

# Tommy, Nigel, and Elon

By Bruce Bawer

In cities all over England, so-called grooming gangs – that is, Muslim rape crews – have been in operation for decades, and news about them has made headlines on and off for years. In the last week or two, however, the issue has risen to the surface as never before. “Britain’s grooming gangs scandal is attracting attention,” [wrote](#) Charlie Peters of GB News on January 2. “It’s happened before, but now it seems different.” Indeed, Brendan O’Neill said in a recent interview that “a lot of people” in Britain appear to be hearing about the grooming gangs for the first time. How on earth is this possible?



In any event, one reason why the issue has returned to the front burner is that Jess Phillips, Britain’s Safeguarding Minister, has refused to order a government

inquiry into child sexual abuse in Oldham, which is part of Greater Manchester. Another reason is that Elon Musk began tweeting (X-ing?) in condemnation of the government inaction on the rape gangs – and in support of the courageous Tommy Robinson, the Luton lad (now age 42) who’s been a target of the British establishment ever since he began blowing the whistle on them many years ago. On January 2, he posted: “Free Tommy Robinson!” It’s Jess Phillips, not Tommy, opined Elon, who should be behind bars. Elon’s tweets about Tommy and the rape gangs “exploded the political discourse in this

country," [said](#) British podcaster Carl Benjamin, a supporter of Tommy.

Tommy, as you may know, has been in prison since October. His crimes are as follows. First, in his documentary *Silenced*, in violation of a court order, he contradicted the official narrative about a young Syrian immigrant who was, as Tommy showed, not a victim but a thug. Second, also in violation of the same court order, he talked about that young immigrant on Jordan Peterson's podcast, screened *Silenced* in Trafalgar Square, and posted it online (where it's accumulated over 150 million views). Third, In supposed violation of the Terrorism Act, he refused to let the police access the contents of his mobile phone, which contained confidential information about his sources. This isn't Tommy's first stretch in the hoosegow. The powers that be recognize him as a threat to their power and are determined to bring him down on any pretext they can. As Lavrentiy Beria said, "Show me the man and I'll show you the crime." In short, Tommy is a political prisoner. And Elon understands that.

Elon's posts about Tommy prompted a range of reactions. Tommy's supporters were delighted. But many of Tommy's critics were outraged at what they described as the attempt by a foreigner to interfere in British politics. Winston Marshall (who left the band Mumson & Sons after his public enthusiasm for Andy Ngo's book about Antifa caused outrage on the left) [shot](#) these critics down tidily:

*If it's acceptable for British politicians to kneel for George Floyd, why is it not acceptable for American citizens to tweet about the victims of British rape gangs?*

*If it's acceptable for Labour to send 100 staff to the US to campaign for Kamala, why is it not acceptable for American citizens to opine on British politics?*

*If it's acceptable for Labour's leading politicians...to*

*slander Trump as racist, why is it not acceptable for Americans to criticise British politicians for the systemic betrayal of British children?*

*If it's acceptable for Westminster elites to praise Biden/Kamala, why is it unacceptable for American elites to praise Farage?*

Farage, of course, is Nigel Farage, longtime friend of Donald Trump and head of the Reform UK Party, which since its founding in 2018 has been positioning itself as the *real* conservative party, the party for patriots and ordinary people – in effect, the British equivalent of the MAGA movement. Nigel firmly backs calls for a government inquiry into grooming gangs. But in a January 4 [interview](#) – and here's where things get messy – Nigel vigorously rejected the proposition that Tommy is a political prisoner. Tommy, he added, was not welcome to join Reform UK. Nigel even suggested, disgracefully, that Tommy has crusaded against the grooming gangs in order to turn a buck. (Sorry – a pound.) Nigel's deputy, Richard Tice, agreed. Back in October, Tice dismissed Tommy's supporters by referring to them as "all of that lot." On January 5 he [reiterated](#) his distaste for Tommy: "I'm not interested in Mr. Yaxley Lennon, or Robinson, or a convicted criminal," he told an interviewer for GB News. "I'm interested in how we get this country growing again."

Disgusting. Yes, Tommy is a convicted criminal. So is every patriotic Brit who's now in jail for expressing concern online about grooming gangs and other aspects of the Islamization of Britain. (And yes, Tommy goes by a fake name. So did Cary Grant.) The fact is that by setting themselves so firmly against Tommy, Nigel and Tice alienated a hell of a lot of voters, some of whom began asking: is Nigel leading a real revolution, or is he just controlled opposition? Tice's "all of that lot" putdown drew furious comments online: "Tice & his demonization of Tommy is making me consider revoking my

membership.” “Richard thinks he can have a grass roots movement without the grass roots.” “The problem is, if they keep saying we don’t care about Tommy, they actually don’t care about freedom of speech.” On January 4, YouTuber Paul Thorpe put out a blistering hour-long [video](#) in which he withdrew his support for Nigel. In addition, Nigel and Tice put themselves in a ticklish position in regard to Elon – who has expressed support for Reform UK and discussed the possibility of throwing some cash their way – and also, perhaps, in regard to Trump, who these days is even closer to Elon than to Nigel. On January 4, [addressing](#) Reform UK’s party conference, Nigel celebrated his friendship with Trump and described Elon as a supporter of Reform and of himself (but omitted to mention their disagreement over Tommy).

In the same speech, Nigel decried the grooming gangs’ predations – but instead of admitting that these predations are a distinctively Muslim phenomenon, rooted in the doctrines of Islam, he spoke about “the mass rape abomination.” Sorry, but to dodge the real issue in this way is cowardly and useless. The sad truth, alas, is that Nigel is terrified of alienating Muslim voters. Even when he was the face of Brexit – which, he argued, needed to be ratified so that Brits could put an end to mass immigration and control their own borders – he consistently refused to say that Islam was in any way part of the problem. He left the UK Independence Party (UKIP) in 2018 because its then leader, Gerard Batten, *did* acknowledge that Islam was problematic. Nigel [said](#) that he had no interest in “fighting a religious crusade.” Even if Nigel wanted to change his tune now, he could hardly do so, given that the chairman of Reform UK is – believe it or not – a self-identified Muslim named Zia Yusuf. (I call him “self-identified” because in a [paean](#) to Nigel last June, Yusuf spoke up for “equality under the law,” and freedom of speech and religion – not exactly Koranic values.)

Nigel isn’t alone in his ticklishness about Islam. Yes, it’s

common all over the Western world – but it’s particularly endemic in the UK. In Germany, Italy, France, and the Netherlands, the police have been known, from time to time, to put down rowdy Muslim protests; in Britain, the cops consistently go after the people who criticize those protests. In no Western country other than Britain, moreover, are Muslims consistently labeled with the word “Asians” or with any other such euphemism. (Even the usually admirable editor of *Spiked*, Brendan O’Neill, in a recent [interview](#) about the renewed interest in grooming gangs, used the weasel terms “certain communities” and “Asians.”)

But there’s yet another problem that’s more endemic in the UK than elsewhere in the West – and that’s the class system. If Nigel and Tice were able to welcome Tommy Robinson into their fold, they might well have a winning movement comparable to Trump’s. But they’re constitutionally very disinclined to do such a thing. They claim to be spearheading a populist revolution – to be speaking for the downtrodden, the regular folks. But they can only go so far down that road, because neither one of them is a member of the working class. They’re men who wear Savile Row suits and who know how to dine at a three-star Michelin restaurant and who, quite simply, talk a certain way. They’re products of the British class system – it’s in their DNA – and try as they might, they can’t keep from looking upon the lower orders in pretty much the same way that Hillary Clinton does. To her, they’re “deplorables”; to Tice, they’re “that lot.” (And they’re not alone on the British right. The *Telegraph* is a conservative daily, but on January 3 its associate editor, Gordon Rayner, [praised](#) Nigel for having “no time for Robinson.”)

So when they look at Tommy they don’t see a hero, as I do. They see somebody who expresses himself in what they consider a vulgar manner. Douglas Murray is brilliant at laying it on the line about Islam while still sounding clubbable (as upper-class Brits put it, or used to). But every time Tommy opens

his mouth to make exactly the same points as Douglas, he sounds, to the likes of Nigel and Tice, like a lowbrow bigot. The British elite, truth be told, has always viewed the proles as bigots. That same elite has also always had a thing – what to call it? a fetish? a yen? – for Arabs and Islam, the prime example thereof being Lawrence of Arabia. So the reflexive tendency of types like Nigel to keep a distance from people like Tommy has nothing to do with real differences of opinion. It's entirely about a class gulf, a culture gulf, a style gulf.

After Elon and Nigel both had their say on Tommy, there was speculation that Elon, to please Nigel, might back off from supporting the lad from Luton. But that's not Elon. On January 5, out of the blue, he [tweeted](#), with devastating succinctness: "The Reform Party needs a new leader. Farage doesn't have what it takes." If Elon's expression of support for Tommy shook up British politics, this sudden thumbs-down for Nigel – the day after the Reform UK conference! – amounted to a category-7 earthquake. One is free to wonder how this will affect the Trump-Farage alliance. In any case, what matters is that Elon's right. And after his tweet about Nigel, the latter's unwillingness to grapple with Islam will almost certainly prove to be even more problematic for his fledgling party, which stands the best chance of saving Britain from the lunatic left and its Muslim allies. For what it's worth, I'm with Elon. Dump Nigel, folks, and replace him with – well, if not Tommy, then with somebody like Tommy, someone who respects and understands Tommy, and someone who grasps the plain and simple fact that Tommy's cause is Reform's cause.

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