



Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

The Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP PC
First Minister of Scotland
Bute House
6 Charlotte Square
Edinburgh EH2 4DR

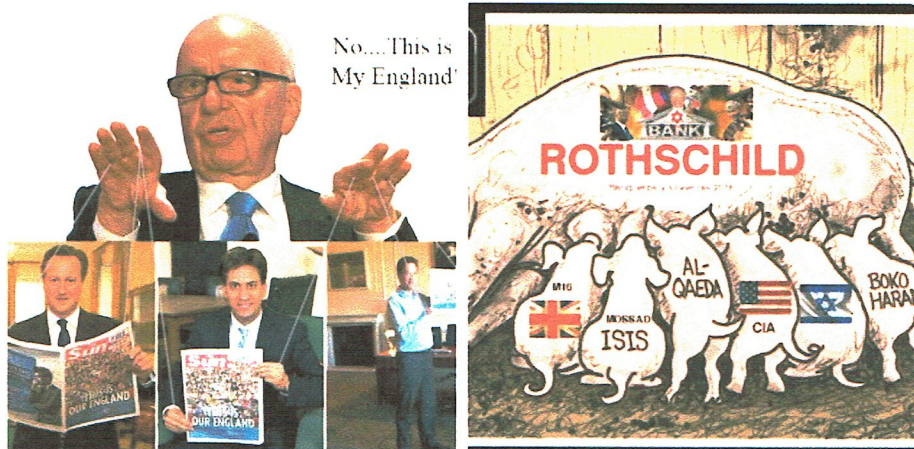
9 November 2015

Dear Nicola,

I regret having to write about a matter we have discussed a number of times, to request that swift and appropriate action be taken concerning a grotesque antisemitic image, retweeted on 6 November by Sandra White MSP.

Sandra White's retweet would be unwelcome at any time, but it is especially regrettable that it should occur so soon after the great success of your recent open meeting at Giffnock Synagogue, at which you stated that "There is nothing that happens in Israel or Palestine that can be justification for antisemitism or any racial or religious hatred. That is a point that has to be made at every level of Scottish society very, very strongly."

We are, to be frank, utterly appalled that any MSP should have seen fit to disseminate such a bizarre and utterly hateful image. This is what she circulated:



Whether it is appropriate to circulate the image of Murdoch as a puppet master is no concern of ours. The Rothschild part of the picture, however, fits with the very worst of Nazi

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propaganda. The picture superimposed on the pig derives from American neo-Nazi websites and is blatantly antisemitic: there are three Stars of David, one in red above the word “bank”, and the others on the cheeks of President Obama and former President Bush; the cartoon hook noses and rubbing hands that flank the presidents, are a close up excerpt from one of the most commonly used antisemitic cartoons in US neo-Nazi circles.

Even if Sandra White did not see or understand the Stars of David on the presidents, or the hook noses and other imagery, nonetheless, the overall antisemitic thrust must surely have been clear to her, because of the red Star of David and the large red word “Rothschild”, which plays to the enduring antisemitic charge that Jews use wealth to control others to go to war on their behalf.

This what Sandra White evoked when she retweeted the image. If, as we expect, she did not mean to cause such an extreme level of offence, and even though she has now deleted the post from her account, we remain thoroughly disturbed as to what enthruses her so readily to circulate and give credibility to the conspiracy message that she was endorsing.

When you spoke to the Community, you were asked about the Scottish Parliament’s disproportionate focus on Israel – in total 62 of the 355 Motions about foreign countries since the last election have been about Israel, compared with only 13 about Syria and 15 about Iraq, and Sandra White is foremost amongst the MSPs responsible for this, having proposed 9 (the highest of any MSP) and supported 20 of the Motions strongly condemning Israel. In reply, you denied that “there is an antisemitic culture in the Scottish Parliament”, but to be candid, her actions make this claim more difficult to sustain.

As you know, in our *What’s changed about being Jewish in Scotland* project, funded by your Government, this disproportionate attention from some MSPs was frequently cited as a reason why the Community is, as you acknowledged, “anxious, worried, scared.”

You gave the Community the undertaking that “so long as a single person is a victim or feels they cannot celebrate their Jewish identity, we still have work to do”. We ask, therefore, that the following actions be swiftly taken:

- clear and public condemnation by the Party itself;
- a sincere and unqualified apology from Sandra White that acknowledges that the imagery was antisemitic (i.e. racist); and
- a clear warning from the Party to Sandra White concerning her future behaviour, including possible suspension of the whip.

We would, of course, be very willing to meet again at your convenience to discuss this, and other issues of Jewish communal interest, in as constructive a manner as possible..

*We look forward to receiving your prompt reply.
With kind regards,*



Ephraim Borowski
Director