

# Rotherham MP Sarah Champion: Left 'failing to confront truth of sex crimes'

From [\*The Daily Mail\*](#)

The Left is turning a blind eye to sex grooming gangs for fear of being branded racist, a sacked Labour MP has said. Sarah Champion was dismissed from the shadow front bench last month for saying that Britain has a 'problem' with British Pakistani men exploiting white girls.

In her first interview since then, the former shadow women and equalities secretary said the 'floppy left' was failing vulnerable children with its silence. 'If I'm on the floppy left, to be accused of racism is probably the worst thing you can call me. That fear will motivate me to step away from a lot of topics I'd maybe tackle head on if I didn't have that phobia.'

In a newspaper piece last month, the MP said: 'Britain has a problem with British Pakistani men raping and exploiting white girls.' She quit her role after the piece caused an outcry among her Labour colleagues.

After her resignation Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn – an MP in Islington, north London – said his party would not 'blame' or 'demonise any particular group'. He accused the paper of inciting Islamophobia and stigmatising 'entire communities'. But Labour was accused of stifling free speech.

The Rotherham MP used an interview with The Times yesterday to highlight differences in attitudes between the capital and Labour's northern heartlands.

Ms Champion said that many Labour members and politicians

based in London had “never been challenged by a reality that’s different” from their largely “tolerant, multicultural world”.

“London is not representative of the UK and it’s definitely not representative of the north of England in relation to race,” she said. “Rotherham and many post-industrial towns are still segregated.”

Ms Champion’s constituency is among a lengthening list of English towns, including Rochdale, Oxford and, most recently, Newcastle upon Tyne, in which groups of men largely of Pakistani origin have been convicted of multiple sex crimes against vulnerable white girls.

No similar prosecution has occurred in London. *The first mention I have seen of something I have long pondered, being a Londoner, albeit an old school Cockney who like most of my fellows lives on the edges and fringes now.* Ms Champion said that the “multicultural policies that I, through my working career, grew up with, and which Jeremy Corbyn grew up with, need a translation to come outside London”.

She said: “It’s not that Yorkshire’s racist, it’s that Yorkshire is very blunt and doesn’t sugar-coat anything. In Rotherham, people’s frustration is that if they all knew what was going on, why didn’t the people who were meant to protect them do anything about it?”

She said she found it extraordinary that some on the liberal left seemed less offended by her words than by her decision to write an article for a newspaper such as *The Sun*.

“Once you make a decision to be open and up front about what’s going on in this country, you want to get the broadest number of people to hear that message,” she said. “Rotherham has a working-class demographic and a lot of my older constituents read *The Sun*. I’m a Labour politician, I want us to be in government and I wanted to let people know we’re taking this seriously. I wanted to reach out to people that we don’t

normally reach out to.”

*There have been cases in Essex where most of the white working class of East London have moved to. There was a case of men from Waltham Forest trafficking a girl from Chingford in the north of the borough on the fringe of Essex into Ipswich. I was sure in my mind that it would be going on somewhere, on a smaller scale, covered up of course, and maybe involving black non-muslim girls but that eventually it would come to light. But with all the publicity of recent years it doesn't seem to. London is now largely a city of new-comers. Maybe the support networks of the new-comers are too strong, and vulnerable black girls will not meet the 'racist' taboo if they seek help.*