

View from the House

The country fell silent at 12pm for a minute on Friday 3 July to remember those who tragically lost their lives in the senseless murders on a beach in Tunisia. Holidaymakers enjoying themselves one minute and the next injured or dead. Everyone is asking why?- what drove this man to kill innocent people who had no connection with him?.

I joined many people of Walsall and Walsall FC fans at the Banks's Stadium to lay flowers and to remember three special fans- Joel Richards, Adrian Evans and Patrick Evans- all members of the same family and 3 generations of Saddlers fans. The area outside the main entrance was covered in flowers, Walsall shirts and scarves. Their families came out to join in the silent tribute and prayers. It was fitting that the Club facilitated this and supported the family.

The people of the Emanuel Church in Charleston North Carolina who responded in a measured way, when faced with the same thing, taught us forgiveness. It is difficult when innocent people going about their daily lives are caught up in these random acts of violence. As the Revd Jesse Jackson, who paid a visit to Walsall few years ago, said of the killings in Charleston, "the killer was taught to hate".

That is why we need to challenge people when their only message is intolerance of anyone who is different. The message that the EDL promotes has to be opposed. They can exercise their right to gather together but not in Walsall- in a field perhaps - where local people and businesses do not have to face their message of hatred and intolerance.

There was consternation in the House when the Government decided to use Parliament's standing orders rather than legislation to push through "English votes for English Laws." If a Bill has an English only element, the Speaker must certify this is the case and only English MPs can vote during its passage. But the English MPs also vote for the Bill at the end the so called double majority leading to some MPs having 2 votes and 2 classes of MPs. The Government has not consulted MPs and I am not sure if even the Speaker was consulted. It was announced in the House in a Statement from the Leader of the House. This may have consequences as to whether Parliament continues to be a Parliament for the whole of the United Kingdom.

Valerie Vaz MP

Walsall South

6 July 2015