response. We had a very interesting trip to Bradford, organised by Naz Shah, to meet younger members of the community. We also had lots of testimony from schools and universities. There is clearly a problem with the brand and image of Prevent. However much you may think it is a good brand and successful, certain parts of certain communities have a very serious problem with it, and you will need to address that in your response.

One thing that struck me in Bradford is how completely untrusting young people from Muslim communities and others were of the mainstream media. They do not go to BBC News, ITV or Sky to get their information about what is going on in the world. They do not trust them, for starters. They are much more likely to access social media, some of which may be tainted with all sorts of agendas, as sources of information. We took the view that we are not doing enough to try to inform those types of social media, which younger people are more likely to access, to help give them a more balanced view.

We referenced that within our report, but I think it is quite a big gap in the Government's approach at the moment: the heavy reliance on Prevent. It is far from perfect; it may be able to be improved hugely, but it is not trusted by a great many people who need to trust it in order for it to be effective. I lay that there as a point for you when considering your response.

Amber Rudd: That's fine; thank you for drawing attention to it. I have seen that it is in your report. You have drawn attention to the issue of media, particularly for young vulnerable people, and I will make sure that we address it in my response. We do have some activities in that area, and wherever possible, I will draw attention to them when I write back to you.

Chair: That would be helpful. Chuka Umunna, on knife crime.

Q100 **Mr Umunna:** Before I ask my question, can I ask you to look at this picture, Home Secretary? All the members of the Committee have a picture; I will hold it for the benefit of the camera. This is a zombie knife that was collected by police in my borough of Lambeth. Never mind its name; this is a terrifying weapon that has clearly been created with the principal aim of inflicting severe injury and violence on another person, or at least threatening it. With that in mind, I very much welcome the coming into force of the amendment to the Criminal Justice Act 1988 that makes it illegal to sell, rent out, manufacture or import these knives, but is it actually an offence to own such a weapon? People can keep knives at home.

Mark Sedwill: We will have to come back to you, Mr Umunna, if this is wrong, but I think the answer is that the legislation that applies to knives more generally—talking about the person, as opposed to the import, manufacture and so on of these—applies in this case as well.

Q101 **Mr Umunna:** Why it's relevant, Home Secretary, is that it is all very well



HOUSE OF COMMONS

passing a law to stop people selling or renting out these types of weapons, but the problem that we have in Lambeth—this is one of over 300 dangerous knives that have been collected in my borough over the past three years—is that they are in circulation already. In spite of the coming into force of the amendment announced by the Minister, the Member for Truro, these knives are still being marketed online by UK companies. If you were to do a basic Google search on this, granted there are US companies that would come up and you can get this type of knife on eBay, but there are still UK companies marketing these zombie knives. Granted, some of them have said they are out of stock, but they are still marketing these knives. I suppose all I would say, Home Secretary, is that I welcome the amendment, and the Act coming into force is one thing, but clearly a hell of a lot more needs to be done in terms of the enforcement of this new law that has come into effect.

Amber Rudd: The legislation is specifically to ban them. Selling them—online or offline—is going to be banned. You have asked specific questions about people owning these at home or them existing in circulation, and in order not to make any mistakes, I will write to you fully about it, but the intention is to get them off the streets and out of people’s hands and out of people’s homes. I will write to you in full on it.

Q102 **Mr Umunna:** Finally on this, in the US there is obviously a slightly different legal framework that applies to weapons generally, but a lot of the websites where these weapons are still sold are those of US companies, and unless you have enforcement agencies actually opening or x-raying packages that are coming to this country, it is going to be quite difficult to ensure that we take this type of outrageous weapon out of circulation. I was shocked when I asked for pictures of some of the knives that have been collected in Lambeth and this was one of them.

Amber Rudd: They are shocking pictures—I completely agree with you. That is why it was so important to ban them. When I write to you, I will let you know how we think it can be enforced given that people may try to buy these online from abroad, as you say.

Mr Umunna: Thank you.

Chair: Home Secretary, I think we have a final subject—prostitution—which Mr Burrowes wants to raise. I note there have been no declarations of interest before we do so.

Q103 **Mr Burrowes:** What is your view on buying sex from prostitutes?

Amber Rudd: Let’s face it: this is a difficult and controversial issue. The Committee has a report out on it at the moment, so I am going to hold my position before coming back to you and giving a full answer. It is complicated and I would like to consider it further before giving a full answer.

Q104 **Mr Burrowes:** Are you satisfied with the current law on prostitution as it stands?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Amber Rudd: Again, I would ask for a little notice to consider carefully my answer before I come back on that. I was involved with a Labour party Member, Gavin Shuker, on an inquiry that looked at this. I do have concerns about the current legislation. I do have concerns about the trafficking of women. I do have concerns about a lot of different elements of this, but before giving you a simple answer, I would ask for some time to consider it and come back to you.

Q105 **Mr Burrowes:** So that means you are open as we further our inquiry—we have not in any way finished our inquiry into prostitution—to considering the recommendations?

Amber Rudd: I am absolutely open to looking at what your recommendations are.

Chair: On that, we obviously produced a short report, which we called an interim report. We hold by the findings, which were always going to be controversial findings for what is not an easy subject, as you have said, and there are various recommendations that we have asked the Government to look at and perhaps bring in. Subject to that, we may then be returning to that whole issue in a further report, but we are relying a good deal on what the Government's response will be to guide us as to where we go on it. Clearly, it was always going to be a controversial issue and there has been even more subsequent correspondence on the back of recent events, but it in no way alters the observations and recommendations that we made, and I think that is worth putting on the record.

Mr Jayawardena: Just for the record, it was not unanimously agreed. There is a difference of opinion in the Committee, and this reflects—as you said, Home Secretary—the complex and controversial nature of the issue.

Chair: But as I say, it is not the end of the work that we propose to do on it.

Mr Burrowes: We could say it's just the beginning.

Chair: I think there is one further point on hate crime that Mr Winnick wants to raise.

Q106 **Mr Winnick:** Home Secretary, the only point I want to make, which you are obviously aware of, is the increase in hate crime since the decision was taken by the country on the 23 June. One does not want to exaggerate the position, unfortunate enough as it is. I wonder if you have any comments to make on the need for an increased police presence in areas where such incidents have occurred.

Amber Rudd: Mr Winnick, you are right, I am aware that there was a spike in crime after 23 June. I am pleased to say that, although all hate crime is unacceptable, it has now gone back down to levels comparable to last year. We are watching it carefully. I am making as many relevant statements as possible to say how unacceptable hate crime is. It did exist before 23 June. We will continue to combat it however we can. In fact, I



HOUSE OF COMMONS

met the Polish Foreign Minister and Interior Minister, with our Foreign Secretary, just earlier in the week, in order to reassure them about the actions that we are taking to make our Polish friends who are here welcome in the UK. We will continue to monitor that very carefully.

Q107 Mr Winnick: You mentioned Poland. It does appear that the Poles have been the main victims of such hate crimes. Have the Polish authorities approached you? You said you were going to meet them, but have they approached you initially to express concern?

Amber Rudd: Yes. The Ministers asked for a meeting with me at the beginning of the week. They were over here to express their concern. The Foreign Secretary and I met with them and, we hope, reassured them and told them how seriously we take any hate crime and how valued the Polish community is here in this country.

Q108 Mr Winnick: Do you think that it would be useful if there were some kind of ministerial broadcast, be it by you or the Prime Minister, recognising the decision that has been taken and the processes that have already been indicated by the Prime Minister of our leaving the EU, to take on and warn about such crimes being committed against totally innocent people, simply because they are not British nationals?

Amber Rudd: I hope that we are already doing that. It has come up a number of times at PMQs and it has come up in conversations that I have had sometimes with colleagues. I know that most Members of Parliament are reassuring their communities that everything should be harmonious wherever possible and that all hate crime is unacceptable.

Q109 Mr Winnick: A ministerial broadcast? You don't think that would be helpful?

Amber Rudd: As I say, I launched a hate crime action plan in July and I took the opportunity then to say how all hate crime is unacceptable. Although there was a spike after 23 June, it has now largely come off.

Chair: And of course, we will never know whether if there had been a different decision declared, the spike may have been even greater. It is good to hear that things have returned to normal, even though normal will always be unacceptable on any amount of hate crime.

Home Secretary, Permanent Secretary, thank you very much for covering quite a lot of areas in the last two hours. I think we have given you quite a lot of tasks: to provide us with further information and some particular observations on some of the reports that are outstanding, waiting for Government response, and the extra information, as soon as you have completed it, on the CSE inquiry. Whatever you can give us ahead of our likely calling of the new chair of that inquiry will be exceedingly helpful. Thank you very much for your debut today.

Amber Rudd: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman.