

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

16th April 2021

Jew Content,

RE: ISRAEL APARTHEID WEEK

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of Israel Apartheid Week campaigns and antisemitism on campuses; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

Free speech is vital to the independence and innovation that embodies higher education, but no student should face discrimination, harassment, or racism, including antisemitism. I am assured that the Government is committed to addressing antisemitism wherever it occurs and I am encouraged that the UK became the first country to formally adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.

Ministers will continue to call on all higher education institutions to accept the IHRA working definition of antisemitism, which is a tool to help frontline services better understand and recognise instances of antisemitism. I believe this would send a clear message that antisemitic behaviour will not be tolerated and will be taken seriously by higher education providers.

All universities and higher education institutions have a responsibility to provide a safe and inclusive environment and have a responsibility to ensure students do not face discrimination, harassment, abuse, or violence, including online. Universities are expected to have robust policies and procedures in place to comply with the law, and to investigate and swiftly address any hate crime and antisemitic incidents that are reported.

Ministers have provided over £144,000 for a programme to support universities in tackling antisemitism on campus, delivered by the Holocaust Education Trust, in partnership with the Union of Jewish Students. I also welcome that an additional £500,000 of Government funding is being provided to allow 200 university students each year to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau, to hear from the last Holocaust survivors and to help educate students on the importance of continuing to tackle antisemitism on campuses.

This is part of a wider Government commitment to Holocaust remembrance which has included a donation of £1 million to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom'.

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE