

# ANTISEMITIC DISCOURSE in Britain 2023



100,000 at largest protest against antisemitism since Cable Street

## Three-quarters of Jews more fearful since 7/10

Survey reveals chilling impact

## We won't 'cower and accept antisemitism', PM pledges

The 7 October attacks emerged as a dominant theme of this year's main Holocaust Memorial Day event, as speaker after speaker referred to it and the subsequent rise in antisemitism and Islamophobia, writes *Aviv Fraser*.

Laura Marks, chair of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, set the tone by telling a packed Guildhall audience that everyone had been "appalled" by the Hamas atrocities and the ensuing "recent levels" of antisemitism and Islamophobia.

With this year's theme of the Pra-

to a young woman who had gone through 100 days of violence perpetrated by Hamas in Rwanda against Tutsis, Antisemitism Matters.

Marked contributions were included in the ceremony, including from Chanan Jonny Turpin, who sang *Et Vassil El Moale Achshavim*.

The chosen, of course, is the grandson of the late Holocaust survivor Gena Turpin, who met and married his soldier grandfather Norman after the liberation of Bergen-Belsen by the British army in 1945.



London, Sunday 26 November: 100,000 attend UK's largest protest against antisemitism since Battle Of Cable Street

ing many in the UK responded positively to university police action and we perceived, noted that many felt before the event and 240 said they did appear to feel better in the UK's context of war between us and Israel.

Similarly, in response to their attitude to British university authorities, 58 percent said they trust them less than they did before 7 October, a trend which would seem to confirm that Jewish families feel not enough is being done to stem rising antisemitic sentiment on campuses.

According to the results of the poll, conducted in November, 50 percent of British Jews say that following the Hamas attacks they feel the police less.

This would appear to be a response to the sight of inflammatory placards and chants going unopposed at a series of pro-Palestine protests across the country.

Quizzed about the impact of antisemitism, the polls suggest that 89 percent of British Jews think it has grown in the last five years, with two thirds (71 percent) of those surveyed suggesting that it has increased by a significant amount during the period.

The poll also revealed that many British Jews have personally experienced or witnessed antisemitic attacks in the last year. When surveyed, 15 percent of respondents

## Pride in the face of prejudice

Magen David sales are soaring with shops struggling to meet demand. Shul attendances are up. We might be grappling with despair, but we are also embracing a deep sense of communal identity. Now is the time for us to stand unapologetically tall as British Jews.

## 1,000 new volunteers for CST since 7 October

Community members answer the call to keep us safe

A surge of communal solidarity following the 7 October atrocities has inspired 1,000 new recruits and returning volunteers to step up to support the Community Security Trust (CST), writes *Aviv Fraser*.

It is just over three weeks, CST has received more antisemitic incidents than the 800 reported in the last six months in this year.

Community Against Antisemitism has also seen a big rise in volunteers, a spokesperson said. "We have already had the first...

He said that everyone was being interviewed and vetted, but that more people were already on training courses, run by CST. He expected that people did after October 7.

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## Police said: 'Hide your Jewish identity... we can't protect you'

By *Michelle Bevan*  
michellebevan@bbc.com

A man living being asked by Edinburgh police to hide his Jewish identity during a pro-Palestine march says it wasn't a isolated incident.

Danar Nitzan, 40, who was wearing a Magen David necklace at the event on 13 February, has had to be escorted for the past 20 years, he said.

Nitzan has started wearing the Magen David necklace after reading the Metropolitan Police in London was advising Jewish schoolchildren to hide their identities.

"I was outraged and immediately ordered a Magen David", Nitzan told Jewish News.

Nitzan says the extent of the 1,000-strong anti-Israel protest where a concerned

police officer, while attending Nitzan was being wearing illegal, suggested he take his Star of David necklace to avoid triggering the crowd, was caught on video by accident. The footage was shared widely across social media.

Nitzan said: "I took the phone out to take video of the protest when the police officer approached me and the camera was raised. I have been to previous outdoor protests, one just a week after 7 October in the city centre. I went there with an Israeli flag and it was the same thing."

"The police approached me immediately, saying they were under-staffed and if I looked at they wouldn't protect me and to remove my flag and walk away. This is not an isolated incident."

Originally from Israel, Nitzan says it's not his first time being involved in protest marches,

was. He was the commander of the response unit there. We studied together in college. He was arrested on that day (7 October). Luckily his wife and children survived. Later on a relative of mine was killed in action in the Gaza Strip fighting to try and end the hostage and get rid of Hamas. It's very personal for me, that all these people are calling 'From the River to the Sea', and for the destruction of Israel."

Nitzan has since approached his MSP Member of Scottish Parliament Miles Ruggie with the video. "He forwarded it to Police Scotland, and made an approach to the local commissioner asking about the incident. I'm also speaking with Police Scotland. I will ask them if this is specific."

Nitzan says he disagrees completely with "the whole notion that the Jews need to

to walk against the streets, I love Israel. And I've lived there most of my life. But my life is not here now and I'm very happy to fly the Israeli flag. Nothing much has changed. It's the same approach from the police in the streets. You may want to hide. We can't control it. What do you think the police do?"

A Police Scotland spokesperson told Jewish News: "We are aware of the video and the concerns are being reviewed."

The Home Office informed Jewish News to a statement from home secretary James Cleverly: "The rise in antisemitic hatred and abuse we have seen in the UK in recent months is a deeply disturbing trend."

"We've taken strong steps to confront this hatred - increasing funding for protective security at Jewish schools and places of worship, working with the police to ensure that

everything in my power to ensure they are safe, and just as importantly feel safe."

A spokesperson for Campaign Against Antisemitism said: "Yet again, a supposed power march has proved to be about everything but peace, so much so that police felt that they had to ask Jews to hide signs of their identity."

The message now, we have been asking for restrictions to be placed on these marches. The police are so outnumbered that they cannot cope and are unable to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens and, indeed, are oppressing the weak.

"If you want to know why 90 percent of British Jews say that they avoid travelling to a city centre if a major anti-Israel demonstration is taking place there, this is why."

Police have powers to ban or restrict these marches under the Public Order Act and it is

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Lead writer – Elliott Cohen, additional writer – Keith Feldman

Published by Community Security Trust, registered charity in England and Wales (1042391) & Scotland (SC043612) © 2024

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## Executive summary

- Antisemitism played a major and significant role in the national discourse in Britain following the Hamas-led terror attack on southern Israel on 7 October 2023.
- The Hamas-led attack on 7 October, the single biggest loss of Jewish life since the Holocaust, triggered not only a major spike in antisemitic hate crimes but also feelings of fear and anxiety amongst a large segment of the UK Jewish community. It caused many Jews to question their place within UK society.
- Extremists in the UK from various ideological directions took advantage of the horrific events to push antisemitic narratives, and antisemitic language was present and visible on anti-Israel demonstrations.
- In the aftermath of the attack, politicians from across the political spectrum, as well as senior police officers, expressed their solidarity with the Jewish community and expressed a hope that events in the Middle East would not lead to hate crimes on the streets of the UK.
- Some media companies, including the Guardian and GB News, had to deal with instances of antisemitism by staff or contributors. After the events of 7 October, the BBC faced numerous accusations of antisemitism in its news coverage.
- Social media platforms saw the amount of antisemitic and hate speech content online increase dramatically after the 7 October attack.
- There are continuing concerns at how Iran is using media and social media, for example through Press TV and the programme Palestine Declassified, to promote antisemitic discourse.
- There were some antisemitic comments or social media posts by members and candidates of the main political parties in 2023, but the mainstream parties took strong action to combat it.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission concluded that the Labour Party had made the changes required by its agreed action plan to address breaches of the Equality Act.
- Rebecca Tuck KC published her report, *Independent investigation into allegations of antisemitism within NUS* which was commissioned by the National Union of Students. The report gave examples of the antisemitism experienced by Jewish students and made a number of recommendations so that they could once again feel welcomed within NUS spaces or roles.
- In the aftermath of the 7 October attacks, the Union of Jewish Students set up a student welfare hotline, which received a large volume of calls from Jewish students with concerns amid a large rise in reports of antisemitic incidents on campus. Jewish students in schools also experienced a post-7 October spike in antisemitism. The government and opposition both responded quickly to a call for swift and decisive action against any threats to the welfare of Jewish students.
- Concerns were expressed by the Jewish Medical Association about rising antisemitism directed at Jewish healthcare professionals in the wake of 7 October.

# Introduction

This *CST Antisemitic Discourse in Britain* report analyses written and verbal communication, discussion and rhetoric about antisemitism and related issues in Britain during 2023. It is published annually by CST.<sup>1</sup>

‘Discourse’ is used in this report to mean ‘communicative action’: communication expressed in speech, written text, images and other forms of expression and propaganda.<sup>2</sup>

The report concentrates upon mainstream discourse. It cites numerous mainstream publications, groups and individuals who are by no means antisemitic, but whose behaviour may impact upon attitudes concerning Jews and antisemitism.

The report is not a survey of marginal or clandestine racist, extremist and radical circles, where antisemitism is much more common.

Where such material is quoted within this report, it is usually for comparison with more mainstream sources, or because of the wider influence that such material may have.

CST distinguishes antisemitic discourse from actual antisemitic incidents and hate crimes against Jews or Jewish organisations and property.<sup>3</sup>

The 2006 Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism noted the importance and complexity of antisemitic discourse and urged further study of it.<sup>4</sup> By 2008, the parliamentary inquiry process had led to the issuing of the first progress report of the government’s task force against antisemitism. This stated of antisemitic discourse:

**“Antisemitism in discourse is, by its nature, harder to identify and define than a physical attack on a person or place. It is more easily recognised by those who experience it than by those who engage in it...”**

*“Antisemitism in discourse is, by its nature, harder to identify and define than a physical attack on a person or place. It is more easily recognised by those who experience it than by those who engage in it.”*

*“Antisemitic discourse is also hard to identify because the boundaries of acceptable discourse have become blurred to the point that individuals and organisations are not aware when these boundaries have been crossed, and because the language used is more*

*subtle particularly in the contentious area of the dividing line between antisemitism and criticism of Israel or Zionism.”<sup>5</sup>*

The 2015 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* noted the earlier finding by MPs in the 2006 report that: *“the significance of public discourse is that it influences attitudes which in turn influence actions.”<sup>6</sup>*

1 Previous reports are available on the CST website: [www.cst.org.uk/publications](http://www.cst.org.uk/publications)

2 Paul Iganski & Abe Sweiry, *Understanding and Addressing the ‘Nazi Card’: Intervening Against Antisemitic Discourse*. London: European Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism (2009)

3 CST’s annual *Antisemitic Incidents Report*, available at [www.cst.org.uk/publications](http://www.cst.org.uk/publications)

4 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism*. London: The All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism (September 2006)

5 *All-Party Inquiry into Antisemitism: Government Response. One year on Progress Report*. London: The Stationery Office (12 May 2008), p. 12

6 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism*. London: The All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism (February 2015)

## Antisemitic discourse & antisemitism

Antisemitic discourse influences and reflects hostile attitudes to Jews and Jewish-related issues. Hostile attitudes can lead to hostile actions and damaging impacts.

Physically, antisemitic discourse may contribute to an atmosphere in which antisemitic hate crimes against Jews and Jewish institutions are more likely to occur. Psychologically, it can make Jews feel isolated, vulnerable and hurt.

The purpose of this report is to help reduce antisemitism by furthering the understanding of antisemitic discourse and its negative impacts on Jews and society as a whole.

### Antisemitic impacts of legitimate debate & media coverage

Antisemitic impacts may arise from entirely legitimate situations that have no antisemitic intention. Statistics show that hate crimes against perceived members of any particular group can be triggered (or exacerbated) by public discourse or events related to that particular group. For example, antisemitic incident levels typically rise in relation to some public events and stories involving Jews, Jewish institutions, or Jewish-related subjects such as Israel.<sup>7</sup>

Negative media coverage of, or political comment on, Jewish-related events may be entirely legitimate, fair and in the public interest. Nevertheless, those debates can encourage antisemites or cause concern to Jews. This is more likely if such commentary involves inflammatory language or the use of traditional antisemitic imagery, or appears to single out one particular object or individual for scrutiny due to their being Jewish.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest regional security organisation, explains the relation between antisemitic discourse and hostility as follows:

*“Expressions of anti-Semitism in public discourse remain a serious issue of concern as they exacerbate hostile attitudes towards Jews. They have the potential to fuel anti-Semitic incidents, leading to greater insecurity in the Jewish communities and in societies across the OSCE region.”<sup>8</sup>*

<sup>7</sup> Shown repeatedly in CST's annual *Antisemitic Incidents Report*. Also, Paul Iganski, Vicky Kielinger & Susan Paterson, *Hate Crimes Against London's Jews*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research (2005)

<sup>8</sup> [www.osce.org/cio/75676?download=true](https://www.osce.org/cio/75676?download=true)

## UK JEWISH LIFE: Putting antisemitism into context

Any overall assessment of the condition of British Jewry demands proper consideration of both positive and negative aspects. Britain's diverse Jewish communities have many examples of success, vibrancy and confidence. Nevertheless, antisemitic hate crimes, antisemitic discourse and wider antisemitic attitudes in society are issues of considerable importance for British Jews.

### Overview

Jewish life in Britain today is diverse, and most Jews are well integrated into wider society. Government and others often cite the Jewish community as the benchmark of successful minority integration. British Jews have full equal rights and protection in law, including against antisemitic incitement and bias. Jews who wish to live a Jewish life can do so in many ways, including pursuing educational, religious, cultural or political activities.

Generally, overt antisemitism is deemed socially unacceptable and Jews have succeeded in many spheres of public and private life. Nevertheless, the long history of antisemitism, and its remaining manifestations, can cause significant concerns.

A 2014 report by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research noted that whilst *“most British Jews feel integrated into British society and that discrimination against Jews is largely a thing of the past”*, it is also the case that *“most Jews feel that levels of antisemitism have increased in recent years, particularly online, in the media, in academia and certain political contexts”*.<sup>9</sup>

### History

Jews arrived in the British Isles in Roman times, but organised settlement followed the

Norman Conquest of 1066. Massacres of Jews occurred in many cities in 1190, most notably in York. In 1290, all Jews were expelled by King Edward I, but some converts to Christianity and secret adherents to Judaism remained. Following the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492, a covert Jewish community became established in London. The present British Jewish community, however, has existed since 1656, when Oliver Cromwell formally invited Jews to return to this country.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Jews were largely emancipated politically but still suffered formal and informal exclusion from some professions and institutions, while prejudice towards Jews – especially those who were recent immigrants – remained common. From 1881 to 1914, the influx of Russian Jewish immigrants saw the Jewish community's population rise from approximately 60,000 to approximately 300,000. Many Jews can trace their arrival in Britain back to this wave of immigration. Others can trace their British identity back considerably further. Significant numbers of Jews of other national origins have arrived in recent years and decades, from countries including South Africa, Israel and France.

### Demography

The total number of people self-identifying as Jews in England and Wales in 2021 was 271,327. This is a 2.4% increase on the previous decade. Jews comprise 0.46% of the population of England and Wales. 54% of the Jewish population lives in Greater London. Other major Jewish centres are in Hertfordshire, Manchester, Leeds, Gateshead and Birmingham.<sup>10</sup> The religious composition of the Jewish community is highly diverse and ranges from the strictly Orthodox to non-practising.

<sup>9</sup> Laura D Staetsky & Jonathan Boyd, *The Exceptional Case? Perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Jews in the United Kingdom*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research (July 2014)

<sup>10</sup> [Jews in Britain in 2021: First results from the Census of England and Wales](#)

# WHAT IS ANTISEMITISM?

## Background & concepts

In essence, antisemitism is discrimination, prejudice or hostility against Jews.

The word ‘antisemitism’ came into use in the late nineteenth century to describe pseudoscientific racial discrimination against Jews, but is now used more generally to describe all forms of discrimination, prejudice or hostility towards Jews throughout history, and has been called “*The Longest Hatred*”.<sup>11</sup>

It may be spelled as ‘antisemitism’ or as ‘anti-Semitism’. CST uses ‘antisemitism’, as this spelling limits the notion that there is such a thing as ‘Semitism’ to which one may be ‘anti’ (i.e. in opposition to).

### Antisemitism: background

History shows that increases in anti-Jewish sentiment or actions often reflect growing extremism or divisions within society as a whole. Antisemitism is a subject that should concern not only Jews, but all of society.

The near-destruction of European Jewry in the Nazi Holocaust rendered open antisemitism taboo in public life. The strong association of antisemitism with the Nazi Holocaust can lead to the mistaken assumption that antisemitism is an exclusively far-right, genocidal phenomenon that essentially ended after the Second World War.

Throughout history, anti-Jewish attitudes have taken many forms, including religious, nationalist, political, economic and racial-biological. Jews have been blamed for many phenomena, including the death of Jesus; the Black Death; the advent of liberalism, democracy, communism and capitalism; and for inciting numerous revolutions and wars.

<sup>11</sup> For example, Robert S Wistrich, *Anti-Semitism: The Longest Hatred*. Methuen (1991) and Screen Guides for Thames Television, *The Longest Hatred*. (1991)

A dominant antisemitic theme is the allegation that Jews are rich, powerful and cunning manipulators, set against the rest of society for their evil and timeless purpose. The notion of Jewish power (for example as codified within the notorious hoax *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*) distinguishes antisemitism from other types of racism, which often depict their targets as ignorant and primitive.<sup>12</sup>

Antisemitism – like any other form of prejudice – is not solely found in the conscious motivation or intention of an individual or group.

Antisemitism can also reside in the resonance of a perpetrator’s behaviour, where this echoes or repeats older antisemitic accusations and behaviours.

Antisemitism can also be the impact (whether intended or inadvertent) of a person’s actions, or the consequence of the policies and practices of an organisation.

### Types of antisemitism

Antisemitism is a global phenomenon, occurring even where there are no Jews. Its manifestation and expression may range from violent thuggery and murder to literary, philosophical and political discourse. Antisemitism has been described as an ideology in its own right, but others say it is undeserving of such status and should rather be regarded as a polluter of ideologies.<sup>13</sup>

Its persistence and adaptability are not doubted, yet precise definitions of antisemitism, its scale and the nature of its contemporary appearance can cause heated debate.

<sup>12</sup> See Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*. London: Serif Books (1996), original publ. 1967

<sup>13</sup> Anthony Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2010), p. xlv



## Interpretations of antisemitism

Much has been written and discussed regarding what constitutes antisemitism. The definitions shown below are intended as a constructive guide to differing interpretations, but are the briefest of introductions to what is a very large topic.

Steve Cohen argued that antisemitism is defined by its ideological nature:

*“The peculiar and defining feature of anti-semitism is that it exists as an ideology. It provides its adherents with a universal and generalised interpretation of the world. This is the theory of the Jewish conspiracy, which depicts Jews as historically controlling and determining nature and human destiny. Anti-semitism is an ideology which has influenced millions of people precisely because it presents an explanation of the world by attributing such extreme powers to its motive force – the Jews.”<sup>14</sup>*

Anthony Julius has argued that English antisemitism comprises “several kinds of anti-Semitism”; and he identifies four kinds that wholly or substantially “have an English provenance”:

- *“A radical anti-Semitism of defamation, expropriation, murder, and expulsion – that is, the anti-Semitism of medieval England, which completed itself in 1290, when there were no Jews left to torment.”*
- *“A literary anti-Semitism – that is, an anti-Semitic account of Jews continuously present in the discourse of English literature...through to present times.”*

- *“A modern, quotidian anti-Semitism of insult and partial exclusion, pervasive but contained...everyday anti-Semitism experienced by Jews...through to the late twentieth century.”*
- *“A new configuration of anti-Zionisms, emerging in the late 1960s and the 1970s, which treats Zionism and the State of Israel as illegitimate Jewish enterprises. This perspective, heavily indebted to anti-Semitic tropes, now constitutes the greatest threat to Anglo-Jewish security and morale...By ‘tropes’ I mean those taken-for-granted utterances, those figures and metaphors through which more general positions are intimated, without ever being argued for.”<sup>15</sup>*

Brian Klug describes the importance of the imaginary ‘Jew’ (as distinct to the reality of Jews). He depicts the antisemitic caricature of this imaginary ‘Jew’ as follows:

*“The Jew belongs to a sinister people set apart from all others, not merely by its customs but by a collective character: arrogant yet obsequious; legalistic yet corrupt; flamboyant yet secretive. Always looking to turn a profit, Jews are as ruthless as they are tricky. Loyal only to their own, wherever they go they form a state within a state, preying upon the societies in whose midst they dwell. Their hidden hand controls the banks, the markets and the media. And when revolutions occur or nations go to war, it is the Jews – cohesive, powerful, clever and stubborn – who invariably pull the strings and reap the rewards.”<sup>16</sup>*

<sup>15</sup> Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora*, pp. xxxvi–xxxvii

<sup>16</sup> Brian Klug, ‘The Concept of Anti-Semitism’, speech to Oxford University Chabad Society (7 June 2009) [http://www.oxfordchabad.org/templates/articlecco\\_cdo/aid/922682/jewish/Anti-Semitism-Symposium.htm](http://www.oxfordchabad.org/templates/articlecco_cdo/aid/922682/jewish/Anti-Semitism-Symposium.htm)

<sup>14</sup> Steve Cohen, *That’s Funny, You Don’t Look Anti-Semitic*. Leeds: Beyond the Pale Collective (1984), p. 11

### International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism (2016)

In December 2016, the UK Government formally adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.<sup>17</sup> This is a non-legally binding definition of antisemitism that evolved from a previous working definition, drawn up by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in 2005, primarily to aid law enforcement when deciding whether crimes are antisemitic or not. This was intended to enable cross-comparison and assessment of levels of antisemitism, and of European nations' policing and prosecuting of antisemitism.



IHRA adoption plenary in Bucharest Credit IHRA

The IHRA definition includes a list of examples of attitudes and language that “*could, taking into account the overall context*” indicate antisemitism, which includes some attitudes and language that relate to Israel as well as to Jews per se. Some anti-Israel and anti-Zionist activists claim this unfairly renders their behaviour antisemitic. Some pro-Israel activists claim that the working definition defines and outlaws certain anti-Israel attitudes and acts as antisemitic. At times, both are guilty of neglecting the working definition’s core purpose and its caveat about “*overall context*”.

Following the UK Government adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism, it has since been widely adopted, endorsed or used by authorities, agencies and institutions throughout British society, making it the standard non-legal definition that is used when trying to identify possible manifestations of antisemitism.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-leads-the-way-in-tackling-anti-semitism>

# ANTISEMITISM: Legal definitions

Legal definitions of antisemitism are primarily intended for police and judicial use in identifying antisemitic incidents and crimes, rather than defining discourse. Nevertheless, these definitions can provide useful tools for helping consider what may, or may not, constitute antisemitic discourse.

## Race Relations Act 1976

The 2006 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* summarised antisemitism with reference to the Race Relations Act 1976, which is the basis for legal definitions of racism and antisemitism. This was repeated in the updated 2015 antisemitism inquiry report:

*“Broadly, it is our view that any remark, insult or act the purpose or effect of which is to violate a Jewish person’s dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him is antisemitic.*

*“This reflects the definition of harassment under the Race Relations Act 1976. This definition can be applied to individuals and to the Jewish community as a whole.”<sup>18</sup>*

## Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (1999)

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition of a racist incident has significantly influenced societal interpretations of what does and does not constitute racism, strengthening the importance of the victim’s perception.

The 2006 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* and the updated 2015 report invoked the Lawrence Inquiry, stating:

*“We take into account the view expressed in the Macpherson report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry that a racist act is defined by its victim. It is not acceptable for an individual to say ‘I am not a racist’ if his or her words or acts are perceived to be racist.*

*“We conclude that it is the Jewish community itself that is best qualified to determine what does and does not constitute antisemitism.”<sup>19</sup>*

The UK Government Command response to the Parliamentary inquiry concurred, stating:

*“The Government currently uses the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition of a racist incident which is an incident that is perceived as racist by the victim or any other person, and this would include antisemitism. This is a very wide and powerful definition as it clearly includes the ‘perception’ of the victim and others.”<sup>20</sup>*

<sup>18</sup> *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* (2006), p. 1

<sup>19</sup> *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* (2006), p. 1

<sup>20</sup> *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism: Government Response*. London: The Stationery Office (29 March 2007), p. 3

## BRITISH JEWS: Relationship with Zionism & Israel

Zionism and Israel are, in part, Jewish responses to the long and often tragic history of antisemitism. The complex dynamics between antisemitism, anti-Israel activity and anti-Zionism play an important role in debates over contemporary British antisemitism.

Overwhelmingly, British Jews do not come from Israel and their families have been British for at least two generations. Nevertheless, Israel plays an important role in the self-identity of many British Jews. This manifests in the practical sense of physical, emotional and family links that many Jews enjoy with Israel and Israeli citizens, as well as in the psychological sense of perceiving Israel as representing Jewish identity, refuge and rebirth in the post-Holocaust age.

A 2010 survey by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research found that 95% of British Jews said Israel plays some role in their Jewish identity, 82% said it plays a central or important role and 72% consider themselves 'Zionists'. The same survey found that 95% of British Jews have visited Israel.<sup>21</sup> A similar survey by City University in 2015 found that 90% of British Jews support Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and 93% said Israel plays some role in their Jewish identity.<sup>22</sup>

In recent years, Israel has been subject to repeated criticism and outright hostility from relatively large sections of the liberal left, including parts of the media, campaigning groups, trade unions, politicians, churches and the NGO sector. British Jews hold varying perspectives on the legitimacy and motivation of this behaviour, ranging from those who play

a leading part in anti-Israel activity, to those who regard these actions as antisemitic.

### Antisemitism & anti-Zionism

Like racism, antisemitism can feed off criticism of Jews, Israel or Zionism, regardless of how fair or unfair, antisemitic or legitimate, that criticism may be.

### Anti-Zionism

The term 'anti-Zionism' describes a wide range of hostile attitudes towards Jewish self-determination, and particularly towards Jewish peoplehood and the right of the Jewish people to have a nation state (now existing in Israel). Anti-Zionism that denies these beliefs, or seeks Israel's dissolution, should not be confused with criticism of Israel's actions. Anti-Zionism is a complex and contested term, because definitions of Zionism itself mean different things to different people. In particular, mainstream Jewish definitions of Zionism differ markedly from far-left, far-right and Islamist definitions – all of which tend to use (and denigrate) Zionism as a term of political abuse.

Not all anti-Zionists are antisemites and anti-Zionism is not necessarily antisemitic. For example, a minority of Jews do not believe, either for religious or political reasons, that the existence of Israel is in the best interests of the Jewish people. However, much anti-Zionism today is expressed in ways that are actively hostile towards Jews and towards the Jewish people as a group, and that bear similarities to older antisemitic language and imagery.

<sup>21</sup> David Graham & Jonathan Boyd, *Committed, concerned and conciliatory: The attitudes of Jews in Britain towards Israel*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research (July 2010), p. 9

<sup>22</sup> Stephen Miller, Margaret Harris & Colin Shindler, *The Attitudes of British Jews Towards Israel*. London: City University, London (November 2015), p. 15

The malicious denial or misrepresentation of Jewish peoplehood is fundamentally antisemitic, as is politically motivated denial of the Jewish people's historical and religious links with the land of Israel.

### Jews & anti-Zionism

In the decades before the Second World War, anti-Zionism was a relatively widespread and respected position within mainstream Jewish politics. Many Jewish anti-Zionists opposed the idea of creating a Jewish state because they feared it would threaten the political and civic status of Jews in Diaspora communities. Others opposed Zionism because they believed that revolutionary socialism would emancipate Jews alongside the rest of humanity. Many strictly Orthodox Jews opposed Zionism on theological grounds relating to the coming of the Messiah. After the Holocaust and the creation (and survival) of Israel, Jewish opposition to Zionism declined markedly. Other than in some ultra-Orthodox or far-left groups, Jews tend not to describe themselves as anti-Zionists.

### Anti-Zionism & criticism of Israel

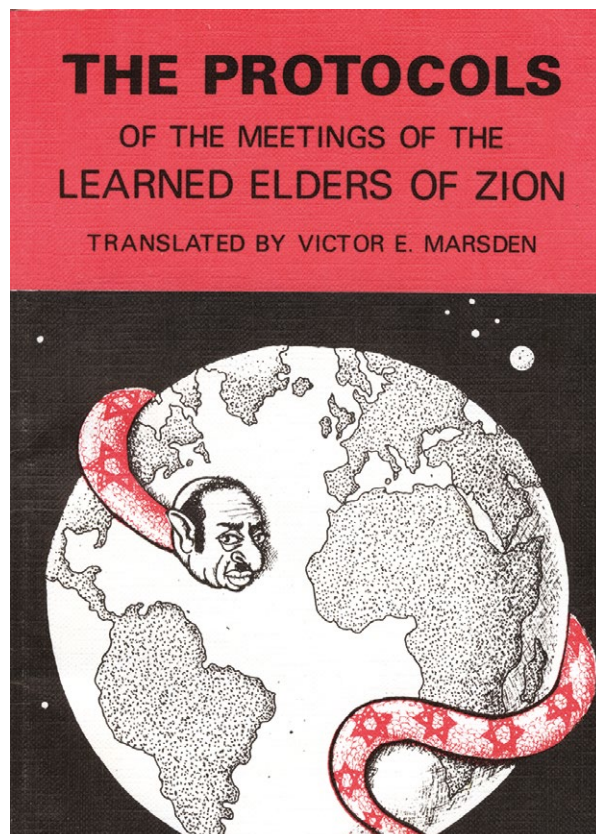
Antisemitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israel criticism or hatred are not the same as each other. They can, however, be hard to untangle and distinguish from one another. It is not necessarily antisemitic to criticise Israel or Zionism, even if the criticism is harsh or unfair. Gauging antisemitic motives and impacts largely depends upon the interaction of the following factors:

- **Target:** Are local Jews being singled out as recipients for criticism, bias or hatred that ostensibly derives from anti-Israel or anti-Zionist enmity?
- **Motivation:** To what extent is the criticism, or outright hatred, driven by the Jewish nature of Israel and/or Zionism?
- **Content:** Does the criticism, or hatred, use antisemitic or otherwise prejudiced language, themes or motifs?

- **Response to concerns:** Are local Jewish concerns about the above sincerely and equally heard? Or, are Jewish concerns viewed with hostility and singled out for scorn?
- **Repeat behaviour:** Does the offender repeat their behaviour, knowing the consequences and concerns that will be raised?

### Antisemitic anti-Zionism & conspiracy theory

Antisemitism has changed and adapted throughout history to reflect the condition of Jews and the society around them at any given time. Today there is an antisemitic form of anti-Zionism that treats Zionism as a global, malevolent conspiracy, much as antisemites have portrayed Jews in the past.



#### The notorious antisemitic forgery

*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* claims to reveal a supposed secret Jewish conspiracy to take over the world, depicted in this British version by a Jewish snake encircling the globe.

Championed by both far-right and Islamist extremists, it includes chapters on Jewish control of war, politicians, finance and media. *The Protocols* contains old antisemitic themes that still resonate, impact and evolve in modern politics, media and discourse.

This can be found within far right, far left and extreme Islamist and New Age circles. These different ideologies all use 'Zionism' and 'Zionist' as pejorative labels for political opponents, often regardless of whether the targets of their hatred are Jewish or pro-Israel or not. In each different setting, Zionism is commonly discussed and perceived in ways that are strikingly similar to older antisemitic conspiracy theories (for example, as in *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*).

Employing the word 'Zionist' where the word 'Jew' would have previously appeared in open antisemitic discourse may, or may not, be deliberate obfuscation on the part of the user. Nevertheless, it essentially fulfils the same psychological and political purpose as open antisemitism once did.

This antisemitic anti-Zionism has, at its core, a construction of Zionism as a political, financial, military and media conspiracy that is centred in Washington and Jerusalem, and which opposes authentic local interests. It is commonly found in extremist discourse, and sometimes alluded to in more diluted forms in mainstream discourse.

Unlike pre-war Jewish anti-Zionism, these modern anti-Zionists are not motivated by a concern for Jewish political and civic rights.

The 2006 Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism noted:

*"One of the most difficult and contentious issues about which we have received evidence is the dividing line between antisemitism and criticism of Israel or Zionism.*

*"...discourse has developed that is in effect antisemitic because it views Zionism itself as a global force of unlimited power and malevolence throughout history. This definition of Zionism bears no relation to the understanding that most Jews have of the concept; that is, a movement of Jewish national liberation, born in the late nineteenth*

*century with a geographical focus limited to Israel. Having re-defined Zionism in this way, traditional antisemitic notions of Jewish conspiratorial power, manipulation and subversion are then transferred from Jews (a racial and religious group) on to Zionism (a political movement). This is at the core of the 'New Antisemitism' on which so much has been written."*<sup>23</sup>

### Historical continuities between antisemitism & anti-Zionism

Other continuities between historical antisemitic themes and the type of modern anti-Zionism that is antisemitic can include the following:

- Alleging that Jewish holy books preach Jewish supremacy and that this is the basis for alleged Zionist racism.
- Dehumanising and demonising language comparing Jews to rats, cancer, plague and bacteria is now repeated in some depictions of Zionists and Israel. This reduces its target to a pest or disease to be cleansed.
- Scapegoating Jews as 'the Other'; blaming them for local and global problems; and demanding their destruction or conversion as a vital step in building a new, better world. This is echoed in the notion that Zionism is uniquely illegitimate, and that its destruction is required for the fulfilment of utopian ideological goals.
- The image of Jews as alien corrupters of traditional, authentic society and established morality endures in today's portrayals of Zionists as somehow hijacking other people's true will and nature, and thereby polluting domestic politics and society.

<sup>23</sup> Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism, pp. 16–17

# Responses after 7 October

## Rise in antisemitism and fear in the Jewish community

The Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on 7 October, the single biggest loss of Jewish life since the Holocaust, triggered a major spike in antisemitic hate crimes affecting Jewish communities around the world, including in the UK (See CST's *Antisemitic Incidents Report 2023*<sup>24</sup>).

In the weeks following the attack, members of the Jewish community expressed feelings of anxiety regarding this surge in anti-Jewish hatred in the UK. According to the news editor and co-publisher of a Jewish weekly newspaper: *"The Jewish community at the moment is full of dread, full of fear, like I've never seen before."* Regarding the large pro-Palestinian protests across the UK, but especially the national protests in central London, one Jewish man said: *"It's chilling. It's upsetting. And it makes you feel unsafe in the place that you call home"*.<sup>25</sup>

One Jewish mother wrote about how a friend's four-year-old daughter was called *"dirty Jew"* on the London underground after she'd revealed her school uniform which included a Star of David. She also explained how she had told her three children not to discuss being Jewish when they go out.<sup>26</sup>

According to a poll carried out in November amongst British Jews by Survation on behalf of Jewish News and the Jewish Leadership Council, 77% of respondents felt less safe as Jews living in the UK since the 7 October attacks. Also, 89% of those questioned thought that antisemitism has grown in the last five years, with 71% suggesting it has risen by a lot in this period. Nearly

57% of respondents said they considered antisemitism to be a *"very big problem"*.<sup>27</sup>

## Extreme responses

On 9 October, CAGE UK (a British Islamist advocacy group) and 5Pillars (a UK Islamist media outlet) released a joint statement of 45 British Muslim organisations and individuals defending Hamas' invasion and attacks inside Israel. The statement did not mention Hamas by name, but it openly stated that the signatories *"reject the use of the word 'terrorism' to describe Palestinian acts of resistance"*, in reference to the atrocities committed on 7 October. It also called for Israel's destruction.<sup>28</sup>

In the aftermath of the attack, academics at various UK universities appeared to celebrate or justify the violence perpetrated by Hamas. They included Amira Abdelhamid, an associate professor of international relations at Portsmouth University, who claimed that the attacks were not terrorism but part of a *"legitimate struggle"*. On the day of the Hamas-led attacks, European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen condemned the attacks in a post on X/Twitter as *"terrorism in its most despicable form"*. Abdelhamid replied:

*"You call it terrorism. We call it legitimate struggle against siege, occupation, settler colonialism, slow violence and genocide... the blood of Palestinians in the past and the future is also on your hands and those like you who legitimise the racist (and antisemitic) state of Israel."*<sup>29</sup>

Support for Hamas and antisemitic sentiment were also expressed on social media channels

<sup>24</sup> [https://cst.org.uk/data/file/9/f/Antisemitic\\_Incidents\\_Report\\_2023.1707834969.pdf](https://cst.org.uk/data/file/9/f/Antisemitic_Incidents_Report_2023.1707834969.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-67266475>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/education/article/i-tell-my-children-not-to-talk-about-being-jewish-when-were-out-7wnpbhjv8>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/more-than-three-quarters-of-uk-jews-more-fearful-since-7-10/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/education/article/hamas-attacks-on-israel-are-not-terrorism-muslim-group-cage-insists-wk0khlhc2>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/academics-claim-hamas-atrocities-are-part-of-legitimate-struggle-against-israel-csnfvhrj>

and in some UK mosques. Two London-based Egyptian broadcasters reportedly celebrated the 7 October attacks and called them “a day filled with pride and glory”. Some Imams in Bradford and Manchester reportedly used their pulpits to attack Jews and called for a Hamas victory. One allegedly issued a call to “purify the Al-Aqsa Mosque from the filth of the Jews”.<sup>30</sup> On 20 October, a sermon given at Redbridge Islamic Centre reportedly ended with prayers for victory over the “cursed” Jews and infidels, including: “Scatter them and rip their groups apart, and destroy their houses and homes, bring them down and punish them like you do criminals.”<sup>31</sup>

On the following day, the Mohammadi Masjid in Alum Rock, Birmingham, posted on its YouTube channel a Friday sermon by Ustadh Abu Ibraheem Hussnayn.<sup>32</sup> Hussnayn described the Jews (“yahood”) as becoming worse oppressors than Pharaoh despite their history of being oppressed. He also described drones as inanimate objects that direct the Jews to where Muslims are hiding so they can bomb them. He then cited the hadith that the trees and stones will speak and say, “Oh Muslim, behind me there is a yahoodi, come and kill him.”<sup>33</sup>

The response from the far-left Socialist Workers Party (SWP) showed explicit support for the Hamas attack on Israel. Between 7-10 October, the SWP released videos, social media posts and articles expressing support for violent Palestinian resistance using “whatever means they choose”,<sup>34</sup> alongside explicit acknowledgements that Hamas carried out a “surprise attack on Israel”. One article on the SWP’s website stated (in reference to

Hamas) “our fighters have taken the initiative”, and that “I feel that for the first time, every Palestinian worldwide will feel proud about what we achieved.”<sup>35</sup>

An issue of the Socialist Worker, dated 1-7 November, included the continued promotion of a SWP pamphlet titled “Palestine Resistance, Revolution and the Struggle for Hamas”.<sup>36</sup> The publication, first published in 2014 and revised in 2023, contains the following line:

*“We consider Hamas to be a resistance movement against Zionism and imperialism. From this perspective we unconditionally support Hamas when it is engaged in military or non-military struggles against Israel”.*

### Political response

In the aftermath of the attack, politicians from across the political spectrum expressed their solidarity with the Jewish community and expressed a hope that events in the Middle East would not lead to hate crimes on the streets of the UK. CST officials met with the Prime Minister, Home Secretary, the Security Minister and senior police officers to ensure measures were in place to protect the Jewish community.<sup>37</sup>

On 9 October, then Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke at a prayer service at Finchley Synagogue and said:

*“We’ve already seen vile words on our streets and attempts to stir up community tensions. I say: ‘Not here. Not in Britain. Not in our country. Not in this century.’[...] I promise you I will stop at nothing to keep you safe.”<sup>38</sup>*

30 <https://www.thejc.com/news/brazen-support-for-hamas-spreading-across-britain-since-terror-attack-omsesitj>

31 [https://twitter.com/habibi\\_uk/status/1716150074579796299](https://twitter.com/habibi_uk/status/1716150074579796299)

32 “Palestine is bleeding. Are you a part of the problem?”, Mohammadi Masjid Alum Rock YouTube channel, 21 October 2023; also posted on Abu Ibraheem Hussnayn Official YouTube channel, 21 October 2023

33 Sahih Muslim 2922, [Sunnah.com](http://Sunnah.com)

34 [https://www.instagram.com/p/CyGj0XplE0K/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/CyGj0XplE0K/?img_index=1)

35 Sophie Squire, “‘We’re rewriting history, our fighters took the initiative’—Palestinian speaks out”, [Socialist Workers Party](http://Socialist Workers Party), 8 October 2023

36 <https://socialistworker.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/issue2879.pdf>

37 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/oct/09/police-increase-presence-on-streets-of-london-over-israel-hamas-war>

38 <https://www.thejc.com/news/sunak-condemns-those-who-refuse-to-describe-hamas-as-terrorists-j8npwfem>



On 11 October, then Security Minister Tom Tugendhat MP wrote in an article:

*“Our support for the Jewish community is unwavering...Whenever Israel is attacked, there are those who try to justify hatred and antisemitism. So, I understand why many in the Jewish community are anxious...The safety of the Jewish community in the UK is an absolute priority. That’s why I’m doing everything I can to support your families and protect your communities. Abuse will not be tolerated.”*<sup>39</sup>

Speaking at a Labour Friends of Israel vigil at the Labour Party conference in Liverpool, Yvette Cooper MP, then Shadow Home Secretary, said:

*“No-one should have to worry about their children going to school in Britain, no-one should have to worry about going to synagogue... we will always be with our Jewish communities, standing up for people’s rights to be safe in Britain.”*<sup>40</sup>

Also on 11 October, Dame Lynne Owens, Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, released an open letter to London’s Jewish communities as antisemitic incidents in the UK were already rising.<sup>41</sup> In it she wrote:

*“We also understand that it has had a direct impact on people across the world, including right here in London, particularly those of you in our Jewish communities, including the Jewish officers and staff who work for the Met. We stand firmly with you and we will do all that we can to make sure you feel safe and protected here at home...I know too that many people will be worried about their safety here, in London. Nobody should be concerned about their child’s journey to school, their safety on a bus or a train, their visit to the shops, or to a place of worship. Working with community*

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/we-stand-with-israel-and-with-the-jewish-community-here-gajdzqus>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/entire-labour-shadow-cabinet-attend-hugely-emotional-lfi-israel-vigil/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-67085625>

*leaders and the Community Security Trust, we are increasing our presence at schools and synagogues and in communities. Our neighbourhood policing teams and dedicated schools officers will be there to provide assurance and support, but also to investigate and prosecute any instances of antisemitic hate or harassment.”*<sup>42</sup>

On 12 October, then Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced that, in the wake of a significant increase in antisemitic incidents after the 7 October attacks, £3 million of extra funding would be provided to the UK Jewish community to protect schools, synagogues and other Jewish communal buildings. It was announced on the day that the Prime Minister convened a meeting with ministers, representatives from UK policing and CST. The announcement meant the total funding for the Jewish community Protective Security Grant was £18 million for 2023-24.<sup>43</sup> In November, then Chancellor Jeremy Hunt announced in the Budget that he would repeat this £3m uplift in the following financial year, meaning that the Protective Security Grant would stay at the higher level of £18m.

On 13 October, following calls by the Hamas leadership for a global “Day of Rage” in support of the Palestinians in Gaza, at least two Jewish schools in London decided to stay closed for the day in the interest of their pupils’ safety. Another Jewish school advised some students to remove their school blazers to avoid being identified with attending a Jewish school.<sup>44</sup>

On 14 October, then Deputy Prime Minister Oliver Dowden MP wrote:

*“Likewise, we cannot allow terror in Israel to breed terror in the UK. Jews must feel able to express their faith freely in public*

<sup>42</sup> <https://news.met.police.uk/news/open-letter-from-the-deputy-commissioner-to-londons-jewish-communities-473589>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-announces-new-support-to-keep-british-jewish-communities-safe>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/education/article/uk-jewish-students-hide-identity-schools-israel-war-99qbctv5t>

*whether wearing kippah, going to school or synagogue...No one should fear walking our streets, no one should have to close their schools, no one should need armed guards as they worship.*<sup>45</sup>

In a House of Commons debate on 16 October,<sup>46</sup> the Prime Minister said:

*"I am sickened that antisemitic incidents have increased since the attack. We are doing everything we can to protect you...we are working with the police to ensure that hate crime and the glorification of terror are met with the full force of the law. I know that the whole House will support that and join me in saying unequivocally that we stand with the Jewish community."*

In the same debate, Sir Keir Starmer MP, leader of the Labour Party, said:

*"I do not want Britain to be a place where Jewish schools are closed, where Jewish children stay at home out of fear and where Jewish families feel compelled to hide their identity."*

On 19 October, Robin Simcox, Commissioner for Countering Extremism, wrote an article in The Times in which he said:

*"A good test for the health of any society is to consider how it treats its Jewish population. By that metric the UK, and even more so, much of Europe, is very sick indeed...The hatred that we have witnessed in recent days on British streets and online, is not only a cause for alarm among the Jewish community. It must be a wake-up call for the government and for all decent people."*<sup>47</sup>

On 20 October, London Mayor Sadiq Khan held a roundtable meeting with Jewish and Muslim representatives following a big rise in

both antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate crimes since 7 October. Khan said it was *"important to come together to stop hate crimes"*. CST and Tell MAMA, an organisation that supports victims of anti-Muslim hatred, both attended the meeting.<sup>48</sup>

On 16 November, then Home Secretary James Cleverly met with representatives from the Jewish community. Afterwards he messaged:

*"We must be honest. The Jewish community does not feel safe in the UK today. This must change...I will do everything in my power to protect the Jewish people in the UK."*<sup>49</sup>

On 26 November, tens of thousands of people attended a march against antisemitism in central London. Actor Eddie Marsan told the crowd:

*"I am so grateful to be given the opportunity to speak here today and express my solidarity with my Jewish friends in the face of the recent appalling rise in antisemitism and, at the same time, condemn the sevenfold increase in Islamophobia."*<sup>50</sup>

On 12 December, to mark the festival of Chanukah, then Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper MP wrote:

*"We have seen unacceptable antisemitic placards on protests, graffiti on a Holocaust library, Jewish primary schools vandalised with red paint, and last week I spoke with the Union of Jewish Students, who are deeply concerned about the steep rise in antisemitism on university campuses. We cannot and will not stand for this, not now and not ever. There is no place in Britain for the hatred and vitriol that devastates lives and corrodes communities, and those who perpetrate that poison must face the full force of the law."*<sup>51</sup>

45 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2023/10/14/oliver-dowden-support-israel-hamas-palestine-jewish-uk/>

46 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-10-16/debates/4B1D5F8B-41E2-4977-8559-51C36494AC90/IsraelAndGaza>

47 <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/hate-march-is-a-wake-up-call-to-the-west-xrn9nzm8l>

48 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-67168462>

49 <https://x.com/JamesCleverly/status/1725174883976389112>

50 <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/londoners-stood-with-jews-in-1936-and-we-stand-with-them-today-sibm1tj5>

51 <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/opinion-never-before-has-the-light-and-warmth-of-chanukah-felt-so-welcome/>

# Antisemitism and UK political parties

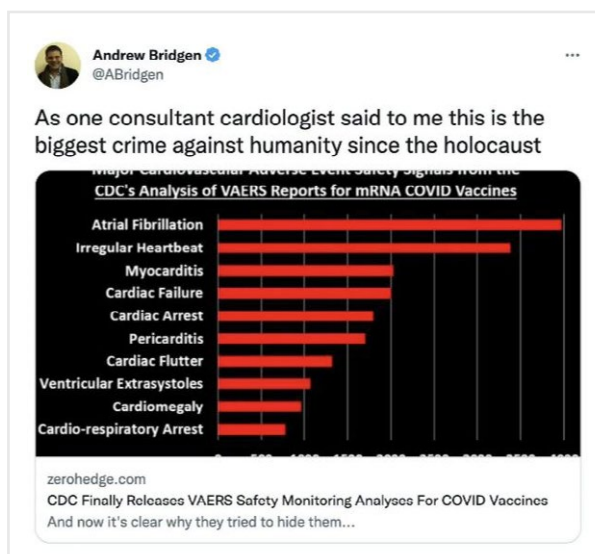
## Conservative Party

In January, Andrew Bridgen MP was suspended by the Conservative Party pending a formal investigation and forced to sit as an Independent MP after posting a message on Twitter/X that compared vaccines to the Holocaust.<sup>52</sup> The message included a link to an article which alleged that people who took Covid-19 vaccines were more likely to experience serious health conditions. Bridgen added: *“As one consultant cardiologist said to me, this is the biggest crime against humanity since the Holocaust.”* Asked by Matt Hancock MP about Bridgen’s comments at Prime Minister’s Questions, Rishi Sunak said: *“Obviously it’s utterly unacceptable to make linkages and use language like that, and I’m determined that the scourge of antisemitism is eradicated. It has absolutely no place in our society and I know that the previous few years have been challenging for the Jewish community and I never want them to experience anything like that ever again.”*<sup>53</sup> In April, Bridgen was permanently expelled from the Conservative Party following the recommendation of a disciplinary panel.<sup>54</sup> Bridgen denied all

allegations of antisemitism and subsequently brought a libel claim against Matt Hancock in order to *“clear his name”*, after allegedly being accused of antisemitism by the former health secretary. Bridgen claimed the allegations are *“seriously defamatory and untrue”*.

In April, two Conservative local election candidates were suspended by the party in relation to controversial social media posts. Stanley Murphy, who was a candidate in south Devon, allegedly shared an image on his Facebook page of Jews being forced onto trains by the Nazis in 1942, which he linked to gun control regulations, as well as other comments about Covid vaccinations. The local Conservative association suspended Murphy pending an investigation. Ashley Sykes, standing as a Conservative candidate for North Lincolnshire council, was suspended from the party for allegedly sharing jokes about the Holocaust on his Facebook page, as well as racist and homophobic memes.<sup>55</sup>

In May, Shakeel Munir Hussain stood for the Conservative Party in the local elections in Stockton-on-Tees despite evidence of conspiratorial language in some of his social media posts. This included Rothschild conspiracy theories and claims about governments being *“controlled by Zionist money”*.<sup>56</sup> Hussain was originally due to stand for the Labour Party but was turned down after they were alerted to the posts. Just before the election, a Conservative spokesman said that the party does not support the views shared in the posts, but it was too late to remove Hussain from the ballot paper.<sup>57</sup> In the election, Hussain was voted in as a Conservative councillor, but was subsequently suspended by the party



<sup>52</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-64236687>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/jewish-groups-slam-mp-for-highly-irresponsible-vaccine-holocaust-tweet-58ddetn14uzxvawSOrd00b>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/andrew-bridgen-expelled-from-tory-party-for-comparing-covid-jabs-to-holocaust-fuoben1v>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/tory-local-election-candidate-suspended-after-controversial-holocaust-facebook-post/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/tories-allow-candidate-ousted-by-labour-over-zionist-posts-to-stand-in-local-elections/>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/antisemitism-scandal-candidate-triumphs-for-conservatives-at-local-elections/>

pending an investigation.<sup>58</sup> In September, Hussain was allowed to rejoin the Conservative Party after apologising unreservedly and expressing “*deep regret*”.<sup>59</sup>

In May, the National Conservatism (NatCon) conference took place in London. At the conference, Conservative MP Miriam Cates made a speech in which she said that “*cultural Marxism*” is “*destroying our children’s souls*”.<sup>60</sup> The use of this phrase attracted criticism because, according to Danny Stone of the Antisemitism Policy Trust, it “*can be and has been used as an antisemitic phrase, to confer antisemitic meaning or as an antisemitic dog whistle...It is not necessarily antisemitic but it is often used in antisemitic ways, to signal an antisemitic way of thinking.*”<sup>61</sup>

In September, Conservative MP Paul Bristow apologised for failing to carry out due diligence before hiring Ansar Ali as a caseworker and translator in his constituency office. Ali was a Labour councillor on Peterborough council from 2015 until May 2023. He was suspended by Labour in 2021 after posting that he was “*boycotting the biased BBC*” because it “*didn’t want to upset the Zionist Israeli government lobby*”. He was reinstated in July 2022 after an investigation, but then further posts were revealed. Bristow admitted he knew that Ali had been suspended by Labour but didn’t closely check the reasons and hadn’t seen an article about further controversial posts. Ali said: “*In the past I have commented and shared social media posts that I now fully understand would have caused hurt and distress to members of the Jewish faith. This was wrong, and I deeply regret any hurt I have caused to the Jewish community and others.*”<sup>62</sup> Bristow subsequently

wrote that having gone through antisemitism training and regretting his actions, Ali should be given “*a chance to make amends.*”<sup>63</sup>

### Establishment of a Jewish Community Police, Crime and Security Taskforce

At the end of March, in a speech to the CST’s annual dinner, then Home Secretary Suella Braverman MP announced the establishment of a Jewish Community Police, Crime and Security Taskforce, to be chaired by the Home Secretary, which will “*strengthen accountability and enhance efforts to combat antisemitic crime and violence against Jewish communities.*” Braverman also announced that the Jewish Community Protective Security grant, which pays for commercial security guards at Jewish schools, synagogues and other communal buildings, would be increased by £1m to £15m for the year. Braverman told the event:

*“Antisemitism is one of the great evils in the world. It is vital that all people, but especially political leaders, challenge antisemitism whenever and wherever they encounter it.”*<sup>64</sup>

### Labour Party

In January, Cal Corkery, a Portsmouth City councillor and former Labour Group leader, was expelled from the Labour Party for breaching rules outlawing support for a banned group (Socialist Appeal). Corkery had reportedly attended meetings where well-known individuals were present who had been expelled from the party in connection with antisemitism allegations. Corkery had allegedly showed support for some of them.<sup>65</sup>

In February, Jim Bradbury, who was selected as the Labour candidate in the local elections in Stoke-on-Trent, stood down as a candidate after a number of posts on his Twitter/X page

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-65558042>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/tory-councillor-rejoins-party-after-apologising-for-zionist-murderers-posts/>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/tory-mp-condemned-for-using-cultural-marxism-slur-in-conference-speech/>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/is-the-term-cultural-marxism-really-antisemitic-rn6x61tm>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/tory-mp-hires-councillor-suspended-by-labour-after-posting-about-zionist-lobby-par0a0yy>

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/why-i-have-employed-a-former-labour-councillor-who-was-once-suspended-for-antisemitism-xf838a8>

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-ramps-up-security-measures-to-protect-jewish-communities>

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/expelled-labour-councillor-antagonised-jewish-members/>

showed support for individuals who had downplayed claims of antisemitism in the Labour Party.<sup>66</sup>

Vivien Burke, the Vice Chair – Membership of Romford Labour, was suspended from the Labour Party after messages on Twitter/X were uncovered that were described as “virulently anti-Jewish” and appeared to downplay or deny antisemitism in the party.<sup>67</sup>

In March, Ismail Bax, a Labour councillor in Preston, was suspended by the Labour Party and put under investigation after sharing a post on Twitter/X which appeared to justify the shooting of seven Jews outside a synagogue in east Jerusalem in January.<sup>68</sup>

In April, Damian McCarthy, a Labour Party activist, was expelled by the Labour Party after an internal investigation. McCarthy was allegedly behind a Twitter/X account that claimed Zionists collaborated with the Nazis and called the Chief Rabbi a “racist and white supremacist”. McCarthy featured in an Al Jazeera documentary, which claimed that accusations of antisemitism in the Labour Party were concocted to undermine Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership.<sup>69</sup>

Diane Abbott, MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington, was suspended by the Labour Party after the publication of a letter she wrote to The Observer. Abbott was responding to an article by Tomiwa Owolade, in which he wrote about a recently released

survey report looking at racial inequality in Britain. The report revealed that Irish, Jewish and Traveller people are among the most racially abused groups in Britain, and Owolade wrote that racism in Britain is more complicated than simply being about colour.<sup>70</sup> Abbott responded by claiming that Irish, Jewish and Traveller people “undoubtedly experience prejudice. This is similar to racism and the two words are often used as if they are interchangeable. It is true that many types of white people with points of difference, such as redheads, can experience this prejudice. But they are not all their lives subject to racism.”<sup>71</sup> Soon after the article was made public, Abbott put out a statement apologising, saying that she “wholly and unreservedly withdraw my remarks and disassociate myself from them... Racism takes many forms, and it is completely undeniable that Jewish people have suffered its monstrous effects, as have Irish people, Travellers and many others.”<sup>72</sup> The Labour Party condemned the comments in the letter and suspended Abbott pending an investigation.<sup>73 74</sup>

In November, Ebrahim Dockrat, a councillor in Kirklees, was suspended by the Labour Party and placed under investigation after he was accused of sharing antisemitic content on social media. He was also accused of liking a tweet by someone else expelled from the party over claims of antisemitism.<sup>75</sup>

66 <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/labour-activist-withdraws-as-election-candidate-after-party-alerted-to-antisemitism-posts/>

67 <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/labour-suspends-official-accused-of-virulently-anti-jewish-tweets-dating-back-years-rd5r9qam>

68 <https://www.lep.co.uk/news/politics/preston-councillor-suspended-from-the-labour-party-over-retweet-in-the-wake-of-jerusalem-synagogue-attack-4072280>

69 <https://www.thejc.com/news/witness-in-al-jazeera-film-expelled-by-labour-mdkn25o5>

70 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/apr/15/racism-in-britain-is-not-a-black-and-white-issue-it-is-far-more-complicated>

71 <https://www.theguardian.com/theobserver/commentisfree/2023/apr/23/success-for-women-not-same-as-for-men-letters>

72 <https://x.com/HackneyAbbott/status/1650072333527252994>

73 <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/labour-suspends-diane-abbott-after-letter-claiming-jews-do-not-suffer-racism-d7dso8jr>

74 Abbott was readmitted to the Labour Party in May 2024

75 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-67412822>

## EHRC concludes monitoring of Labour Party action plan

On 15 February, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) concluded that the Labour Party had made the changes required by its agreed action plan to address breaches of the Equality Act.

In October 2020, the EHRC had served the Labour Party with an unlawful act notice after an investigation into antisemitism found the party responsible for unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination. As a consequence, the party was obliged to produce an action plan to prevent those unlawful acts continuing or reoccurring.

Marcial Boo, Chief Executive of the EHRC, said:

*“On 31 January 2023, we concluded our monitoring as we were satisfied that the Party had implemented the necessary actions to improve its complaints, recruitment, training and other procedures to the legal standards required. This will help to protect current and future Labour Party members from discrimination and harassment. No organisation is above the law. Every employer and every public body must take active steps to address racism and all other forms of illegal discrimination. We are pleased that our investigation and action plan has had the desired impact in this case.”<sup>76</sup>*


In response to the EHRC’s announcement, Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer said:

*“Today is an important moment in the history of the Labour Party. It has taken many, many months of hard work and humility to get here. It has meant rebuilding trust, not just with the Jewish community, but with all those who were rightly appalled by the culture of the party under the previous leadership...Antisemitism is an evil and no political party that cultivates it*

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/media-centre/news/equality-watchdog-concludes-monitoring-labour-party-action-plan?return-url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.equalityhumanrights.com%2Fsearch%3Fkeys%3DLabour%2Bparty>

*deserves to hold power...But while this is an important moment it is not one for celebration. It is one for reflection...To all those who were hurt, to all those who were let down, to all those driven out of our party, who no longer felt it was their home, who suffered the most appalling abuse. Today, on behalf of the entire Labour Party, I say: sorry.”<sup>77</sup>*

CST and the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC) issued the following joint statement:<sup>78</sup>



The image shows a screenshot of a joint statement from CST (Crackpot Susceptibility Trust) and the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC). The statement is titled "CST & JLC joint statement following the EHRC announcement that the Labour Party has complied with its obligations following its landmark report on antisemitism in the party". The text of the statement is as follows:

We always maintained that we would judge the Labour leadership on its actions rather than its words. The Labour Party under Sir Keir Starmer has gone a significant way towards making the Labour Party an unwelcome home for anti-Jewish racists.

We believe that the Labour Party and Sir Keir have engaged us honestly and transparently about the scale of the challenge throughout the EHRC monitoring period and we have welcomed this radically different approach.

There is still much work to do. Cultural change is always slow and whilst there are visible green shoots, there remains a clear issue, as demonstrated so clearly by the quarterly complaints' figures released by the party.

We will continue to work with the Labour Party leadership, as we do with the leadership of all political parties, to represent the interests of the Jewish community and ensure that antisemitism is never again allowed to pollute mainstream politics.

## Liberal Democrats

In April, Fezan Khalid, who was due to stand as a Liberal Democrat council candidate in Rochdale, was suspended from the party pending an investigation. It followed a complaint about posts on Khalid’s Facebook account, one of which claimed that: *“Anti-semitism is a complete fraud.”<sup>79</sup>*

<sup>77</sup> <https://labour.org.uk/updates/press-releases/keir-starmer-responds-to-ehrc-announcement/>

<sup>78</sup> [https://x.com/CST\\_UK/status/1625810972349808641](https://x.com/CST_UK/status/1625810972349808641)

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/crackpot-council-candidate-suspended-cocktail-26699431>

In October, Ayoub Khan, a Liberal Democrat councillor in Aston, Birmingham, posted a series of TikTok videos in which he appeared to question the extent of the atrocities committed by Hamas following the attack in southern Israel on 7 October and called for evidence to be released. Following a complaint to the Liberal Democrats, Khan was subject to an investigation by the party's independent complaints process.<sup>80</sup> Khan subsequently apologised and was offered antisemitism training.<sup>81</sup>

### Green Party

In February, the Jewish Labour Movement (JLM) wrote a letter to the co-leaders of the Green Party to raise concerns about antisemitism.<sup>82</sup> The letter included JLM's concern about Gary Champion, a Green Party councillor in Norwich, who they accused of posting material online that "*promotes antisemitic tropes*" and of repeatedly suggesting that claims of antisemitism in the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership were a smear. The letter also raised concerns about councillors expelled by the Labour Party for alleged antisemitism being admitted into the Green Party.<sup>83</sup>

In June, Jo Bird, a Green Party councillor in Wirral, was given the role of co-secretary of the Jewish Greens organisation, the main representative body for Jewish members of the Green Party. Bird was expelled from the

Labour Party in 2021 over her support for a group that denied and downplayed claims of antisemitism. Bird is also accused of making controversial statements in relation to antisemitism and the Jewish community.<sup>84</sup> In September, Bird was confirmed as the Green Party's prospective parliamentary candidate for Birkenhead.<sup>85</sup>

### UKIP

Peter Cawthron, a UKIP councillor on Tendring District Council, allegedly posted antisemitic, racist and misogynistic posts on Telegram. In one of the posts, Cawthron allegedly wrote: "*The Jews have the monopoly on fake holocausts*". Cawthron denied that he wrote the posts and claimed: "*I think someone must be imitating me*".<sup>86</sup>

### Holocaust Memorial Day debate

On 26 January, the day before Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD), the House of Commons held a debate to commemorate the annual event. MPs from all sides came together to discuss the Holocaust's importance, the current state of antisemitism and the role of the online world in spreading hate, conspiracy theories and Holocaust denial. MPs also stressed the importance of education in helping to reduce antisemitism and hatred.<sup>87</sup>

80 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-67234103>

81 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-67248739>

82 <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/jlm-writes-to-green-party-leaders-raising-concerns-around-antisemitism/>

83 <https://x.com/JewishLabour/status/1631168111729582080>

84 <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/jewish-greens-appoint-expelled-labour-councillor-jo-bird-as-a-senior-official/>

85 <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/greens-announce-jo-bird-as-prospective-parliamentary-candidate/>

86 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-64982663>

87 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-26/debates/70BC5F54-2219-4355-8BF6-93B81D821A3B/HolocaustMemorialDay>

# Antisemitism in education

## NUS and antisemitism

On 12 January, Rebecca Tuck KC published her report, *“Independent investigation into allegations of antisemitism within NUS”*, which was commissioned by the National Union of Students (NUS).

In May 2022, Tuck, a specialist in employment and discrimination law, was appointed to lead an independent inquiry. The inquiry followed a series of allegations of antisemitism levelled against NUS, including the election as NUS president of Shaima Dallali, who had posted problematic social media posts in the past. It became clear that antisemitism was a serious issue within NUS and the government temporarily disengaged with it. Tuck was asked to investigate recent and historical allegations of antisemitism within NUS and its broader culture.

The report opened with the following statement:

*“For at least the last decade, Jewish students have not felt welcome or included in NUS spaces or elected roles. There have been numerous instances of antisemitism within NUS. It invariably falls to Jewish students to raise complaints about these issues, and when they do, frequently, the complainants have not experienced the process as inclusive and fair.”<sup>88</sup>*

The report continued:

*“Antisemitism comes in many forms and far right-wing antisemitism – with references to Hitler, Nazism and the Holocaust – is depressingly still apparent on campuses, and very much so on social media platforms. Freshers having “white t-shirt parties” at which students write messages to each other in marker pens has seen, in recent years, Jewish*

*students having swastikas and other antisemitic messages drawn on them. Stickers and posters saying “Hitler was right” have been placed in student common rooms and on campuses. Social media has seen utterly vile messages being posted...The antisemitism which has been experienced has not been limited to Israeli-related examples such as holding Jewish students responsible for the acts of the Israeli state or comparing Israeli policy to Nazism, but has also seen the employing of ancient antisemitic tropes, from blood libels to Rothschild conspiracies.”*

The report made eleven recommendations, including the creation of an advisory panel to monitor the implementation of the recommendations, record keeping, due diligence process for election candidates, election and code of conduct complaints, antisemitism training, educational materials, discussions about Israel/Palestine, the revival of the Anti-Racist Anti-Fascist (ARAF) Committee, surveying Jewish students, conference speakers/guests and a governance review.

NUS responded to the report with the following statement:

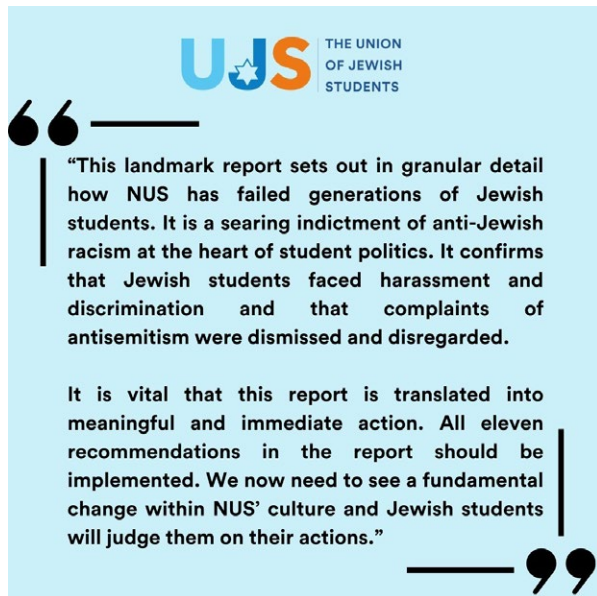
*“The KC’s report is a detailed and shocking account of antisemitism within the student movement. It is a truly difficult read for all of us but we welcome the clarity it brings to enable us to act with confidence to tackle antisemitism head on. There is no place for antisemitism within NUS and we are committed to ensuring that Jewish students feel safe and welcome in every corner of our movement... Thoughtful and consistent efforts will now be required over a sustained period, and an acknowledgement that it will take time to build trust as it has been notable by its absence for many years.”<sup>89</sup>*

<sup>88</sup> [https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471780/Independent\\_Investigation\\_into\\_Antisemitism\\_Report\\_NUS\\_12\\_January\\_2023.pdf?1673471780](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471780/Independent_Investigation_into_Antisemitism_Report_NUS_12_January_2023.pdf?1673471780)

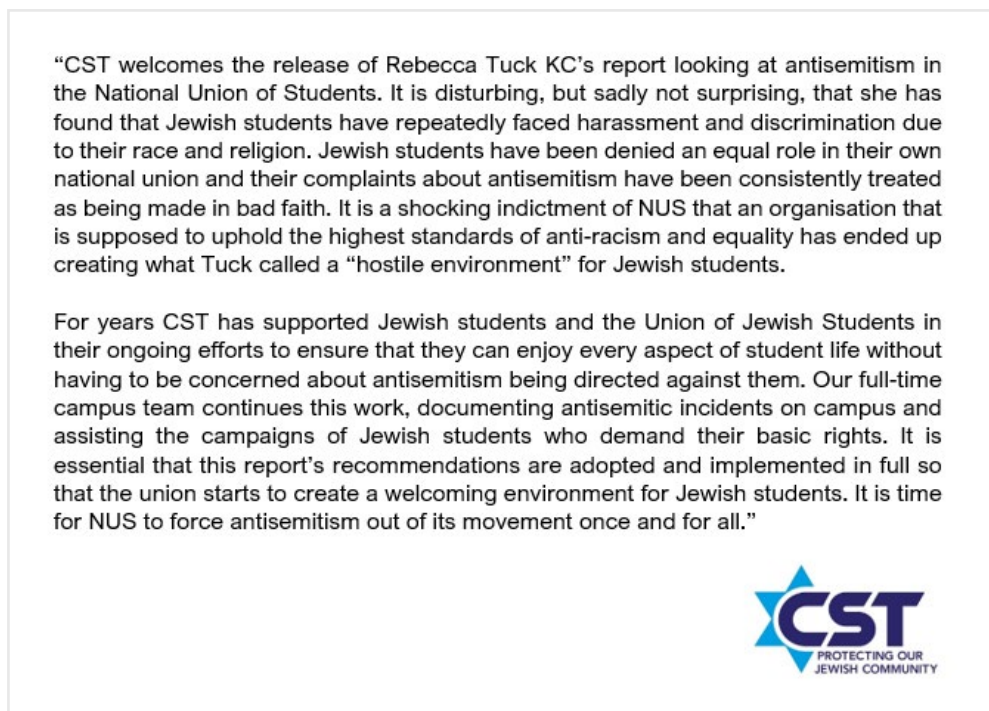
<sup>89</sup> [https://www.nus.org.uk/independent\\_investigation\\_into\\_antisemitism](https://www.nus.org.uk/independent_investigation_into_antisemitism)



The response from the Union of Jewish Students was as follows:<sup>90</sup>



CST’s response was as follows:<sup>91</sup>



<sup>90</sup> [https://twitter.com/UJS\\_UK/status/1613446895463956483](https://twitter.com/UJS_UK/status/1613446895463956483)

<sup>91</sup> [https://twitter.com/CST\\_UK/status/1613448585076510721](https://twitter.com/CST_UK/status/1613448585076510721)

Robert Halfon, Minister of State for Education, said in answer to a parliamentary question about the report:

*“This report that shows that the National Union of Students (NUS) has, over a number of years, systematically failed to represent the interests of Jewish students, and failed to tackle antisemitic practices within its own organisation. This is not acceptable. The NUS should be an organisation where Jewish students not only feel safe to be themselves, but where their full and equal participation is actively welcomed. Higher education (HE), more broadly, should do all it can to root out antisemitism.”*<sup>92</sup>

In response to the report’s findings, NUS released an Antisemitism Action Plan. In a section entitled *“What needs to be said”*, it states:

*“NUS must now take responsibility for the ways in which we have let Jewish students down. The KC’s report highlights many instances where Jewish students were hurt by the very organisation that should be defending them. We are deeply sorry.”*<sup>93</sup>

The Action Plan includes a section called Principles for Action, which includes: Transparency and accountability; Trust between Jewish students and NUS; Knowledge and understanding; Representation for Jewish students; Long term change; A new culture around Israel and Palestine debate within student politics.

In March, two of the leaders of NUS opened its annual national conference in Harrogate with an apology to Jewish students for the “truly shocking” findings in Rebecca Tuck’s report: *“Let us say this to anyone in doubt, antisemitism is real and is happening in student*

<sup>92</sup> <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-25/132493>

<sup>93</sup> [https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471793/NUS\\_Antisemitism\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Jan2023.pdf?1673471793](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471793/NUS_Antisemitism_Action_Plan_Jan2023.pdf?1673471793)

*politics today”*. They were *“genuinely, truly sorry that it has taken us so long to address antisemitism head-on”* and they pledged to ensure that Jewish students *“never have to fight this fight on your own again”*.<sup>94</sup>

## **CST report: Campus Antisemitism in Britain 2020-2022**



In January, CST released its biennial report *Campus Antisemitism in Britain 2020-2022*<sup>95</sup>. The report showed that CST had recorded a total of 150 university-related antisemitic incidents in those two years across 30 cities and towns in the UK, which was a 22% increase compared to the previous two-year period.

In 2021, CST recorded 95 campus-related antisemitic incidents, which was the highest total recorded for a single academic year. Fifty-five of these incidents took place in May 2021, at the same time as that year’s conflict in Israel and Gaza. At that time, national levels of

<sup>94</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/nus-opens-conference-with-antisemitism-apology-after-damning-report-vfiv369l>

<sup>95</sup> <https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/4/a/Campus%20Antisemitism%202020-2022.pdf>

antisemitic hate crimes increased and university campuses were disproportionately affected. Online spaces were especially hostile during this time.

The report made some recommendations for universities, including the need to maintain a fair, independent and impartial complaints process; offer a timely response to students and keep them updated on the progress of an investigation; allow students to report hate crimes anonymously; and ensure the IHRA definition of antisemitism is adopted and accompanied by training for staff.

In response to the report, CST Chief Executive Mark Gardner said:

*“Antisemitism at our universities has been a running sore for decades and these new findings show that far too many Jewish students suffer hatred and bias. This study also reinforces last week’s National Union of Students’ own report into antisemitism, including the link between anti-Israel hatred and racist treatment of British Jews. Students’ Unions and university authorities need to better support their Jewish students, taking concerns seriously and acting against antisemitism, whether it comes from students or academics.”*

Asked in the House of Lords for the government’s response to the report, Baroness Barran said:<sup>96</sup>

*“The recent Community Security Trust (CST) report showing an increase in antisemitic incidents on campus over the last two years is deeply concerning. Universities should be safe and welcoming places for Jewish students, and they should do all they can to root out antisemitism.”*

*The department has encouraged higher education (HE) providers to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, to have absolute clarity of what constitutes antisemitic behaviour. So far, 245 providers in England have adopted the IHRA definition, including the vast majority of universities. We would urge those providers that have not yet adopted the definition to do so, and those that have, to ensure that they are fully complying with the definition.”*

### London university announces inquiry into antisemitism

In May, Goldsmiths, University of London announced an independent inquiry into allegations of antisemitism within the institution to be led by senior barrister Mohinderpal Sethi KC.<sup>97</sup>

Professor Frances Corner, warden of Goldsmiths, announced that the inquiry would “determine whether students or staff have experienced antisemitism at Goldsmiths, as well as examining the college’s response to any reports, if our policies are adequate and if we are meeting legal duties.” Corner said antisemitism was “serious and it is pernicious, and we are determined to address it”.

In June 2022, David Hirsh, a senior sociology lecturer at Goldsmiths, had been accused by the president of the Students’ Union of being a “far right white supremacist”. Hirsh welcomed the inquiry:

*“Goldsmiths is acting with courage, asking for help in determining whether it has institutional antisemitism, and if it does, asking what should be done about it.”*

<sup>96</sup> <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-26/hl5145>

<sup>97</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/goldsmiths-university-confirm-barrister-led-inquiry-into-antisemitism-claims/>

## Antisemitism on campus in the aftermath of 7 October

On 8 October, UJS established a student welfare hotline and in the first fortnight it received more than 150 calls from Jewish students with concerns, worries and reports of antisemitic incidents on campus. The reported incidents included verbal abuse, intimidation, targeting Jewish students' accommodation, antisemitic messages in WhatsApp groups and death threats. According to UJS, Jewish students were experiencing an unprecedented rise in antisemitism on campuses across the UK and Ireland.<sup>98</sup>

On 11 October, Education Secretary Gillian Keegan and Education Minister Robert Halfon wrote a letter to university vice-chancellors in England concerning the welfare of Jewish students on campus. They asked universities to “act swiftly and decisively against any threats” to the welfare and safety of students.<sup>99</sup>

The letter followed reports that some student societies sent out messages showing support for Hamas, a proscribed terrorist organisation in the UK, after 7 October. According to the letter:

*“The effects of these statements are already being felt by Jewish students, many of whom are being made to feel that they need to hide their Jewish identity....we are asking that you do whatever you can to actively provide Jewish students with the reassurance they need, now and in the weeks and months to come to go about their lives, and pursue their studies, without fear of harassment or intimidation.”<sup>100</sup>*

UJS welcomed the letter: “We have received reports of Jewish students who have been harassed, intimidated and abused.”

<sup>98</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/jewish-students-have-suffered-a-years-worth-of-antisemitic-incidents-on-uk-campuses-since-hamas-attack-gi0btzhh>

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-67089209>

<sup>100</sup> <https://x.com/GillianKeegan/status/1712461243267829960>

Some academics at a variety of universities reportedly appeared to celebrate or justify the Hamas-led attacks.<sup>101</sup>

On 13 October, UJS and the University Jewish Chaplaincy wrote to vice-chancellors and some student unions across the UK calling for greater protection and support for Jewish students following an increase in antisemitism on campus. The letter stated:

*“Your institution needs to stand by its Jewish students by unequivocally condemning the glorification and celebration of terrorism and antisemitism which is being seen on campuses across the UK.”<sup>102 103</sup>*

On 23 October, Gillian Keegan spoke about antisemitism at universities in a questions session in parliament:

*“My ministerial team and I recently met leaders from the Jewish education community. I was deeply moved by the experiences that they shared but horrified by the rise in antisemitism that they faced. That is totally unacceptable. All students deserve to learn without fear or harassment.*

*Disturbingly, I have also seen evidence of students and academics appearing to support Hamas. Let me be crystal clear: Hamas is a terrorist organisation and supporting it is a criminal act. The Government will take action against those who do. With my Ministers, I have written to schools, colleges and universities, reminding them of their duties under Prevent and that incidents of antisemitism will not be tolerated.”<sup>104</sup>*

Towards the end of October, some student

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/academics-claim-hamas-atrocities-are-part-of-legitimate-struggle-against-israel-csnfvhrj>

<sup>102</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/community/university-vice-chancellors-are-asked-to-protect-jewish-students-olvz9wzo>

<sup>103</sup> <https://x.com/JewishChaplain/status/1712816165746028803>

<sup>104</sup> <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2023-10-23/debates/4012A55C-D5AC-4903-8096-E5615E7055EB/TopicalQuestions#contribution-A91C8C56-F5C2-4DEB-8404-29236BF175FF>

unions, including Cambridge University, Oxford University and University College London, put forward motions calling for “*Intifada until victory*” and a “*mass uprising*” against Israeli civilians.<sup>105</sup>

On 1 November, Edward Isaacs, UJS president, wrote:

*“In the past few weeks, we have seen some of the most violent antisemitic hatred known to UJS. Both I and others on campus have received death threats. Jewish students have been physically assaulted and harassed on campus which has resulted in immense anxiety as to whether to attend lectures or whether to openly display their Jewish identity. This cannot continue any longer.”*<sup>106</sup>

On 8 November, more than 500 alumni of University College London signed an open letter addressed to the president and provost.<sup>107</sup> They wrote: “*We come together to express our horror and disgust over the appalling torrent of antisemitism that has swept our alma mater.*”

The letter outlined examples of where “*the UCL community has been set ablaze with constant antisemitism and bigotry of the most vile kind... Such language and behaviour has no place in any modern institution of higher education – and it puts the lives and security of Jewish students and staff at risk. It is incomprehensible that academics and students at one of the world’s leading universities could join in the global calls to incite violence.*”

On 7 December, Sir Michael Ellis MP spoke in the House of Commons:

*“Can we have a debate on antisemitism in higher education? This week, the presidents of Harvard,*

<sup>105</sup> [https://x.com/UJS\\_UK/status/1716776661100736770](https://x.com/UJS_UK/status/1716776661100736770) & [https://x.com/UJS\\_UK/status/1716872672595095891](https://x.com/UJS_UK/status/1716872672595095891) & <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/status/1719056745949986908> & <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/an-utter-disgrace-ujs-condemns-university-union-calls-for-a-mass-uprising-against-israeli-citizens/>

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/alienation-and-adversity-todays-jewish-student-experience-on-campus/>

<sup>107</sup> <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdjDuW7gxcSmb--bZYqN9TFnmUCcqyVWvntzj77n0QHks8qag/viewform>

*MIT and Penn appeared before the United States Congress, and when asked repeatedly about whether calling for genocide of Jews breaks the university code of conduct and was harassment, they said that it ‘depends on the context’ and whether the speech turned into actual genocidal conduct. It is impossible to imagine a call for mass murder of any other minority group being said to depend on the context. A call for the mass murder of black people or gay people would rightly not be tolerated for a moment. This is top-level institutional Jew hatred at the highest levels of academia, and sadly universities in the United Kingdom are also infested with antisemitism. Does the Leader of the House agree that British students must be protected from such poison?”*<sup>108</sup>

In an article in the Telegraph on 24 December, Karen Pollock, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust, wrote:

*“Our hope for the future has always been rooted in the power of education, a key ingredient of the vaccine to rid our society of the virus that is anti-Semitism. Shockingly though, instead of being part of the cure, these institutions have proven themselves to be part of the problem.*

*University campuses that are supposed to be bastions of intellectual thought, the pursuit of knowledge and, above all, safe spaces for all people from all backgrounds, have not escaped this upward trend in hatred of Jews, but rather, the anti-Jewish racism that we are seeing seeping into all areas of society has been amplified on campuses here and abroad.”*<sup>109</sup>

### Academic stripped of university titles

Harriet Bradley, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Bristol and Emeritus Professor at the University of the West of England (UWE), replied to an online post about a conference organised by the

<sup>108</sup> <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-12-07/debates/D110B382-8600-4D5B-A280-04880CA8FBD0/BusinessOfTheHouse>

<sup>109</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/24/our-universities-have-failed-their-jewish-students/>

Jewish Labour Movement by posting:  
*“Somebody blow up the venue!”*<sup>110</sup>

Bradley, who is also a former Labour councillor who specialises in inclusion, inequality and discrimination, deleted the post. Other posts Bradley wrote include: *“All Zionist supporters should go straight to hell. They are demons not human beings”*.

In response to the posts, the University of Bristol and UWE Bristol stripped Bradley of her titles with immediate effect.<sup>111</sup>

### Antisemitism in schools in the aftermath of 7 October

As seen on university campuses, antisemitism increased substantially in schools following the 7 October attacks in Israel. According to CST figures, there were more reported antisemitic incidents in schools in the seven weeks after 7 October than the whole of 2022. Most of the antisemitic incidents reported to CST in the month after the Hamas terror attack affected Jewish children in mainstream schools. In one example, a Jewish boy in a primary school was asked by a classmate if he supported Israel or Palestine and when he replied Israel, he was told: *“I support Palestine, I want to kill all the Jews.”*<sup>112</sup>

On 23 October, Andrew Gwynne MP (Labour) asked Nick Gibb MP (Conservative), Minister of State for Schools, in the House of Commons about a rise in antisemitism in schools and he replied:

*“The hon. Member is absolutely right: antisemitism has no place in education. It was an honour to join the Secretary of State’s visit to Menorah High School last week, together with the whole ministerial team, standing in solidarity with that school and with the Jewish*

<sup>110</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/israel/academic-specialist-in-inclusion-calls-for-evil-jewish-conference-to-be-blown-up-rn4haveo>

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/two-universities-strip-titles-from-socialology-academic-who-called-for-jewish-conference-to-be-blown-up-rn4haveo>

<sup>112</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2023/nov/09/charities-report-rise-in-antisemitism-and-islamophobia-at-schools-in-england>

*community. We have written to all schools and colleges urging a swift response to hate-related incidents and active reassurance for their students and staff, and we continue to work with faith leaders, schools and Ofsted to monitor the response to those concerns.”*<sup>113</sup>

In November, thousands of school pupils in Manchester, Glasgow, Bristol, Luton and East London reportedly walked out of school to march against the Israel-Hamas war and in sympathy with Gaza. The *“school strikes”* were co-ordinated by the Stop the War Coalition. Education Secretary Gillian Keegan MP commented:

*“I’m deeply concerned that some children are attending political protests during the school day. Even more so if they’re taking part in, or being exposed to, antisemitic chants. This should be treated with the utmost seriousness – missing school for activism is unacceptable.”*<sup>114</sup>

Also in November, Gillian Keegan met with Jewish groups to discuss the rise in antisemitism in schools. Keegan said:

*“It has been shocking and heartbreaking to hear about the hate Jewish teachers and young people have experienced, and the damage that abuse has caused.”*<sup>115</sup>

Bridget Phillipson MP, Labour’s shadow education secretary, visited Jewish schools and said that she was:

*“deeply alarmed by the horrifying surge in antisemitic abuse suffered by Jewish children and school staff. I’ve heard first-hand about the terrifying scale at which these incidents are growing.”*

<sup>113</sup> <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2023-10-23/debates/4012A55C-D5AC-4903-8096-E5615E7055EB/TopicalQuestions#contribution-A91C8C56-F5C2-4DEB-8404-29236BF175FE>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/pupils-go-on-strike-in-pro-palestinian-protests-5qkv7kklz>

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/revealed-ministers-hold-crisis-meeting-over-antisemitism-surge-in-schools-bq5o3sz7>

# Antisemitism in the media and on social media

## The Economist

In January, The Economist ran an article about the declining fortunes of the investment bank, Goldman Sachs, which is viewed as a Jewish-dominated institution.<sup>116</sup> Entitled “Vampire Squib”, it was illustrated by a cartoon of a giant squid hovering over grand Wall Street buildings. Such an image has antisemitic overtones with the huge squid or octopus representing the apparent power of Jewish financiers to control everything, the vast tentacles sucking the lifeblood out of everything also recalling medieval blood libels. Alex Brummer wrote in the Jewish News: *“The magazine’s choice of an ancient image with a terrible history to illustrate a modern business story totally is unworthy of the editors responsible. Even if intended as clever and super-ironic it can only be construed as antisemitic and offensive.”*

## LBC

In April, the broadcasting standards watchdog, Ofcom, received complaints about the LBC presenter, Richard Spurr, leading it to investigate whether rules were broken.<sup>117</sup> While hosting a late-night show, Spurr discussed with a caller whether the Jewish people were a race, remarking that the latter *“come from many different countries, don’t they? There’s no such place as ‘Jewland’”*. Later, he said to another caller: *“You’re right in saying that in parts of North London – St. John’s Wood, Golders Green, up that way – you do see large groups of Orthodox Jews walking around in their traditional dress and you could describe it maybe as a ‘ghetto’ but certainly as an area concentrated with Jews.”* One complainant stated that the ghetto comparison was *“highly*

*offensive,”* especially as during the Holocaust Jews were segregated without their will.

## GB News

In February, complaints were made to Ofcom about the GB News channel featuring conspiracy theory content.<sup>118</sup> This was after an edition of a show hosted by the broadcaster and historian, Neil Oliver, in which he spoke directly to camera about a *“silent war”* by politicians to take *“total control of the people”* and set up *“one-world government.”* This idea derives from a document called *“Silent Weapons for Quiet Wars,”* purportedly a secret manual for world government which came to light in 1986. This has a long section on the alleged central role of the Rothschild banking dynasty, promoting a common antisemitic trope.

In July, GB News presenter Beverley Turner was also in the spotlight for making controversial comments about Jews and other minorities in relation to Covid vaccines.<sup>119</sup> The host of a weekday show, Turner posted this message on X/Twitter:<sup>120</sup> *“Sars cov 2 virus causes less harm to certain ethnicities – east Asians, and Ashkenazi Jews (Fauci anyone?) than to European, S Asian & African...Just let that sink in...This is looking increasingly like a bio weapon to destroy the west. Why is this not on the front pages of every paper?”* In writing this, she was echoing the sentiments of the controversial independent presidential candidate, Robert Kennedy Jr, who had said that Covid-19 had been manufactured to target some ethnic groups but not others and *“the people who are most immune are*

<sup>116</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/opinion-why-has-the-economist-used-an-ancient-anti-jewish-image-to-illustrate-a-modern-business-story/>

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/news/lbc-radio-talk-show-host-faces-ofcom-complaint-over-‘jewland’-remark-3wyavZavp6uoXDlgu2CciV>

<sup>118</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2023/feb/08/jewish-groups-urge-gb-news-to-stop-indulging-conspiracy-theories>

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2023/feb/08/jewish-groups-urge-gb-news-to-stop-indulging-conspiracy-theories>

<sup>120</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/gb-news-presenter-accused-of-sharing-antisemitic-myth-about-jews-and-covid/>

*Ashkenazi Jews and Chinese*".<sup>121</sup> Such statements went against received knowledge and official statistics about the spread of the virus, while implying that Jews may have been involved in a conspiracy to develop vaccines as a way to harm other ethnic groups. The British Medical Journal had, for instance, officially concluded that even after "controlling for a range of variables there was a large and unexplained increased risk for Jewish males."

## BBC

With the atrocities committed by Hamas on 7 October, and the subsequent outbreak of the war between Israel and Gaza, the BBC faced numerous accusations of antisemitism in its news coverage.<sup>122</sup> Just days after the attack, the broadcaster took off air and investigated six reporters and a freelancer from the BBC Arabic channel.<sup>123</sup> They had posted comments on social media describing the Hamas attacks as "a morning of hope", celebrating as a "proud moment" a video of bodies and kidnapped people loaded onto a jeep, and stating Zionists "will live as a thief and a usurper."

In October and November Danny Cohen, a former director of BBC television, wrote a pair of opinion pieces in the Daily Telegraph in which he castigated his former employer. In the first, he argued that reporting failures as over the coverage of the explosion at the al-Ahli hospital in Gaza could be dangerous to British Jews.<sup>124</sup> He wrote: "When the BBC gets its reporting this badly wrong it fuels the dangerous poison of anti-Semitism. It sets up false equivalences between a nation responding to the worst terrorist attack in its history and the genocidal cult Hamas which cares nothing for human life, Israeli or Palestinian. It provides excuses for the

*prejudiced to act out their racism online or, more frighteningly, in the real world.*"<sup>125</sup> In the second piece, he argued that "the BBC's credibility with the Jewish community is reaching a point of no return" and called "for an independent inquiry into anti-Israel bias and related anti-Semitism at the BBC."<sup>126</sup> Speaking to the Jewish Chronicle at the time, he said: "I think the BBC is an extremely powerful institution in the UK. A lot of people follow it and note what it says. If it reports inaccurately or [gives] unbalanced information, it risks adding fuel to fire of antisemitism".<sup>127</sup> He further added: "Either the BBC's senior management is complicit in these egregious examples of bias, these regular breaches of its guidelines, or it lacks the ability to control the output of its own organisation."

On Sunday 26 November, the Campaign Against Antisemitism organised a march against antisemitism in central London.<sup>128</sup> With an estimated 100,000 people attending, it was the largest British gathering against antisemitism since the Battle of Cable Street in 1936. In the run-up to the event, BBC staff working in news and current affairs were told they had to adhere to existing guidelines on not participating in public demonstrations or gatherings about controversial issues, including antisemitism.<sup>129</sup> This upset Jewish employees at the corporation, and in the end dozens defied the guidelines and attended the march. One anonymous member of staff said: "BBC News romanticises Hamas and its supporters and sanitises their deeds and objectives, a consequence of which is a rise in antisemitism and has the audacity to tell its

121 <https://www.thejc.com/news/jewish-orgs-condemn-gb-news-presenters-dangerous-covid-claims-about-jews-ssv7tgxa>

122 <https://www.thejc.com/news/bbc-is-institutionally-antisemitic-says-corporations-former-director-of-television-bic3n3jv>

123 <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/bbc-arabic-channel-journalists-taken-off-air/>

124 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/21/warning-bbc-reporting-failures-consequences-british-jews/>

125 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/21/bbcs-deep-rooted-prejudice-fuelling-poison-of-anti-semitism/>

126 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/11/19/bbcs-credibility-jewish-community-reached-breaking-point/>

127 <https://www.thejc.com/news/bbc-is-institutionally-antisemitic-says-corporations-former-director-of-television-bic3n3jv>

128 <https://www.thetimes.com/culture/tv-radio/article/jewish-bbc-staff-london-march-antisemitism-5cbml79p5>

129 <https://www.thetimes.com/culture/tv-radio/article/bbc-staff-blocked-from-march-against-antisemitism-68jwmj9d>



*Jewish staff not to protest about it.*<sup>130</sup> Another commented: *“On the one hand they are saying that they’re not impartial on racism and staff don’t need to be but for some reason that we do need to be impartial on anti-Semitism. We can only assume that where this racism is concerned, Jews don’t count.”*

## The Guardian

On Saturday 29 April, a satirical cartoon drawn by Martin Rowson was published in the Guardian.<sup>131</sup> It was a comment on the resignation of Richard Sharp as BBC Chairman after it was revealed that he failed to disclose.<sup>132</sup> The cartoon depicted a monstrous pig-like Johnson sitting on a pile of excrement saying: *“Cheer up, Matey! I put you down for a peerage in my resignation honours list.”* On the left-hand side, the departing Chairman, who is Jewish, is depicted with a sinister grin and exaggerated, stereotypical Jewish features favoured by anti-Jewish caricaturists throughout the ages. Moreover, he is carrying a box marked *“Goldman Sachs”* on the side of it. Inside the box are a pink squid, what appear to be gold coins, and a puppet of the Prime Minister at the time, Rishi Sunak. In conspiratorial discourse, Goldman Sachs, a bank founded by Jews, is often used as a potent signifier of *“Jewish Greed”*,<sup>133</sup> and an image of a squid is common in antisemitic iconography. That the squid and Sunak are being casually carried by Sharp only further emphasises the idea that he is a Jewish *“puppet master”* with control over the economic and political world.<sup>134</sup>

CST Director of Policy Dave Rich tweeted the cartoon fell *“squarely into an antisemitic*

*tradition of depicting Jews with outsized, grotesque features, often in conjunction with money and power. It’s appalling.”*<sup>135</sup> He added that *“a squid or octopus is also a common antisemitic motif, used to depict a supposed Jewish conspiracy with its tentacles wrapped around whatever parts of society the Jews supposedly control.”*<sup>136</sup> It transpired that the cartoon was looked over by three opinion desk staff, who didn’t object to anything.<sup>137</sup>

Following an enormous outcry, the Guardian removed and deleted the cartoon. In a statement, it said: *“We understand the concerns that have been raised. This cartoon does not meet our editorial standards, and we have decided to remove it from our website. The Guardian apologises to Mr Sharp, to the Jewish community and to anyone offended.”*<sup>138 139</sup> He added: *“I’d never intended – idiotically, crassly and carelessly – to depict antisemitic tropes.”* The Guardian’s editor Kath Viner met representatives of CST and the Board of Deputies of British Jews to discuss the affair, and Rowson personally met representatives of CST.

Reflecting a few months later on all that occurred, Rowson wrote in the Guardian of how he was consumed *“with deep, devouring shame”* over the cartoon and further stated: *“What I do is a twisted and dreadful magic, and it needs to be practised with extreme care. Over the past few weeks, clambering through the wreckage resulting from my last cartoon, I have been talking to lots of people, prominent and otherwise, from across the Jewish community both to atone and to help me understand how I could have done this terrible*

<sup>130</sup> [https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12804047/jewish-bbc-staff-london-march-against-anti-semitism-defied-ban-attendance.html?ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490&ito=1490](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12804047/jewish-bbc-staff-london-march-against-anti-semitism-defied-ban-attendance.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)

<sup>131</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/the-last-two-weeks-show-the-guardians-antisemitism-blind-spot-still-remains-lrvs8m40>

<sup>132</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/opinion-is-the-guardians-radar-for-detecting-anti-jewish-hate-simply-switched-off/>

<sup>133</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/business/andrew-clark-on-america/2009/jul/14/goldmansachs-banks>

<sup>134</sup> <https://news.sky.com/story/the-guardian-pulls-cartoon-of-outgoing-bbc-boss-richard-sharp-after-antisemitism-backlash-12869197>

<sup>135</sup> <https://x.com/daverich1/status/1652230220013871110>

<sup>136</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/04/29/anti-semitism-row-guardian-cartoon/>

<sup>137</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/may/03/image-published-bbc-richard-sharp-guardian-cartoon-martin-rowson>

<sup>138</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/guardian-apologises-to-jewish-community-for-explicitly-racist-cartoon-hpzwbcyi>

<sup>139</sup> <https://www.martinrowson.com/words-poems/2023/8/2/osf9o46p7tojl8f4sed7h69dnftp0a>

thing.”<sup>140</sup> His apology was applauded by many Jewish commentators and community figures.

In the wake of the 7 October attacks and the conflict between Israel and Gaza, the Guardian refused to publish an image by another cartoonist, Steve Bell, that was alleged to contain an antisemitic trope.<sup>141</sup> He drew the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, cutting from his stomach a shape in the form of Gaza. He was told this was a reference to Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*, where the Jewish money-lender Shylock, a notorious antisemitic stereotype, demands payment of a pound of flesh from Antonio for non-payment of a debt. Bell denied there was any intended antisemitism.

### Social media

Research released at the end of March by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue and CSAM technology “found a major and sustained spike in antisemitic posts on Twitter since the company’s takeover by Elon Musk on October 27, 2022.”<sup>142</sup> Findings revealed that despite promises by Musk to stifle hateful content, “the volume of English-language antisemitic tweets more than doubled in the period following Musk’s takeover.” Under his aegis, there was a surge of new accounts promoting hate speech and the restoration of those previously suspended.

**Findings revealed that despite promises by Musk to stifle hateful content, “the volume of English-language antisemitic tweets more than doubled in the period following Musk’s takeover.”**

TikTok was also in the spotlight for hosting far-right content.<sup>143</sup> Clips and links relating to the Nazi propaganda film “*Europa: The Last Battle*” were being hosted and widely viewed on the platform, despite their assurances that any such content would be removed. The film denies the Holocaust, claims Hitler had no desire to launch the Second World War, and is full of antisemitic tropes such as the idea that

Jews own the world’s money supply. Far-right activists were responsible for the wide circulation of its content: one popular video with 60,000 views directed users to a website streaming the full 12-hour film. When approached by the Jewish Chronicle over the issue, a spokesperson from TikTok said: “Content of this nature has no place on our platform. We have banned the search term associated with the documentary and will continue to detect and

remove any similar violative content... We will continue to work closely with our expert partners to strengthen our policies and systems against antisemitism.”

After the Hamas attacks of 7 October, the ADL reported that antisemitic material on X/Twitter had a huge 919% week-over-week increase.<sup>144</sup> The Institute for Strategic Dialogue stated that the number of antisemitic comments on YouTube videos related to the Israel-Gaza conflict increased by 4,963% in the three days after the Hamas attacks compared to the three days before. With so much antisemitic and violent content being circulated, Michelle Donelan, then the Technology Secretary, arranged a meeting with representatives of X/Twitter, Meta,

<sup>140</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/jul/26/britain-prejudices-cartoon-antisemitic-tropes>

<sup>141</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-67122609>

<sup>142</sup> [https://www.isdglobal.org/digital\\_dispatches/understanding-antisemitism-on-twitter-after-musk/](https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/understanding-antisemitism-on-twitter-after-musk/)

<sup>143</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/tiktok-is-still-hosting-nazi-propaganda-despite-warnings-vipj2e50>

<sup>144</sup> <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/what-happens-when-you-flag-a-post-as-antisemitic-not-much/>

Google and the other main social media companies.<sup>145</sup> In that meeting, she referred to the Online Safety Bill, which was weeks away from royal assent and, in her words, *“had a practical conversation with platforms on how they can and must do more to stop supporters of Hamas pushing wicked terrorism and antisemitism to the world. I’ve asked them to follow up and detail the plans they have in writing.”*

Roblox, an online gaming platform, was also having to deal with a proliferation of antisemitic content since 7 October.<sup>146</sup> With over 70 million users, most of whom are children, players are given the opportunity to create their own worlds and avatars. In one of these digital spaces, the Rally for Justice realm, burning Israeli flags were depicted next to a Jihadist flag. In another area, an avatar held up a placard with the Nazi SS symbol, while another had one saying *“Israel”* with a pig emoji. When notified by the Jewish News, a spokesman for Roblox responded: *“We have already taken action against a number of users as a result of our investigation and will continue to do so. We have also removed experience content – including the Rally for Justice experience – that was found to be in violation of our community standards.... We have a dedicated team focused on proactively identifying, and acting on, any content or user behaviour that glorifies or promotes terrorist or extremist organisations or promotes hatred against individuals or groups in any way.”*

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<sup>145</sup> <https://www.thetimes.com/business-money/technology/article/social-media-companies-get-ultimatum-over-israel-content-5lr87j0qc>

<sup>146</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/roblox-doing-all-it-can-to-tackle-proliferation-of-antisemitic-content-on-platform/>

## Iran-related antisemitic discourse

In April, the Centre for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) released a report titled *“State Hate: How Iran’s Press TV Uses Social Media to Promote Anti-Jewish Hatred”*. The report accuses the Iranian broadcaster Press TV of operating as:

*“a foreign state hate operation; an influence campaign by the Iranian state that spreads dangerous antisemitism through social media platforms to millions, with impunity. Press TV, a broadcasting brand founded by Iran’s state-controlled media corporation, is a platform used to promote the Iranian state’s hateful views of Jewish people, Holocaust denial, and LGBTQ+ and women’s rights to the rest of the world.”<sup>147</sup>*

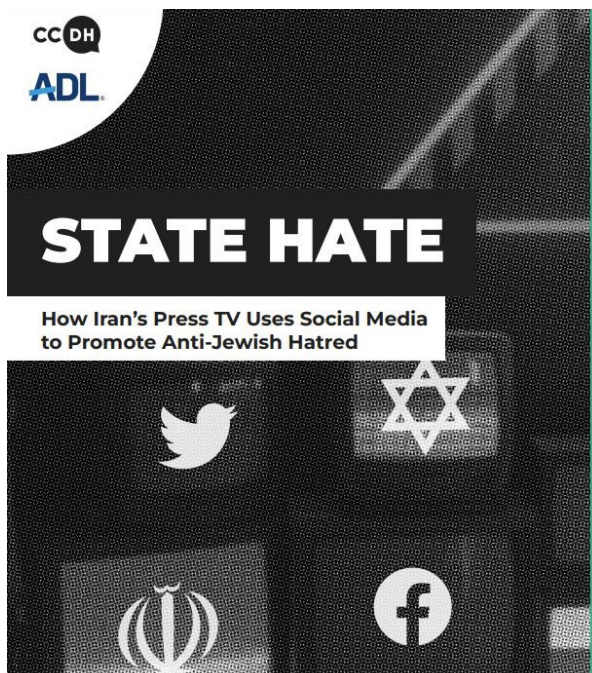
The report highlights one Press TV programme in particular, *Palestine Declassified*, *“which focuses its hatred towards British Jews, but spreads hateful narratives and lies about Jewish people as a whole...Half of the programme’s episodes promote antisemitic narratives – purporting antisemitic myths that*

*“Zionists” control world events, “groom” young people in schools and universities, and the well-worn conspiracy that “Zionists” exercise a network of control in the world, specifically in the UK. Its comment section is rife with antisemitism, ranging from abuse to inciting violence against Jews.”*

The two main presenters of *Palestine Declassified* are former MP Chris Williamson and former professor David Miller. In one episode of the programme, Williamson described the 7 October attack on Israel as an *“extraordinary armed uprising”* and an *“audacious military offensive by Palestinian freedom fighters”*.<sup>148</sup>

In August, Miller posted on X/Twitter:

*“If you are not Jewish, do not be cowed by racial supremacists who want to hector you into political subservience. Judeophobia barely exists these days. Educate yourself about Zionism and the tactics used by its adherents.”<sup>149</sup>*



<sup>147</sup> <https://counterhate.com/research/state-hate/>



He then posted:<sup>150</sup>

<sup>148</sup> <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/article/palestine-declassified-british-tv-iran-hamas-ldn65svmm>

<sup>149</sup> [https://x.com/Tracking\\_Power/status/1688308458171277312](https://x.com/Tracking_Power/status/1688308458171277312)

<sup>150</sup> [https://x.com/Tracking\\_Power/status/1688310790908956672](https://x.com/Tracking_Power/status/1688310790908956672)

According to an article in the Jewish Chronicle from August, senior commanders from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) have addressed student audiences in the UK using antisemitic propaganda and calls for violence. Some of the speakers have been sanctioned by Britain for human rights abuses.<sup>151</sup> One commander reportedly told students that the Holocaust was "fake", boasted of training al-Qaeda terrorists and urged them to join the "beautiful list of soldiers" who would fight and kill Jews in a coming apocalyptic war. The talks were livestreamed from Iran between September 2020 and January 2022 and allegedly arranged by the Islamic Students Association of Britain, which is based in Hammersmith, west London.

In the light of the allegations, Edward Isaacs, then president of the Union of Jewish Students, called for the proscription of the IRGC in the UK so that:

*"Jewish students would be able to share the same excitement for campus life as their fellow students do, rather than having to fear that the IRGC are preaching violent hatred while seeking their demise. We must ensure Jewish students are able to study free from antisemitic hatred that has no place in our society."*<sup>152</sup>

<sup>151</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/news/irgc-chiefs-tell-uk-students-to-join-'apocalyptic-war'-on-jews-2FZeFYUh52J5eDJ6exPsfA>

<sup>152</sup> <https://www.thetimes.com/world/asia/article/protect-jewish-students-from-irans-hate-speakers-wr6x5crb9>

## Antisemitism in the NHS and healthcare

In April, Maqsood Ahmad, an NHS Trust director, quit his position after it was revealed that he had written a series of antisemitic posts on social media.<sup>153</sup> Ahmad was the non-executive director of the Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust, which provides both mental health and learning disability services to Bury, which has a substantial Jewish population. Several posts by Ahmad were discovered in which he made comparisons between Israel and the Nazis. In one post he wrote: *“The Holocaust and Nazism wasn’t just the gas chambers. It had many things that Zionism is today, to a degree. They wail ‘never again’ – but never is happening again. Don’t take my word for it. The decent Jewish folk are even saying it.”* He also claimed that Sir Keir Starmer, the then Labour leader and David Lammy, the then shadow Foreign Secretary, had been *“bought and paid for”* by the Israeli lobby.<sup>154</sup> He once told a US-Jewish advocacy group: *“May i suggest you occupy New York and declare that as the only Jewish State in the World and leave Palistine [sic] alone”*. Ahmad, who was awarded an OBE and was also Chief Executive of the British Muslim Heritage Centre, had previously held other prominent public positions including head of equalities for policing at the Home Office and director for equality and inclusion at NHS England.

The British Medical Association suspended Dr Martin Whyte, a paediatrician in Newcastle, pending an external independent investigation into antisemitic posts he allegedly wrote on

Twitter/X. For example, in response to a post about a synagogue shooting in 2018, Dr Whyte allegedly replied: *“hahaha zeig heil hahaha gas the jews hahaha just kidding but have you seen these youtube videos about the holohoax the’re pretty convincing imo [in my opinion]’*. In another post he allegedly referred to *“Jew banker goblins”*. Whyte reportedly resigned from his position as a deputy chair of the UK Junior Doctors Committee.<sup>155</sup>

In the wake of the Hamas-led 7 October terror attack, the Jewish Medical Association expressed heightened concern about antisemitism directed at Jewish healthcare professionals.<sup>156</sup> Two doctors from this group, Professor David Katz and Dr Fiona Sim, wrote a letter to the leading medical journal, *The Lancet*, voicing this worry. They wrote: *“Although these attacks might have come from a small number of people, it is nonetheless a serious*

*problem. Furthermore, our colleagues have been exposed to open support for the massacres done by Hamas.”* They added: *“Everyone involved needs to be aware that there is growing concern and fear among staff—general practitioners, consultants, junior doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals. Patients, and their families, need to feel safe in the knowledge that those entrusted with their care never express racist—including antisemitic—views”*. In response, a statement from the Department of Health and Social Care said that then Health Secretary, Stephen Barclay, was *“clear that abuse or misconduct of any kind is unacceptable and has no place in the NHS. He is working closely*

**The survey found that 73% of respondents said they had dealt with at least one antisemitic incident since 7 October**

<sup>153</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/nhs-trust-director-steps-down-after-jewish-news-uncovers-posts-about-holocaust-and-real-jews/>

<sup>154</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/government-diversity-guru-steps-down-after-zionazi-tweets-revealed-oes5qhqx>

<sup>155</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12000469/Junior-doctor-leader-joked-Twitter-gassing-Jews-suspended-BMA.html>

<sup>156</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/jewish-healthcare-professionals-express-concern-about-antisemitism-in-nhs/>

*with the NHS and earlier this year convened a meeting with NHS leaders to discuss how to root out this vile behaviour and ensure services are always safe for staff and patients.”*

In November, a survey was conducted of more than two hundred Jewish healthcare professionals.<sup>157</sup> It was led by Joseph Greenwall-Cohen, in collaboration with Alpha Omega (The Jewish Dental Association). The survey found that 73% of respondents said they had dealt with at least one antisemitic incident since 7 October; 70% experienced antisemitic incidents involving their colleagues and 48% did not feel safe in clinical settings. Greenwall-Cohen commented:

*“To think that less than a third of us feel safe around our colleagues is a testament to the severity of anti-Jewish racism at this present time and highlights the need for this to be resolved urgently.”*

Just after the results of the survey were released, Northwick Park Hospital sacked a doctor for making antisemitic comments on Facebook.<sup>158</sup> Manoj Sen, a consultant, posted statements such as: *“Die Juden sind unsere Unglück”* (German for *“the Jews are our misfortune”*, a phrase used in Nazi Germany). Sen had been an honorary senior lecturer in surgery at Imperial College London’s faculty of medicine.

<sup>157</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/anti-jewish-racism-soars-by-95-in-healthcare-sector-says-report/>

<sup>158</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/exclusive-doctor-at-northwick-park-hospital-removed-for-posting-antisemitic-comments-online/>

## Antisemitism in the arts

### Roger Waters

In June, ex-Pink Floyd frontman Roger Waters performed two concerts at the O2 Arena in London as part of his UK tour.<sup>159</sup> At one point, he appeared on stage in a black leather trench coat with a red armband, invoking the image of a Nazi SS officer. Also featuring in his performances was a large graphics display naming twelve individuals said to have been killed by repressive states.<sup>160</sup> Included in this were Anne Frank, the Jewish girl who died in a Nazi concentration camp, and Shireen Abu Akleh, the Palestinian journalist killed during an IDF raid near Jenin in the West Bank in May 2022.<sup>161</sup> Waters had already featured his costume and the list of names at concerts in Germany, where he had faced allegations of antisemitism.<sup>162</sup> Regarding the controversial elements of his show, Waters tweeted: *“The elements of my performance that have been questioned are quite clearly a statement in opposition to fascism, injustice, and bigotry in all its forms... The depiction of an unhinged fascist demagogue has been a feature of my shows since Pink Floyd’s The Wall in 1980.”*<sup>163</sup>

Christian Wakeford, Labour MP for Bury South, raised the issue of Waters’ stage performances in the House of Commons, claiming that Waters *“used the name of Anne Frank to stoke division”*. Waters addressed Wakeford directly during one of his performances, accusing him of lying *“because you were told to by your masters in the Foreign Office in Tel Aviv because of this hate.”*<sup>164</sup>

<sup>159</sup> <https://www.timesofisrael.com/roger-waters-resumes-nazi-act-in-london-that-hed-dropped-following-germany-uproar/>

<sup>160</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/roger-waters-claims-labour-mp-who-criticised-him-is-acting-for-masters-in-tel-aviv/>

<sup>161</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/ex-floyd-frontman-waters-in-new-low-with-nazi-israel-comparison-on-latest-tour/>

<sup>162</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/roger-waters-pink-floyd-nazi-officer-anne-frank-b2346190.html>

<sup>163</sup> [https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12173265/Roger-Waters-says-accusations-hes-glorifying-Nazis-deeply-insulting-upsetting.html?ns\\_mchannel=rss&ito=1490&ns\\_campaign=1490](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12173265/Roger-Waters-says-accusations-hes-glorifying-Nazis-deeply-insulting-upsetting.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ito=1490&ns_campaign=1490)

<sup>164</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/roger-waters-claims-cripple-labour-mp-is-working-for-his-masters-in-tel-aviv-beluxoex>

Reacting to Waters’ comments, Karen Pollock, chief executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust said: *“Yet again, we see the grotesque mockery of Anne Frank and trivialisation of the Holocaust together with an age-old antisemitic slur that suggests that Jews are pulling the puppet strings of people in power.”*

In July, the Creative Community for Peace (CCFP), a non-profit entertainment industry group, organised a letter to be sent to the Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG) asking them to end their business relationship with Waters, who they represented.<sup>165</sup> It was co-signed by fourteen leading Jewish organisations including CST, ADL, World Jewish Congress, the Simon Wiesenthal Center and the Conference of European Rabbis. The letter stated that: *“We believe that artists, given their massive influence in the world today, have a unique and important responsibility to speak out against bigotry. Mr Waters has repeatedly shown that he’s determined to do the opposite – and would instead use his voice, his platform and his public microphone to fan the flames of hatred.”* Ari Ingel, the Director of CCFP, said: *“For over a decade, Roger Waters has peddled and promoted antisemitism and leveraged his immense platform to spread his hateful views to millions worldwide. As we witness the continued rise of antisemitism, his words and actions are unacceptable. Our letter demonstrates the Jewish community’s concern that corporations cannot sit idly by while their business partners promote hate.”* In January 2024 it was reported that BMG had decided to stop working with Waters.<sup>166</sup>

In November, Waters faced more allegations of antisemitism when in an interview he voiced his opinions about the Hamas-led 7 October

<sup>165</sup> <https://www.creativecommunityforpeace.com/blog/2023/07/19/worlds-leading-jewish-organizations-urge-bmg-to-reconsider-business-relationship-with-roger-waters/>

<sup>166</sup> <https://variety.com/2024/music/news/roger-waters-bmg-split-over-pink-floyd-anti-israeli-comments-1235891350/>



attacks in southern Israel. He claimed what had occurred was “*thrown out of all proportion*” and might have been a “*false flag operation*.”<sup>167</sup>

### Glastonbury cancels screening of ‘The Big Lie’ after backlash

On the last day of the annual Glastonbury festival in July, there was due to be a screening of the film “*Oh, Jeremy Corbyn! The Big Lie*”.<sup>168</sup> The film claims that Corbyn was toppled as Labour leader by an “*orchestrated campaign*.” On the Glastonbury website, the film was also described as “*a dark and murky story of political deceit and outrageous antisemitic smears*.” It contained contributions from ex-Labour MP Chris Williamson, former sociology professor David Miller, far-left activist Andrew Murray and the filmmaker, Ken Loach, who was expelled from the Labour party over membership of a banned group.<sup>169</sup> Paul Mason, the former Channel 4 and BBC presenter, when reviewing the film on the Labour List website, wrote that it presented a “*a full-blown conspiracy theory about Corbyn’s opponents, conflating Zionists, Jews and Israel as part of a force that ‘orchestrated’ his overthrow*” and that it breached “*at least two examples of antisemitism in the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition*.”

A few days before the screening of the film, Marie van der Zyl, the President of the Board of Deputies, wrote to the co-organisers of the Glastonbury Festival expressing deep concern at the planned screening.<sup>170</sup> The Glastonbury management announced that it would cancel the screening: “*Although we believe that the Pilton Palais booked this film in good faith, in the hope of provoking political debate, it’s become clear that it is not appropriate for us to screen it at the Festival. Glastonbury is about unity and not division, and we stand against all*

*forms of discrimination.*”

In the wake of the cancellation, the film’s producer, Norman Thomas, said: “*An outside pressure group has declared war on our film. They wrote to the festival’s sponsors...and whipped up huge storm of complaints about the film claiming, without any foundation whatsoever, that the film is antisemitic.*”<sup>171</sup>

Despite the ban, there was a showing of the film at the festival. Reel News, which describes itself as an activist video collective, tweeted a video of a group of festivalgoers watching the film in a tent.<sup>172</sup>

### Theatre production targeted by antisemitic trolls

In the wake of the 7 October terror attacks, a touring production of Shakespeare’s play *The Merchant of Venice* 1936 had to hire extra security due to fears of antisemitic attacks.<sup>173</sup> The production, which set the play in the 1930s East End in the run-up to the Battle of Cable Street, was adapted by the actress Tracy-Ann Oberman, who also played the character of Shylock. After the show began to receive antisemitic trolling, Oberman wrote in *The Spectator*: “*It’s like a dystopian nightmare. A Jewish actress putting on a play about anti-Semitism which needs to be made secure because of Jew-hating extremists.*”<sup>174</sup>

<sup>167</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2023/11/07/pink-floyd-roger-waters-hamas-gaza-israel-attack-proportion/>

<sup>168</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/glastonbury-cancels-screening-of-the-big-lie-after-backlash-from-community-euvkjc9>

<sup>169</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/glastonbury-axe-screening-of-pro-corbyn-film-after-complaints-over-antisemitism/>

<sup>170</sup> <https://x.com/BoardofDeputies/status/1670848802452799504>

<sup>171</sup> <https://www.standard.co.uk/culture/music/jeremy-corbyn-keir-starmer-labour-pyramid-jewish-b1089107.html>

<sup>172</sup> <https://labourlist.org/2023/06/jeremy-corbyn-big-lie-film-glastonbury-screen-ban/>

<sup>173</sup> <https://www.thetimes.com/article/production-starring-tracy-ann-oberman-targeted-by-antisemitic-trolls-qkm3qkm8c>

<sup>174</sup> <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/why-do-i-need-security-guards-so-i-can-play-shylock/>

### Letter in support of British Jews

In October 2023, a group called British Friends of Israel created an online petition called The October Declaration. The Declaration was signed by a group that included MPs, members of the House of Lords, historians, professors and journalists; followed by tens of thousands of public signatories.

The Declaration included the following:

*“We are a group of concerned British citizens and residents from a wide range of backgrounds and professions who stand in solidarity with British Jews and condemn all forms of antisemitism, whether in Britain or elsewhere... British Jews should not live in fear because of actions taken by the state of Israel to defend itself. The British state must do everything in its power to protect them.”<sup>175</sup>*

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<sup>175</sup> <https://britishfriendsofisrael.org/>

# Antisemitism in sport

## Football

In January, two Jewish female Arsenal fans watching the north London derby match in a London pub objected to the chanting by some Arsenal fans of the word “*Yiddo*”. They were then threatened and subjected to antisemitic abuse by a group of men. Arsenal Football Club released a statement criticising the “*grossly offensive antisemitic comments*” and stating they would “*not stand for this kind of behaviour*”, and that anyone involved who was identified would receive a lengthy ban from the club.<sup>176</sup> In April, Arsenal announced the establishment of a new affiliate Jewish supporters’ group called Jewish Gooners, partly in response to antisemitism among fans. The aim of the group is to prevent antisemitism and help to foster a more inclusive environment for Jews at the club.<sup>177</sup> Arsenal said it had banned five members for three years for antisemitic incidents that took place online or inside the stadium.<sup>178</sup>

In October, football writer Henry Winter wrote an article titled, “*Inaction on antisemitism shames football*”.<sup>179</sup> He wrote about a meeting he attended at Bushey United Synagogue to discuss antisemitism in football. There was criticism from the attendees of the delayed (or lack of any) response from the Premier League or football clubs to the 7 October attacks in Israel: “*It is the silence that heightened the fear, the feeling of an absence of support, and the ghosts of history returning. It took five days for clubs to respond, each day of delay deepening the hurt, and even then the messages were*

*deemed insufficient.*” There was also criticism in the audience for the refusal of the FA to light up the Wembley arch in the blue and white colours of Israel’s flag as a show of humanity.

In November, Wasim Haq resigned as a Football Association Council member after he wrote a post on X/Twitter saying that: “*Netanyahu has sacrificed his own people to maintain power. Whilst #Palestinians are trying to maintain their sanity. Adolf Hitler would be proud of Benjamin Netanyahu.*” Haq was suspended by the FA pending an investigation into the post, which was subsequently deleted. Haq, who was also removed or resigned from roles with the Lawn Tennis Association and England Golf, apologised for any offence caused.<sup>180</sup>

In December, ahead of an event celebrating the festival of Chanukah at Wembley Stadium, Debbie Hewitt, chair of the Football Association, wrote an article apologising for the FA’s response to 7 October and stating: “*there is no place for antisemitism or any discrimination in football.*” She wrote that the FA will continue to learn about antisemitism within football, respond to antisemitic incidents, deliver more antisemitism awareness education and establish an antisemitism football taskforce involving key Jewish stakeholders. Regarding the FA’s response to the 7 October attacks, she wrote:

<sup>176</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/arsenal-slams-grossly-offensive-antisemitic-statements-from-fans-during-derby-b7hg7j5m>

<sup>177</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/arsenal-announces-new-antisemitism-plan-after-banning-fans-for-jew-hate-k155jy56>

<sup>178</sup> <https://www.arsenal.com/news/our-ongoing-drive-against-abuse-and-discrimination>

<sup>179</sup> <https://www.thetimes.com/article/fa-and-clubs-should-have-shown-more-support-for-israel-brkl9mqjf>

<sup>180</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/football/67509314>

*“We recognise that this is a deeply traumatic time for the Jewish community in the United Kingdom and beyond and we are truly sorry for the hurt our response caused. The impact of the 7 October terror attacks on the Jewish community is unimaginable, as is the impact of the profoundly worrying rise in antisemitism in England. We have reflected deeply on how football can help to eradicate it. We want football to be a place of safety, consolation, and enjoyment in these dark times and indeed, always.”*<sup>181</sup>

### Cricket

In February, Azeem Akhtar, chairman of Essex County Cricket Club, resigned following an investigation into social media posts. Akhtar was appointed in November 2022 but stepped aside in February after the setting up of an independent review into his social media activity prompted by an article in the Jewish Chronicle. The article claimed that Akhtar endorsed comments that the “Zionist lobby” has “oversized” control of the media and liked a defence of comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany. The review, which was not carried out by a Jewish community organisation, claimed that Akhtar’s social media activity was “supportive of the Islamic faith and beliefs as opposed to being antisemitic or indicating any other forms of racism.” Despite this, Akhtar decided to step down from his post.<sup>182</sup>

In October, Amjad Bashir, a trustee of Yorkshire’s cricket foundation, was removed from his position with immediate effect after he posted a series of statements on X/Twitter following the 7 October terrorist attacks in Israel. In one of the posts, Bashir reportedly wrote that Israel was guilty of “slavery, murder, rape, ethnic cleansing and apartheid all in the name of Jewish supremacy”.<sup>183</sup> In 2019, Bashir

was suspended by the Conservative Party for having said in 2014 that British Jews were returning from Israel as “extremists – as people that are brainwashed.”<sup>184</sup>

<sup>181</sup> <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/opinion-the-fa-is-truly-sorry-for-the-pain-caused-by-its-response-to-7-october/>

<sup>182</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/essex-cricket-chairman-resigns-following-jc-investigation-a36fteo7>

<sup>183</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cricket/2023/10/25/yorkshire-ccc-racism-trustee-anti-semitism-israel-gaza/>

<sup>184</sup> <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/amjad-bashir-tory-candidate-who-spoke-of-brainwashed-british-jews-suspended-from-party-a4291981.html>

# Antisemitism – reports & publications

## Prevent Review

In February, the government published the Independent Review of Prevent, carried out by William Shawcross CVO. Prevent is part of the government's counter-terrorism strategy that seeks to divert people away from being radicalised into violent extremism and tackle the ideological causes of terrorism.

In the Review, Shawcross explains how antisemitism is central to all ideologies:

*"I was disturbed by the prevalence of antisemitism within the Channel cases I observed. Individuals discussed at Channel panels tended to harbour violent and fanatical beliefs about Jews, often expressing an intent to kill, assault or blow-up members of the Jewish community. Prevent must better understand and tackle antisemitism where it is relevant to its work. As part of this pursuit, Prevent work should cover UK extremist networks supportive of terrorist movements that explicitly target Jewish communities. Prevent should also better address the anti-Jewish component of both Islamist and Extreme Right-Wing ideology."<sup>185</sup>*

The government's response to the Review included the following:

*"It is also clear from the review that Prevent needs to better understand the prevalence of antisemitism across ideologies and do more to combat it...we will ensure greater understanding of the prevalence of antisemitism in Channel cases so that we can better disrupt radicalisers who spread antisemitic views or are supportive of those that harass and violently target the Jewish community."<sup>186</sup>*

<sup>185</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e26968d3bf7f17385a3421/Independent\\_Review\\_of\\_Prevent.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e26968d3bf7f17385a3421/Independent_Review_of_Prevent.pdf)

<sup>186</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e2399de90e07625faf56c6/The\\_response\\_to\\_the\\_Independent\\_Review\\_of\\_Prevent.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e2399de90e07625faf56c6/The_response_to_the_Independent_Review_of_Prevent.pdf)

CST's response to the Prevent Review was as follows:<sup>187</sup>

"CST has long argued that antisemitism is an indicator of extremism, so we strongly welcome the Prevent Review's acknowledgement of this reality. As the Review points out, Islamist and Extreme Right Wing ideology share a conspiratorial, hateful view of Jews that fuels anti-Jewish terrorism and wider antisemitic attitudes, and tackling this is an essential part of the effort to reduce the amount and impact of antisemitism in Britain today.

Terrorism does not happen in a vacuum, and we share the view that public statements of support for proscribed terrorist organisations and calls for Jihad, including in relation to Israel, must be treated as manifestations of extremism. We have seen repeatedly how an atmosphere of extreme anti-Israel hatred contributes to levels of antisemitism, and it is both unacceptable and contradictory that anybody encouraging or professing such views could be involved in counter-extremism programmes such as Prevent.

It is surely correct that all forms of extremism should be subject to the same criteria and threshold for intervention, while recognising the distinctive characteristics of different ideologies and movements. For example, most young people drawn into Extreme Right Wing ideology do so primarily via online content from extremist actors on alternative social media platforms rather than from mainstream media and politics.

Ultimately, Prevent ought to be a vital tool in the effort to reduce the flow of people into extremism and terrorism of all types, and CST hopes to continue our work with government in this area, to enhance the understanding of antisemitism within Prevent and support their efforts to tackle extremism more generally, as part of our mission to protect the Jewish community and wider society from antisemitic hate and extremism."

**Study by researchers from King's College London, Goldsmiths, University of London, and Arden University: Antisemitism is predicted by anti-hierarchical aggression, totalitarianism, and belief in malevolent global conspiracies<sup>188</sup>**

In April, a study was released which examined people who are most likely to hold antisemitic views. The study revealed that people who believe in conspiracy theories are more likely to have antisemitic opinions than those who do not believe in conspiracist ideas.

The researchers found that antisemitic views are more prevalent in people *"who consider it justifiable to take extreme authoritarian action against political opponents, and people who want to overthrow social order."*

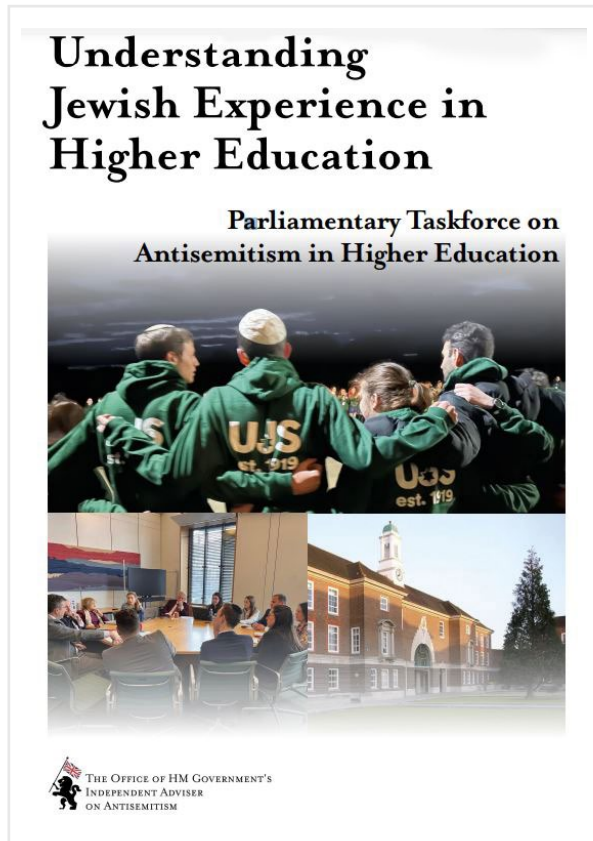
They also found that: *"antisemitism may be less closely linked to political beliefs than has previously been implied, and more closely linked to opinions and views on other topics*

<sup>187</sup> [https://x.com/cst\\_uk/status/1623390817900437531?s=46&t=O9GEwdUgXplOPtUeIkQjw](https://x.com/cst_uk/status/1623390817900437531?s=46&t=O9GEwdUgXplOPtUeIkQjw)

<sup>188</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-023-01624-y>

*such as religion, ethnic nationalism, and conspiracy theories.”*

### Parliamentary Taskforce on Antisemitism in Higher Education: Understanding Jewish Experience in Higher Education



In May, the Parliamentary Taskforce on Antisemitism in Higher Education, which was established in 2022 by the UK Government’s Independent Adviser on Antisemitism Lord Mann, released a report titled *“Understanding Jewish Experience in Higher Education”*, which examines antisemitism and wider Jewish staff and student experiences across the higher education sector in the UK.<sup>189</sup>

According to the report’s foreword:

*“Our findings are that Jewish students are likely to mask their identity at times in order to avoid negativity directed at them purely because of their Jewish identity. We repeatedly heard that an underlying fear of being targeted for being Jewish or expected to answer questions about Israel can impact how open an individual is about their Jewish identity. We were told it was commonplace for Jewish students to choose not to wear certain clothing or jewellery around campus because it would make them visibly identifiable as Jewish.”*

Amongst the recommendations the report makes are:

- Where there are issues or complaints, the IHRA definition should be used as a reference point to understand what contemporary antisemitism is.
- Antisemitism Awareness Training should be provided for staff in universities, students’ union managers and trade unions.
- Universities should develop systems to address antisemitism both where it occurs, and where there are opportunities to offer education.
- Universities should actively reach out to Jewish and other minority groups to ensure that they are fully aware of reporting processes and feel empowered to use them.
- Institutions should undertake a thorough review of their complaints systems.

<sup>189</sup> [https://mcusercontent.com/415963e62aecf0a8ba1b9e530/files/9a9064bc-c632-4677-a5cf-31e8500fd497/6747\\_AT\\_Lord\\_Mann\\_Report\\_PDF\\_Embargoed.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/415963e62aecf0a8ba1b9e530/files/9a9064bc-c632-4677-a5cf-31e8500fd497/6747_AT_Lord_Mann_Report_PDF_Embargoed.pdf)

# Norwich's Lord Mayor makes apology to Jewish community for first Blood Libel

In April, Councillor Kevin Maguire, the Lord Mayor of Norwich, offered a heartfelt apology to the Jewish community for the first known blood libel in England. In 1144, Jews were falsely accused of the ritual murder of a 12-year-old boy called William of Norwich, who was found dead in the woods. It was England's first recorded instance of a blood libel, in which Jews were wrongly accused of murdering Christian boys to use their blood in religious rituals. Similar blood libel accusations followed in other cities, resulting in massacres of Jews.

In 2004, the remains of 17 people, including 11 children, were discovered during archaeological digs in Norwich. They are believed to be the victims of an antisemitic riot that took place in Norwich in February 1190.<sup>190</sup>

Maguire made the apology at an interfaith Seder held by the University of East Anglia and its committee for Jewish heritage and culture. He told the gathering:

*“William’s murder is a story for today. We apportion blame for any harms and seek to punish those who are not like us; those who do and say things differently to the way that we say or do things. Medieval Norwich blamed the Jews and we see the horrendous events that followed. Today we see other ‘not like me’ groups turned upon and blamed for shortcomings in society...For me, the answer is to say ‘no more’ and to work for Norwich to be free of antisemitism – and to counter the lies told blatantly by those who would wish to foment hate.”<sup>191</sup>*

In June, plans were announced to create a centre of Jewish heritage, culture and study in Norwich, including research into historic and contemporary antisemitism. The organisers said that the city’s “foundational” role in the rise of antisemitism made it the right location. The centre would be located at the site of Jurnet’s House, described as the oldest known Jewish dwelling in England.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>190</sup> <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/news/2022/august/ancient-dna-medieval-norwich-skeletons-shed-light-jewish-history.html>

<sup>191</sup> <https://www.thejc.com/news/community/norwich-lord-mayors-heartfelt-apology-to-jewish-community-for-first-blood-libel-ljv6tb1n>

<sup>192</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-65745075>

# CST's Mission

- **Promote good relations** between British Jews and the rest of British society by working towards the elimination of racism, and antisemitism in particular.
- **Represent British Jews** on issues of racism, antisemitism, extremism, policing and security.
- **Facilitate Jewish life** by protecting Jews from the dangers of antisemitism, and antisemitic terrorism in particular.
- **Help those who are victims** of antisemitic hatred, harassment or bias.
- **Promote research** into racism, antisemitism and extremism; and to use this research for the benefit of both the Jewish community and society in general.
- **Speak responsibly** at all times, without exaggeration or political favour, on antisemitism and associated issues.



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National Emergency Number (24-hour) **0800 032 3263**

London (Head Office) **020 8457 9999**

Manchester (Northern Regional Office) **0161 792 6666**

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