

# Alarming scenes inside and outside Parliament last night.

*We are not 'sleepwalking' into a crisis; as Carl Benjamin, aka [Sargon of Akkad tweeted](#) earlier "We didn't sleepwalk into it. Many people raised the alarm over the preceding decades, and they were shouted down as racists and xenophobes, despite the harm it was causing to regular people. Now the problem has reached Westminster, the political class reluctantly recognises it."*

*Last night the House of Commons debated, or tried to debate a motion on the matter of a ceasefire in Gaza. [Politico](#) puts it better than I could*

LONDON – Angry MPs staged a walkout in the House of Commons Wednesday night and vented their fury at Speaker Lindsay Hoyle, as a symbolic vote on a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas descended into chaos.

MPs from the Scottish National Party and a raft of Conservatives walked out of the parliamentary chamber in protest at Hoyle, who they accused of tipping the scales in favor of Labour – a charge denied by Hoyle in an emotional statement.

MPs had been set to vote on a motion from the Scottish National Party calling for an "immediate" cease-fire in Gaza. But Hoyle intervened to allow the opposition Labour Party – which feared a rebellion from its own MPs amid pressure over its response to the conflict – to put forward its own amendment to the motion, which also backed an "immediate humanitarian cease-fire"...

Hoyle's move had little precedent, and was criticized [on the](#)

[record](#) by the chamber's most senior official, Clerk Tom Goldsmith. The decision denied the SNP – seeking to exploit Labour divisions on Gaza – a chance to vote on their own motion on an SNP opposition day.

Hoyle's intervention sparked outrage too from the ruling Conservatives, who had planned to offer their own Gaza motion but withdrew from the process in protest.

*That's the constitutional bit in brief. And yes, we do have a constitution, and it is written down, but not in one single document. I have seen with my own eyes how the spreading of constitutional requirements across laws and statutes, some centuries old, should and did prevent a crafty sweeping away of certain ancient checks and balances. But I digress. This is the [Independent](#) on the aspect of last night's events I find most alarming.*

Underlying the parliamentary tug-of-war are rising tensions over the Israel-Hamas war, with hundreds of thousands of people marching through London last Saturday in support of the Palestinian cause and figures showing that the number of antisemitic incidents in the United Kingdom jumped almost 150% last year.

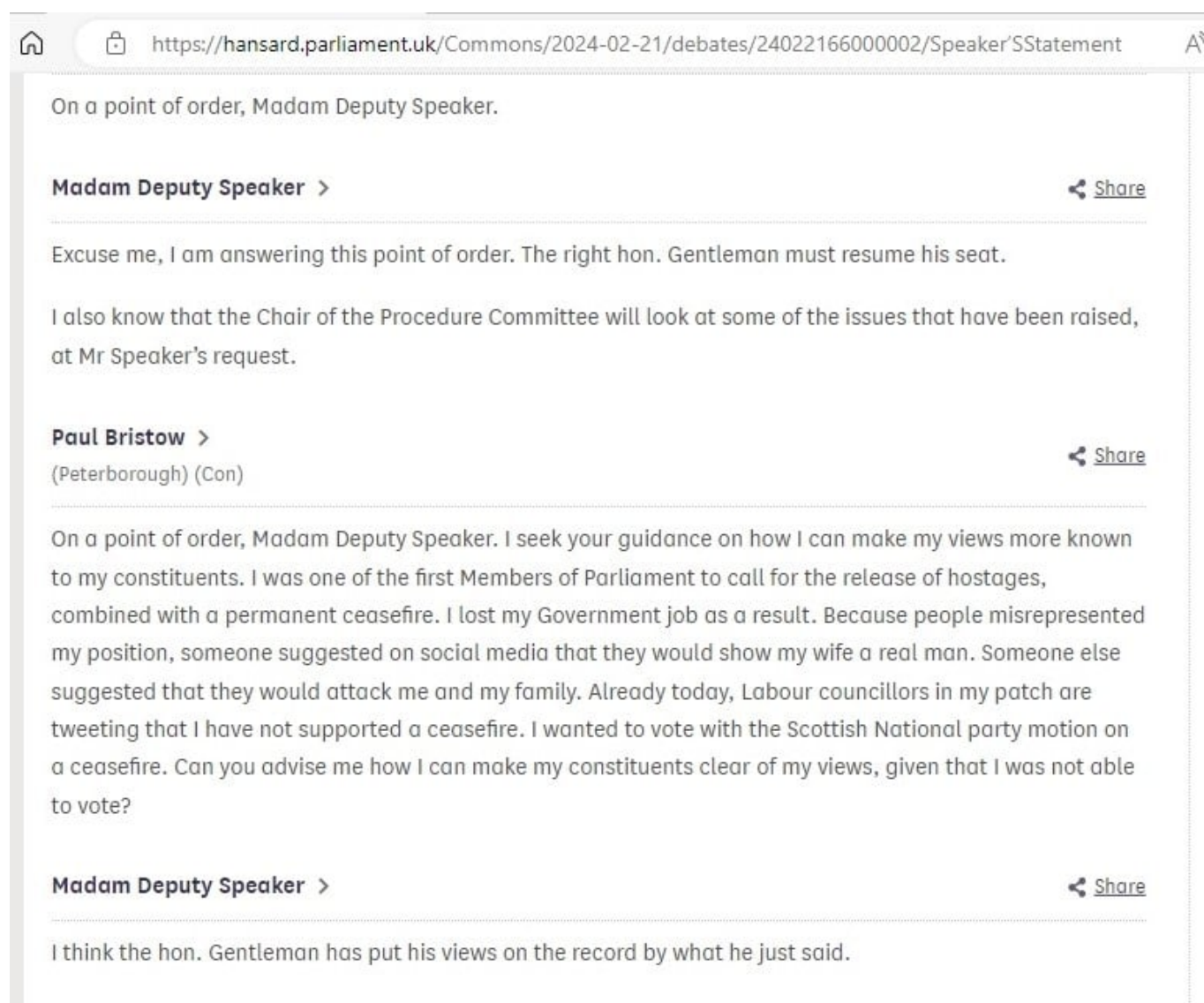
That is spilling over into Parliament, where the Gaza issue has been “weaponized” and some lawmakers believe they have to vote a particular way to ensure their own safety and the safety of their families, Conservative Charles Walker said during Wednesday's debate.

“This is a far bigger issue than the debate we're having tonight, because if people are changing their votes in this place, or changing their behaviors in this place, because they are frightened what may happen to them or their families out there, then we have a real problem,” Walker said. “So this point scoring off each other is not going to resolve many issues.”

*One frightened MP is Paul Bristow of Peterborough. [The Telegraph](#) reported*

Paul Bristow, the Conservative MP for Peterborough ... pleaded with the Deputy Speaker for him to be allowed somehow to vote for a ceasefire anyway, fearing that he and his family might be attacked by constituents if he hadn't been seen to do so.

I thought, have they got that right? I checked [Hansard](#) the definitive record of everything said verbatim in Parliament.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2024-02-21/debates/24022166000002/Speaker'SStatement>. The page content is as follows:

On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Madam Deputy Speaker** > [Share](#)

Excuse me, I am answering this point of order. The right hon. Gentleman must resume his seat.

I also know that the Chair of the Procedure Committee will look at some of the issues that have been raised, at Mr Speaker's request.

**Paul Bristow** > [Share](#)  
(Peterborough) (Con)

On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I seek your guidance on how I can make my views more known to my constituents. I was one of the first Members of Parliament to call for the release of hostages, combined with a permanent ceasefire. I lost my Government job as a result. Because people misrepresented my position, someone suggested on social media that they would show my wife a real man. Someone else suggested that they would attack me and my family. Already today, Labour councillors in my patch are tweeting that I have not supported a ceasefire. I wanted to vote with the Scottish National party motion on a ceasefire. Can you advise me how I can make my constituents clear of my views, given that I was not able to vote?

**Madam Deputy Speaker** > [Share](#)

I think the hon. Gentleman has put his views on the record by what he just said.

*Who knows who else has been frightened? [Mike Freer, MP for Golders Green](#) (area of North London with famous Jewish Community) said two weeks ago that he was retiring at the next general election as he fears for the safety of his staff and*

family after death and arson threats. [Barry Sheerman of Huddersfield](#) says he has 'become a person who "watches where he walks" as a result of intimidation and did not feel like there was "much there on the receiving end" by way of support for him.'

*Because this is what was happening outside Parliament while the 'debate' was going on inside.*

*The modern call for the destruction of Israel, ie the From the River to the Sea Palestine will be Free chant beamed onto the Elizabeth Tower (that contains the bell Big Ben)*

*A call for genocide of Jews being projected on the Big Ben*  
[@metpoliceuk](#), you there?  
[pic.twitter.com/Indb0ikd9v](https://pic.twitter.com/Indb0ikd9v)

– Dr. Eli David (@DrEliDavid) [February 22, 2024](#)

Steve Speakers Corner has other video. This one example is typical. I don't need to over egg the pudding. Martin Daubney was an MEP; he is now also a journalist.

*Martin Daubney egged at Palestine protest* [@MartinDaubney](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/uZU4sx8ITX](https://pic.twitter.com/uZU4sx8ITX)

– SteveSpCorner (@SteveRightNLeft) [February 21, 2024](#)

*Note that the policeman only follows the assailant for 3 paces.*

*Members of Parliament are now fearful and intimidated by their Muslim/pro-Gaza constituents (but not their patriotic indigenous ones) but still nothing is done. [Muslim Vote](#) says it wants to unseat MPs. The likes of [Ali Harbi Ali](#) and [Roshonara Choudary](#), wanted the MPs dead.*

*While drafting this post [The Telegraph](#) has picked up another MP's comments today about the projection of the chant on the Tower.*

Police stood by as "From the River to the Sea" was projected onto Parliament, a senior Jewish MP has said.

[Andrew Percy](#), a Tory backbencher, raised concerns after pro-Palestine protesters broadcast the slogan "From the river to the sea" onto the Elizabeth Tower, which houses Big Ben, on Wednesday night.

He spoke out during a Commons debate that saw many MPs express fears for their safety and warn that threats from "Islamist extremists" were stifling democracy.

Mr Percy warned the Commons of the rising tide of anti-Semitism, saying he had felt safer during a recent trip to Israel than he did in Britain.

"For months I've been standing up here talking about the people on our streets demanding 'death to Jews', demanding Jihad, demanding intifadas as the police stand by and allow that to happen," he said. "Last night a genocidal call of 'From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free' was projected onto this building. That message says no Jew is welcome in the state of Israel or in that land. This is going to continue happening because we're not dealing with it."

Penny Mordaunt, the Commons Leader, told him the authorities were looking into who projected the message and that prosecutions would be brought.

It came after Sir Lindsay Hoyle, the Speaker, sparked angry scenes on Wednesday by breaking with convention to select a Labour amendment on Gaza. He revealed that he made his decision after being warned of threats to the safety of Labour MPs if they were not allowed to vote on their own party's proposal.

Mr Percy was not the only Tory MP to criticise the Metropolitan Police's handling of months of pro-Palestinian protests in London.

Dr Matthew Offord, the MP for Hendon, also attacked the force for its inaction in the face of growing intimidation of Jewish people. He said: "Many of my constituents have faced a level of anti-Semitism that we've never seen before. My constituents remind me not only of the calls for jihad on the streets of London and the Metropolitan Police refusing to do anything about it. They remind me about men driving through North London threatening to rape Jewish women and the CPS [Crown Prosecution Service] then declining to prosecute them."

Robert Jenrick, a former immigration minister, added: "We have allowed our streets to be dominated by Islamist extremists, and British Jews and others to be too intimidated to walk through central London week after week. Now we're allowing Islamist extremists to intimidate British members of Parliament. This is wrong, it has to stop."

*We, the constituents, the citizens, the general population have been trying for 20 years, maybe more. You, the Members of Parliament are the ones with the power. Now that YOU are threatened DO SOMETHING.*