

## **Kashmir**

I attended a meeting in parliament on Monday evening – which included a number of Waltham Forest residents – organised by the Indian Muslim Federation. The federation is based in Leytonstone so obviously I know many of its members pretty well.

I do not have any ingrained animus against the government of India, quite the reverse in fact. However, I believe that Prime Minister Modi is pursuing a course of action which is directly at odds with India's founding and secular principles. Since he revoked article 370, Kashmir has been in lockdown. The press are not allowed to report from inside Kashmir but there is a large Kashmiri community in Leyton and Wanstead, many of whom have contacted me to say that they have little or no contact with relatives. Contact that has taken place seems to be less than reassuring, with widespread imprisonment of government critics.

In other parts of India, gangs of thugs who support the RSS or BJP often attack Muslims and other minorities.

Mr Modi has now put forward the Citizenship (Amendment) Act which offers citizenship to non-Muslims from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh who are living in India. This specifically excludes Muslims and Tamils from Sri Lanka. It will be used in conjunction with the National Register of Citizens which demands that people prove their citizenship with legal documents going back decades which for many poor people will be almost impossible.

By making citizenship contingent on religion, the new Act violates the secular constitution drafted by BR Ambedkar on independence.

Demonstrations against the new legislation have been met with extreme violence by the Indian state resulting in the deaths of 30 Muslims.

## **Trump Palestine Deal**

This plan is a monstrosity and simply about annexation. I genuinely do not believe that any previous British government would have gone along with it (probably of either party). The problem with the current government's response, and apparently that of a number of other countries, is that it effectively gives the green light to Trump and Netanyahu to pursue their plan because they will assume, quite rightly, that there will be no opposition from many of the key western countries. The plan certainly breaches international law in its proposed annexation, as do existing and future settlements.

## **The far right**

The news that a senior adviser in Downing Street had expressed eugenicist and racist views, worthy of the 1930s, is deeply shocking and shows how widespread fascistic notions have become in the past few years. It doesn't really matter very much that this loathsome individual has now left the prime minister's employment, what matters is that he got anywhere near government. Racist and supremacist ideas are creeping back into the political mainstream across the world.

The answer to this alarming turn of events is not simple, but a prerequisite is a united Labour movement fighting for equality and social justice and against all forms of bigotry.

## **Deportation of 50 Jamaicans/Windrush**

I was contacted by dozens of constituents raising concerns over the Home Office plans to deport 50 people to Jamaica by charter flight. At the time of the time of the Windrush crisis I was a strong advocate for a clear policy ensuring the protection of those from Commonwealth countries who move to Britain.

I made representations to the Prime Minister to review the matter and at the same time asked him to address the issue of justice for victims of Windrush to ensure their permanent right to remain, citizenship, and full compensation for losses incurred.

## **Protect Our Oceans campaign**

I have received a large number of emails about protecting our oceans which are certainly under threat. Drilling and plastic dumping are deadly, as is overfishing which for decades was a menace in EU waters because of the deeply misguided doctrine of common resource which led directly to overfishing. In other parts of the world, the problem has tended to be a lack of regulation and co-ordinated action. I support the Global Ocean Treaty and I have added my name to early day motion 112.

I feel very strongly that we must bequeath clean and sustainable seas to future generations. We cannot simply continue dumping poisons into our open waters and drilling for an unsustainable oil demand. And on a personal note, I am an open water swimmer – when I get the chance – and I have swum in oceans, lakes, rivers and reservoirs. So for obvious reasons it is an issue close to my heart.

## **In parliament:**

### **Cuts to payments to the Commonwealth secretariat**

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2020-02-13b.990.0&p=10143#g1000.0>

### **Parliamentary Debates on Housing and Homelessness**

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2020-02-06c.466.0&p=10143#g473.1>

### **Capita's lamentable track record**

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2020-02-03b.18.3&p=10143#g22.3>

### **Knife Crime**

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2020-01-30b.941.0&p=10143#g956.8>

Advice surgeries, coffee mornings, street surgeries and other activities continue as normal.

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