



## ***Cut It Out - campaign launch***

House of Commons

16 of October, 2019



## **Chair and speakers**

### **Lord Young of Norwood Green (chair)**

Lord Young kindly chaired and hosted the event, on behalf of the Traveller Movement and Rene Cassin

### **Kate Green MP for Stretford and Urmston**

Co-chair for the All Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma

### **Martin Gallagher**

Advocate at Travelling Ahead, Wales; Board member of Traveller Movement advisory board

### **Sara Cowan**

Refugee Campaign Manager, Oxfam

### **Phil Rosenberg**

Director of Public Affairs, Board of Deputies of British Jews

### **Jemma Levene**

Deputy Director, Hope not Hate

### **Groups present**

London Gypsies and Travellers

Friends, Families and Travellers

Roma Support Group

Board of Deputies of British Jews

The Council of Christians and Jews

Stop Hate UK

Hope Not Hate

Stop Funding Hate

Parliamentarians

## About the campaign

The #Cut It Out campaign is a joint initiative between the Traveller Movement and [Rene Cassin](#) aimed at tackling hate speech against ethnic minority or religious groups by politicians. The campaign brings people together from all backgrounds in calling out abusive or inflammatory speech in politics. By cutting out words that show who the hate is being directed at, we reveal that hate speech is unacceptable in all its forms. Politicians are invited to [sign a pledge](#), and are encouraged to call out hate speech when they hear it. More information can be found on Traveller Movement's [website](#)

The campaign was launched on 16 of October to mark Hate Crime Awareness Week 2019.

## What was discussed?

**Kate Green MP** discussed her parliamentary activities calling out racist rhetoric by fellow parliamentarians. On the subject of parliamentary privilege, Kate strongly stated that parliamentarians have duties and responsibilities to uphold the highest standards in the chamber, and that parliamentary privilege does not give MPs free reign to use hate speech,

**Martin Gallagher from Travelling Ahead** discussed his political work holding racist politicians to account. He discussed his dismay at the inaction by various governments and parties to properly address and confront anti-Gypsy rhetoric which is so prevalent in commons debates. Martin also pointed out how racist comments from parliamentarians have a negative trickle-down effect which sets an unacceptable example to the general public. He also stated that parliamentary privilege should not entitle MPs to use hate speech with impunity, as there is hard evidence that hate speech by parliamentarians can lead to a [spike in hate crime](#).

**Tony Lloyd MP for Rochdale** for stated quite plainly that there is no place for hate in the UK. Parliamentarians are to be held to the highest standards and hate speech should never be tolerated.

**Sara Cowan from Oxfam** discussed positive framing in Oxfam's campaigns work, and how this had been beneficial when building support for refugees in the UK. She discussed the Words of Welcome campaign, which highlighted moments in history where refugees have been welcomed into Britain, demonstrating acceptance as tradition, and part of our nation's value system.

**Jemma Levene from Hope not Hate** discussed the work of Hope not Hate in educating future generations, but also targeting the media for hateful messaging.

**Phil Rosenberg from Board of Deputies of British Jews** discussed the power of partnering up, and discussed the recently launched joint report *Protecting the Jewish community from antisemitism on Facebook*.

**Parliamentarians** in attendance discussed the importance of tone and language in parliamentary debates. Many stated that hate speech and racist language was unacceptable

and should always be called out. The message was clear – it coarsens society as a whole when parliamentarians speak negatively against any group.

On the subject of free speech more generally, speech is only free if it is morally based and based on respect. Free speech in parliament is not a liberty, and was never designed to give parliamentarians free reign to use hateful rhetoric.

René Cassin's Director, **Mia Hasenson-Gross** lead a round of applause for all the young people in the room. Representing a range of identities, they are our future leaders and will set the tone for our country.

In response to the event, **Rachel Zaltsman**, René Cassin Trustee, stated that the #CutItOut campaign highlights the importance of building bridges between majority and minority communities; and the powerful impact of standing up for others.

### **Ways forward**

Partnership working – many of the groups present called for greater partnership collaboration, and a sharing of resources. Many were also keen to sign and share the *Cut It Out* pledge with colleagues and their local MPs.

It was widely felt that the next speaker of the House of Commons should be contacted in order to gain their support.

Oxfam's message regarding positive framing was also felt to be quite useful. Supportive MPs and Peers could become Champions of the Cut It Out campaign and could promote among parliamentary colleagues.

### **What people said who attended the event:**

"I've never experienced a panel like this before. It was very interesting. I will take this back and use in my awareness raising work".

"I will take some of the anecdotal information about effective actions against hate speech and Jewish allyship and promote to our young people the importance of standing up against all prejudice".

"This enhanced my knowledge regarding hate crime towards Gypsy and Traveller communities".

"Very powerful testimony hearing first-hand the experiences of discrimination toward Gypsies and Irish Travellers".

"Intelligent dialogue; lots of similarities across experience of disabled communities".

### **Resources:**

Traveller Movement and Rene Cassin press release:

<https://travellermovement.org.uk/news/110-the-traveller-movement-and-rene-cassin-call-for-an-end-to-hate-speech-in-politics>

Cut it Out campaign manifesto:

<https://travellermovement.org.uk/reports?download=153:manifesto-cut-it-out-campaign>

Post event blog: <https://www.renecassin.org/standing-up-for-each-other-the-launch-of-the-cutitout-campaign-in-parliament/>

Rene Cassin GRT representation in the media toolkit <https://www.renecassin.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Media-Toolkit.pdf>

Traveller Movement position paper on Anti-Gypsyism -

<https://travellermovement.org.uk/equality-human-rights?download=155:position-paper-on-anti-gypsyism>

Cut it out campaign on Traveller Movement website:

<https://travellermovement.org.uk/campaigns/cut-it-out>

Tackling Hate Crime Rene Cassin: <https://www.renecassin.org/category/campaigns/tackling-hate-crime/>

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