# Conservative MP Andrew Griffith criticised for insensitive Irish famine remarks amid economic debate



A senior Conservative MP has stirred significant controversy following his remarks during a Westminster session that have been widely deemed “offensive and insensitive” in the context of the Irish potato famine. Andrew Griffith, the Shadow Secretary of State for Business and Trade, hastily dismissed suggestions that his comments were linked to Ireland, asserting, “There was no reference to Ireland.” Such a denial appears not only tone-deaf but also disingenuous, especially when considering the grim legacy of the famine, which saw the tragic loss of around one million lives in the mid-19th century due to a devastating potato blight compounded by governmental neglect.

The incident unfolded as Griffith lashed out at Labour and Chancellor Rachel Reeves over the soaring household bills, calling it an "Awful April" for countless UK households weighed down by crippling financial stress. Against this backdrop, Griffith's remarks have come under a harsh spotlight, prompting an examination not only of their content but also of their potential fallout. The intricate intersection of economic policies and historical sensitivities highlights a broader failing in current political discourse, particularly under the new Labour government that seems indifferent to the real struggles facing families today.

As part of Kemi Badenoch's newly appointed shadow cabinet, Griffith has a pivotal role in sculpting Conservative strategy while in opposition. He is expected to lead conversations around critical issues, including the severe economic challenges that everyday families are grappling with. However, in the wake of his insensitive remarks, he now finds himself entangled in a controversy that undermines the very discussions he ought to be advancing.

This episode is emblematic of deeper-rooted issues within the Conservative party that reflect a lack of sensitivity to historical injustices. In an era where the political landscape is rapidly shifting under the Labour government, grasping the weight of historical contexts when addressing economic struggles is crucial. It is not just about the present implications of fiscal policies but also about acknowledging the legacy of suffering that continues to impact societal discussions. As accountability grows, there is an urgent need for all political actors, including those in opposition, to conduct themselves with greater responsibility and awareness in their communications, especially when addressing such sensitive matters.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/politics/tory-mp-denies-making-any-reference-to-ireland-with-famine-remark-in-house-of-commons/a1903343844.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gbnews.com/politics/video-andrew-griffith-ravhel-reeves-household-bills> - Conservative MP Andrew Griffith criticized Labour and Chancellor Rachel Reeves over rising household bills, stating that while it's April Fools' Day, it's the British people who are being taken for fools. This remark was made as millions of UK households faced significant bill increases in what was termed 'Awful April'.
3. <https://news.stv.tv/politics/whos-who-in-kemi-badenochs-new-conservative-shadow-cabinet> - An overview of Kemi Badenoch's new Conservative shadow cabinet, listing key positions and their respective members, including Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer Mel Stride MP and Shadow Secretary of State for Business and Trade Andrew Griffith MP.
4. <https://www.andrewgriffith.uk/news/andrew-griffith-mp-incredibly-disappointed-october-budget> - Andrew Griffith MP expressed disappointment over the October Budget, highlighting significant tax increases and borrowing, and raising concerns about specific measures affecting family farms, inheritance tax, VAT on independent school fees, business rates, and stamp duty for first-time buyers.
5. <https://members.parliament.uk/member/4874/contributions> - A record of Andrew Griffith MP's spoken contributions in the House of Commons, including debates on EU trading relationships, British steel, and the steel industry, showcasing his active participation in parliamentary discussions.
6. <https://www.thenational.scot/news/national/24263246.former-tory-mp-andrew-bridgen-links-excess-deaths-covid-vaccinations/> - Former Tory MP Andrew Bridgen linked excess deaths to COVID vaccinations, claiming that 20,000 premature deaths in 2023 had been 'airbrushed' away by officials, and criticized hospital policies during the pandemic.
7. <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/bridgen-israel-jewish-lobby-palestine//> - Conservative MP Andrew Bridgen defended his remarks about a 'Jewish lobby' during a House of Commons debate on Palestinian statehood, stating he is not antisemitic and that Britain should be a 'critical friend' of Israel.