

SUELLA BRAVERMAN: My mission to ensure there really is no hiding place for the evil gangs grooming our vulnerable young girls

The [Home Secretary writes in the Mail on Sunday](#). It sounds good, but other [Home Secretaries have talked the talk](#), and may have been sincere but were [defeated by their own Civil Servants](#), an infiltrated 5th column.

The time has come to right one of the greatest injustices seen in Britain in modern times. The systematic rape, abuse and exploitation of young girls by organised gangs of older men – and the disgraceful failure of the authorities to act despite ample evidence – is a stain on our country.



The grooming gangs scandal stretches back many years and continues to this day. It is nine years since Professor Alexis Jay's devastating report on abuse in Rotherham. Dozens of trials have taken place in which harrowing victim testimony

has made clear not only the suffering caused by evil predators but also how cries for help were ignored by people in authority. Such people were more interested in their careers and political correctness than in protecting and helping the vulnerable.

During last year's Conservative leadership contest, Rishi Sunak pledged that if he became Prime Minister he would make stamping out grooming gangs, and justice for their victims, a personal priority. The Government will now make good on that promise.

There are four critical facts about the grooming gangs phenomenon. Each must be acknowledged and addressed in turn if we are to eradicate these gangs and bring justice to their victims.

First, the victims were – and are – some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Young females, overwhelmingly white girls from disadvantaged or troubled backgrounds . . .

Second, the perpetrators are groups of men, almost all British-Pakistani, who hold cultural attitudes completely incompatible with British values. They have been left mostly unchallenged both within their communities and by wider society, despite their activities being an open secret. Many of them have gone unpunished and remain at large. *Even that statement is a fudge; many of the gangs are indeed men of Pakistani background, but they are not Pakistani Christians or the diminishing number of Pakistani Hindus. But other gangs are men of Bangladeshi background (who technically were Pakistani [East] until 1971) , in Bristol the gang was Somali men, in Chelmsford Iranians, another gang in Newcastle was Kurdish, in Yeovil Turkish. Two members of the Oxford gang were North African. The unifying factor is Islam.*

Third, the authorities who had a duty to safeguard the girls –

local politicians, social workers, teachers, police officers and others – have often looked the other way. . . they thought it more likely that they would be accused of racism than praised for stopping the mistreatment. Tragically, that assessment, however morally debased, may have been accurate.

Finally – and most urgent – is the fact that the systemic abuse of young girls by organised grooming gangs is still happening today in communities up and down the country. We must end it.

There is, however, one recommendation which is particularly relevant to eradicating grooming gangs – and which we know that abuse victims, more broadly, are keen to see Government take forward as soon as possible.

The inquiry found repeated individual and institutional failures to report child sexual abuse. It recommended that the Government should introduce a mandatory duty for professionals with safeguarding responsibilities to report any signs or suspicions of such abuse. Had this duty been in place already, countless children would have been better protected against grooming gangs and against sexual abusers more widely.

That is why I have committed to introduce Mandatory Reporting across the whole of England.

When Stephen Lawrence was murdered in 1993 and the state initially failed to deliver justice, the public perceived that the victims of racism were second-class victims. A similar perception exists today in respect to the young girls who are victims of grooming gangs.

I will not allow that perception to stand. It is therefore essential that we track down and punish the grooming gangs with the same sense of mission and determination that we rightly demonstrated in pursuing the murderers of Stephen Lawrence.

On Monday the Prime Minister will set out further measures to tackle the problem, to find and punish the predators, and to bring justice to the victims.

Fine words. But unless the teachers and social workers and junior police officers can be given a huge dose of courage and moral fibre (and some have shown it) there is still no protection for them here against the smear of 'racism' and 'Islamophobia'. A reprimand for not complying with Mandatory Reporting is less of a slur on a future career than to be branded as a racist Islamophobe.

Stripping as many as possible convicted defendants of their British citizenship and actually deporting them direct from prison would also be a very good step. No hiding place indeed.