

Mr Paul Dacre
Daily Mail
Northcliffe House
2 Derry Street
Kensington
London
W8 5TT

Respond to letter at:
Muslim Council of Britain
P.O Box 57330
London
E1 2WJ

20th February 2014

Dear Mr Dacre,

We write to express our condemnation of a recent article published by Richard Littlejohn in your newspaper. Entitled "Jolly Jihadi's Outing to Legoland", Mr Littlejohn deploys the most hateful stereotypes of Muslims to attack an individual.

Our condemnation is not about the attacks on Mr Haitham al-Haddad: he is perfectly capable of responding to the accusations put to him if minded to do so. Many of us may well disagree with the views attributed to him. Rather, we are speaking out at the insidious and hateful tropes Mr Littlejohn uses for his argument.

Mr Littlejohn may think he is humorous, satirical in fact. But there is nothing funny about inciting hatred. The language he deploys is exactly the same as those used by racists and the far-right. One needs only to peruse the comments below his article online to see the hatred against Muslims Mr Littlejohn has generated.

Would you allow similar hateful stereotypes to be used when writing about other faith or race communities?

Mr Littlejohn may suggest his words of hatred are directed at one figure rather than mainstream Muslims. This is a poor excuse. He accuses one figure of using hate speech by deploying hate speech himself.

As a cross section of Britain's Muslim community, along with many of our fellow Britons, we state clearly and loudly that Mr Littlejohn's article is the worst form of bigotry. This goes beyond causing offence. Your newspaper has published an incitement to hate Muslims.

So, we urge you, in the interests of decency and fairplay, to retract Mr Littlejohn's article and to issue an apology not just to British Muslims, but to your readers and the great British public at large.

Yours,

Farooq Murad,
Secretary General, Muslim Council of Britain

Fiyaz Mughal,
Founder and Director, Faith Matters and Tell Mama

Julian Bond
Director, Christian Muslim Forum

Steven Derby,
Director, Interfaith Matters

Ali Qureshi
Secretary General, Union of Muslim Organisations (UMO)

Maulana Sarfraz Madni,
Chairman, Mosques & Imams National Advisory Board

Ameena Blake,
Vice-President, Muslim Association of Britain

Ali Master,
Council of European Jamaats (COEJ)

Saleha Islam
Chief Executive, Muslim Youth Helpline

Sufyan G Ismail,
Trustee, Engage

Mazhar Khan
Executive Board Member, Muslim Council of Scotland

Saleem Kidwai OBE,
Secretary General, Muslim Council of Wales

Mohammed Aslam-Ijaz,
General Secretary, Council of Mosques, South London and Southern Counties

Abdul Hamid Qureshi
Chair, Lancashire Council of Mosques

Ufuk Secgin
Chairman, London Islamic Culture and Recreation Society (LICARS)

Ahmed Khelloufi
Executive Director, Muslim Welfare House (London)

Mohammed Kozbar
British Muslim Initiative and Finsbury Park Mosque

Sheikh Hojjat Ramzy
Chair, Iqra Institute, Oxford

Muhammad Jinani
Young Muslim Organisation UK

Dr Mohammed Idrees
General Secretary, UK Islamic Mission

Ajmal Masroor
London Imam and Director of Barefoot Institute

Yusuf Al Khoei
Al-Khoei Foundation

Moulana Shahid Raza,
Chief Imam, Leicester Central Mosque

Sir Iqbal Sacranie
Balham Mosque & Tooting Islamic Centre

Dr Muhammad Abdul Bari
East London Mosque and London Muslim Centre

Talha Ahmad
Head of Media, Dawatul Islam UK & Eire

Yousuf Bhailok
Trustee /Chair. 'Al Jamiah Al Islamiyah Darul Uloom Lancashire

Rashid Brora
General Secretary, Southampton Medina Mosque Trust Ltd