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Wednesday 11th April 2012

Dear Mr Halfon,

It is with some interest that we read the report in the Jewish Chronicle last week 'MPs: We speak up for Israel - and get death threats,' (JC, 4 April), and your comments therein.

If indeed politicians are victims of abuse, threats and worse, we would hope such incidents are swiftly brought to the attention of the police for investigation and, where appropriate, prosecution. Indeed, the easy demonisation of those whose opinions one may disagree with is an experience many British Muslims will be familiar with. In particular, those British Muslims who are critical of the policies of the Israeli government.

You are, of course, absolutely right to state that though opinions may differ, there is no acceptance, and can never be, of those who "make threats and go beyond what is fair".

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of some extremely serious and factually inaccurate allegations that you yourself made against ENGAGE in February 2011 on the floor of the House of Commons. You said, we quote, "*iEngage has a track record of being aggressively anti-Semitic and homophobic, and has extensive links with terrorism in Tunisia and the middle east.*"

On that occasion, we could not seek legal redress for what we regarded as false and libellous accusations and we wondered whether you would be prepared to make the same allegations in public where you would not enjoy parliamentary immunity? We note that you have yet to do so.

To conclude, we would argue that it is only reasonable to expect that our politicians conduct themselves with the same etiquettes of fairness that they rightly expect of others.

Yours sincerely,

Shenaz Bunglawala