

Harassment in Public Life

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons)

Sadly, abuse and intimidation are directed not just against those in public life, but against their families and those who work alongside them. I am sure the whole House will want to join me in paying tribute to our amazing teams in our constituency and parliamentary offices—in my case, Nina Smith, Lucy Mannion and Daragh Quinn—who deal with people with unfailing courtesy and respect. It is a great shame that, after I am targeted as a traitor by organisations such as the Daily Mail, the extent of the abusive calls is unfortunately so great that I have to ask them to work from home, and that when Members listen to this stuff—when we go in and work alongside them the next day—we find that it is truly shocking and unacceptable.

Amber Rudd The Secretary of State for the Home Department

I thank my hon. Friend for making such an important point. It is for us all to remember that our staff—they are the frontline—so often have to deal with these abusive phone calls, and they do such a fantastic job in usually protecting us from them, but they often have to deal with a torrent of abuse. Yes, I completely share her view, and I wholeheartedly endorse what she says about the people who work for her, as I do about everybody whose staff working for them put up with a level of abuse that we all have to endure.

They Work For You