

Home Office or giant squid?



After weeks of pain over prisoners let out, illegal aliens let in, and criminals let off, the perpetually distressed Home Office reacts to its plight like a giant squid, discharging vast quantities of a dark inky substance into its surroundings – that is vicious newspaper copy about the nation’s most hated species... see left. The Home

Office ([press release](#)) has expelled 60 paedophiles from probation hostels located near schools (presumably to somewhere where children cannot be reached?) and promised to consider ‘Sarah’s law’, which would give public access to the address details of convicted and released sex offenders – responding to a [campaign by the News of the World](#).

The possible negative consequences include: vigilante lynch mobs, offenders going into hiding or evading registration, or interruption of treatment and therapy. There are possible positive consequences in greater safety, parental awareness etc – and we should always challenge complacent officialdom insisting that the public cannot be told. I don’t really know what the answer is, but I doubt that many others do either. The danger is that many think they do know – the *News of the World* claims its [polling](#) has shown 82% of support for Sarah’s law, though the polling company, MORI, says the [data is much more ambiguous](#) depending on how the question is framed.

However, a department against the ropes might lash out with a headline-grabbing populist measure whatever the evidence says – and it wouldn’t be the first time... Who would be to blame for that? Desperate politicians and their over-compliant officials, opportunistic cynical newspapers, or a panicked and suggestible public that elects the former and buys the latter?