The Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg MP,
Leader of the Liberal Democrats
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

28 August 2009

Dear Mr Clegg,

We have recently noted correspondence you have received from Douglas Murray, Director of the Centre for Social Cohesion (CfSC), regarding statements attributed to the Lib Dem peer, Baroness Jenny Tonge (Jewish Chronicle, 21 August 2009), which he considers antisemitic.

We would contend that Mr Murray is perfectly at liberty to draw your attention to instances where he feels the Baroness's remarks may be considered antisemitic, though we would similarly like to draw your attention to comments made by Mr Murray himself that we would argue are Islamophobic and incite hatred towards Muslims.

In his Pym Fortuyn Memorial Conference address, 'What are we to do about Islam', delivered in The Hague in February 2006, Mr Murray made certain remarks loosely subsumed under what has been termed the 'Eurabia' thesis, which mirrors in tone and content many of the racist ideas about Jews in Europe that came to gain currency with devastating consequences.

Mr Murray said:

'*No European country's Muslim population is currently higher than 10% - which ordinarily would be alright – not ideal, but alright. What makes it a problem is not only that native European birth-rates are falling, but that Western relativists are acting as a megaphone for the Muslim minority, making the volume of that minority exponentially greater and more threatening. This megaphone effect - the unequal power which Islam currently wields, and the power it will increasingly wield as it grows, courtesy of immigration and higher than average European Muslim birth-rates – is cause for great worry.*

'*[W]hat are the answers to our predicament? How do we stop the further humiliation of Europe, and its eventual morphing into an entirely different continent?*

'*The first thing to do is to address the problem at home unsparingly. It is late in the day, but Europe still has time to turn around the demographic time-bomb which will soon see a number of our largest cities fall to Muslim majorities. It has to. All immigration into Europe from Muslim countries must stop.*

'*The point here is that the whole deal under which Muslims live in our societies must change. … Conditions for Muslims in Europe must be made harder across the board: Europe must look like a less attractive proposition.*

'*….After all, it is people of my age who will have to put up with an Islamic or dhimmi Europe. We do not want that, and so we must come up with solutions to stop it coming about. If we do not do so now, some awful Le Pen like figure will try to deal with it badly and far more bloodily down the line.*'

Such views are not only repulsive but immensely insulting to European Muslims. We find it incredulous that Mr Murray should painstakingly detail for you comments made by the Baroness that are allegedly antisemitic and yet conveniently ignore his own contributions to inflammatory remarks and hate speech.

Further to Mr Murray's charge that the Baroness is meeting with 'terrorist organisations', among whom Hamas is mentioned, we would bring to your attention the Foreign Affairs Committee's recommendation in its recent report, Global Security: Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories:

'We therefore reiterate our recommendation from 2007, that "the Government should urgently consider ways of engaging politically with moderate elements within Hamas as a way of encouraging it to meet the three Quartet principles."'

We hope, when you respond to Mr Murray's letter on Baroness Tonge that you might venture to probe him concerning the views he expressed in his 2006 speech in The Hague, and his subsequent comments in the British press concerning Islam and British Muslims.

We hope you will remind him that no manner of hate speech is to be tolerated in Britain, and that includes Islamophobic as well as antisemitic comment.

Yours sincerely,

Sufyan Ismail
On behalf of the Trustees, ENGAGE