



# Antisemitic Discourse in Britain in 2009



Terrorize, Kill, Occupy, Militarize, Intimidate





Copies of this sticker were found on the University of Manchester campus in January 2009. The sticker is anti-Zionist and anti-American, but is also antisemitic due to its grotesque abuse of Nazi imagery (i.e. the swastika and the SS death's head insignia).

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ISBN: 978-0-9548471-3-5

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CST Director of Communications, Mark Gardner, addresses the Experts' Forum at the London Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism. Others pictured include David Harris, Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee, and former Director of Intelligence for the Metropolitan Police, Professor Emeritus John Grieve CBE, QPM.

## Executive Summary

- Explicit antisemitism about Jews is rare in mainstream British discourse. It is, however, disturbingly common for older antisemitic conspiracy themes to be evoked by modern depictions of "Zionism" and "Zionist".
- Antisemitism is a matter of concern for British Jews, and many other observers, but it does not prevent Jews from leading a full life as British citizens.
- Rhetoric against "Zionism", "Zionists" or "pro-Israelis" is fostering hostility against British Jews and their representative bodies.
- In 2009, the Gaza conflict caused Israel to be compared to Nazi Germany and its supporters to be compared to Nazis. Previously a fringe phenomenon, the Nazi comparison is now widespread and also appears in mainstream media. This causes significant upset to Jews and is an antisemitic abuse of the memory of the Holocaust.
- The play "*Seven Jewish Children*" typified the emerging trend to depict Israel and Zionism as a mass Jewish psychological reaction to the trauma of the Holocaust.
- The ugliest medieval accusation, the Blood Libel, claiming that Jews steal children in order to use their blood, was strikingly revived in 2009. This feature of medieval village antisemitism now returned as a shocking example of antisemitic rumours in today's global village.
- The controversy regarding Polish MEP, Michal Kaminski, saw Jewish communities in Britain and Eastern Europe embroiled in a highly sensitive party political dispute concerning allegations of antisemitism.
- Two senior journalists at *The Independent* newspaper wrote separately about the supposed power of America's "Jewish" lobby. It is quite common for *The Independent* and *Guardian* newspapers, in particular, to depict a dominant US "Zionist" lobby in America: which risks reflecting and encouraging antisemitic Jewish conspiracy allegations.
- The term "criticism of Israel" continued to be used as a catch-all defence against the raising of Jewish concerns about antisemitic manifestations, public speakers, groups, websites, agitprop and other phenomena.
- There were numerous public declarations against antisemitism during 2009, including from Government and departments of state, diplomats, politicians, Muslim community figures and newspaper editorials. These largely reflected the worsening situation but were warmly welcomed by the Jewish Community.

# Introduction

**This CST Antisemitic Discourse Report analyses written and verbal communication, discussion and rhetoric about Jews and Jewish-related issues in Britain during 2009. 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.

For ease of analysis and discussion, CST distinguishes antisemitic discourse from actual antisemitic incidents<sup>3</sup>, which are race hate attacks against Jews or Jewish organisations and locations.

Racist or political violence is influenced by extremist discourse; particularly the manner in which perpetrators of such violence may be emboldened by support (real or imagined) from opinion leaders and society for their actions.

The 2006 Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism<sup>4</sup> noted the importance and complexity of antisemitic discourse and urged further study of it. By 2008, the Parliamentary Inquiry process had led to the issuing of the first progress report of the Government’s taskforce

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.*

*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>*

1 CST’s 2007 and 2008 reports may be read at <http://www.thecst.org.uk/index.cfm?Content=7>

2 Paul Iganski and Abe Sweiry “Understanding and Addressing The ‘Nazi card’ – Intervening Against Antisemitic Discourse”. European Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism, London 2009.

3 CST’s annual Antisemitic Incidents Report is a comprehensive analysis of the scale and nature of antisemitic race hate attacks. The “Antisemitic Incidents Report 2009” and recent predecessors may be accessed via the publications page at CST’s website: <http://www.thecst.org.uk/index.cfm?content=7&Menu=7>

4 “Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism”. Published September 2006, London: The Stationery Office. The report may be viewed on the website of the Parliamentary Committee Against Antisemitism: <http://www.antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/All-Party-Parliamentary-Inquiry-into-Antisemitism-REPORT.pdf>

5 “All-Party Inquiry into Antisemitism: Government Response One year on Progress Report”. Published 12th May 2008. London: The Stationery Office. Also at <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm73/7381/7381.pdf>



## Antisemitic Discourse and Antisemitism

Antisemitic discourse influences and reflects hostile attitudes to Jews and Jewish-related issues.

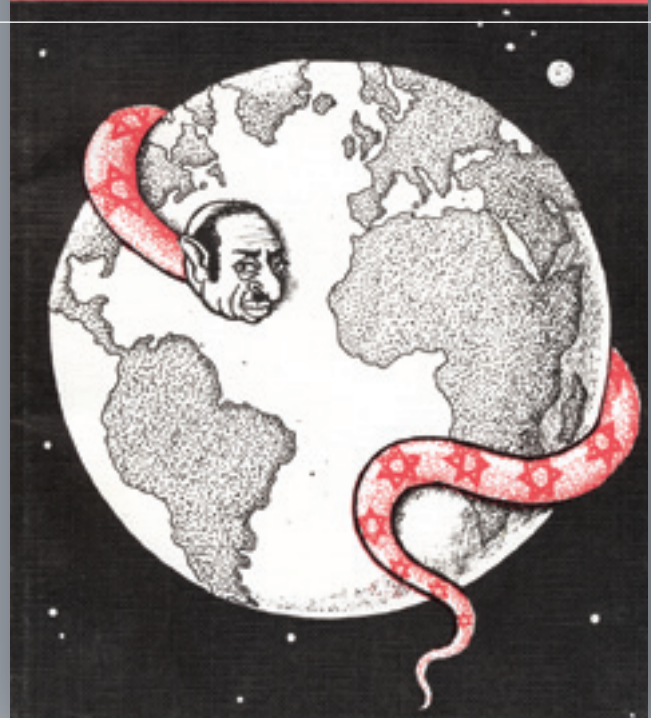
It can fuel antisemitic incidents against Jews and Jewish institutions, and may leave Jews feeling isolated, vulnerable and hurt.

The purpose of this Report is to help reduce antisemitism, by enabling readers to better understand antisemitic discourse, and its negative impacts against Jews and society as a whole.

### THE PROTOCOLS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE LEARNED ELDERS OF ZION TRANSLATED BY VICTOR E. MARSDEN

The notorious "*Protocols of Zion*" claims to reveal a supposed secret Jewish conspiracy to take over the world. (Shown in this British version by the Jewish snake circling the globe.)

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



## Antisemitism: Context of UK Jewish life

**British Jewry should be defined by its successes and vibrancy, rather than by antisemitism. However, the growth in antisemitism (and anti-Israel) in recent years has fuelled concerns for the well-being of British Jews**

Jewish life in Britain today is diverse and extremely well integrated into wider society. Indeed, the Jewish community is often referred to by Government and others as the benchmark of successful minority integration.

British Jews have full equal rights and protection in law. Overt antisemitism is both illegal and socially unacceptable. Jews who wish to live a Jewish life have every opportunity to do so, be it educational, religious, cultural or political.

Nevertheless, many Jews regard themselves, and future generations, as being increasingly vulnerable to antisemitic attitudes and impacts that they are largely perceived within the context of anti-Israel hostility. This perception of Jewish vulnerability is worsened by the statistical evidence of antisemitic race hate incidents and crimes, which have increased significantly since the turn of the millennium and rise sharply in immediate reaction to Middle East events.

The 2005-2006 All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism noted *"that there is much truth"* in the apparent contradiction between the extremely positive situation of British Jewry, and the rising mood of vulnerability and isolation.

*"In his oral evidence, the Chief Rabbi stated: 'If you were to ask me is Britain an antisemitic society, the answer is manifestly and obviously no. It is one of the least antisemitic societies in the world.'*

*However, the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews told us: 'There is probably a greater feeling of discomfort, greater concerns and greater fears now about antisemitism than there have been for many decades.' Having considered all of the evidence submitted, we are of the opinion that there is much truth in both of these ostensibly contradictory views."<sup>6</sup>*

### History

Individual Jews were present in the British Isles in Roman times, but organised settlement began after 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 the expulsion was removed by Oliver Cromwell.

By the early 19th century, Jews had virtually achieved economic and social emancipation. By the end of the 19th century, Jews also enjoyed political emancipation. From 1881 to 1914, the influx of Russian Jewish immigrants saw the Jewish community's population rise from c.60,000 to c.300,000. This met with antisemitic agitation from trade unions, politicians and others.

<sup>6</sup> "Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism". Published September 2006, London: The Stationery Office. <http://www.antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/All-Party-Parliamentary-Inquiry-into-Antisemitism-REPORT.pdf>



## Demography

There are an estimated 300,000 to 350,000 Jews in Britain, two-thirds of whom live in Greater London. Jews live throughout Britain, predominately in urban areas. Other major Jewish centres are in Manchester, Leeds, Brighton and Glasgow.

The religious composition of the Jewish community is highly diverse, and ranges from the strictly orthodox to non-practising. Many Jews can trace their British identity back to the most significant influx of Jewish immigration,

from Russia at the turn of the 20th century. Others can trace their British identity considerably further. There is also a substantial number of Jews of other national origins who have arrived in recent years, from countries including South Africa, Israel and France.

The Jewish population is in decline due to low birth rate, intermarriage and emigration. The strictly orthodox minority is experiencing sustained growth due to larger family sizes and may in future comprise the majority of the Jewish community.



Jewish teenagers attending a course in personal safety and development, run by the community's Streetwise initiative.

# What is Antisemitism?

## Definition, Impact, Historical Background

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

**Antisemitism is also used to describe all forms of discrimination, prejudice or hostility towards Jews throughout history.**

Antisemitism focuses upon 'the Jew' of the antisemitic imagination, rather than the reality of Jews or Jewish life.

It is not necessarily antisemitic to criticise Israel or Zionism, even if the criticism is harsh or unfair. The antisemitic aspect largely depends upon:

- The motivation for the criticism: to what extent is the critic driven by the Jewish nature of Israel and/or Zionism?
- The form of the criticism: does it use antisemitic or otherwise racist themes and motifs? The more deliberate and/or inaccurate the usage, the more antisemitic the criticism.
- Who is the target for the criticism: are local Jews being singled out as recipients for criticism or bias that ostensibly derives from anti-Israel or anti-Zionist hostility?

### **'The Jew' of the antisemitic imagination**

Philosopher Brian Klug has stressed the importance of the imaginary 'Jew' to antisemitic discourse, "*where Jews are perceived as something other than what they are...Thinking that Jews are really 'Jews' is precisely the core of antisemitism.*"

Klug depicts the antisemitic caricature of 'the 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>7</sup>

### **Antisemitic impacts**

Antisemitic impacts may arise from entirely legitimate situations that have no antisemitic intention.

Statistical evidence shows that perceived members of an ethnic or religious group can suffer hate crime attacks when public events related to that group take place. Media coverage or political comment of such public events may be entirely legitimate and in the public interest; yet still spark a hateful reaction from others. This dynamic is repeated in antisemitic incident levels<sup>8</sup>, rising in relation to public events involving Jews, Jewish institutions or Jewish-related subjects such as Israel.

Furthermore, members of targeted groups can feel vulnerable due to public debate on matters that they perceive as being closely associated

<sup>7</sup> Brian Klug "The Concept of Antisemitism". Speech, Oxford University, 2009. Also, "Submission of Evidence to the All-Party Inquiry into Antisemitism". December 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Shown repeatedly in CST's annual "Antisemitic Incidents Report". <http://www.thecst.org.uk/index.cfm?content=7>  
Also, Iganski, Kielinger, Paterson "Hate Crimes Against London's Jews". Institute for Jewish Policy Research, London, 2005.

with them. This dynamic is also repeated within the Jewish community when there is public debate on Jewish related issues.

### **Antisemitism: historical background**

Antisemitism is an important warning of division and extremism within society as a whole. It is a subject that should be of concern not only to Jews, but to all of society.

The near destruction of European Jewry in the Holocaust rendered open antisemitism taboo in public life, but led many to wrongly regard antisemitism as an exclusively Far Right phenomenon that is essentially frozen in time.

Antisemitism predates Christianity and is referred to as "*The Longest Hatred*"<sup>9</sup>. Its persistence is not doubted, yet precise definitions of antisemitism are an issue of heated debate.

Antisemitism repeatedly adapts to contemporary circumstances and historically has taken many forms, including religious, nationalist, 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, capitalism; and for inciting numerous revolutions and wars.

A dominant antisemitic theme is the allegation that Jews are powerful and cunning manipulators, set against the rest of society for their evil and timeless purpose. The notion of Jewish power – codified within the notorious forgery, "*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*" – distinguishes antisemitism from other types of racism, which often depict their targets as ignorant and primitive.

Today, antisemitic race hate attacks have approximately doubled since the late 1990s. This phenomenon has occurred in most Jewish communities throughout the world. The situation is made far worse by ongoing attempts at mass casualty terrorist attacks by global jihadist elements against their local Jewish communities.

### **Antisemitic ideology: Jewish conspiracy**

The ideological component of antisemitism was defined by Steve Cohen, as follows:

*"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>10</sup>

### **Antisemitism: legal definitions, Race Relations Act, and Stephen Lawrence Inquiry**

The 2005-2006 All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism summarised antisemitism by reference to the Race Relations Act 1976 as follows:

*"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>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Edward H Flannery "The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty-Three Centuries of Antisemitism". First pub. 1965. Reprint Paulist Press, 2004. Robert S Wistrich "Anti-Semitism The Longest Hatred", Methuen, 1991. Also Screen Guides for Thames Television "The Longest Hatred", 1991.

<sup>10</sup> Steve Cohen "That's Funny, You Don't Look Anti-Semitic". Beyond the Pale Collective, Leeds, 1984. <http://www.engageonline.org.uk/resources/funny/index.html>

<sup>11</sup>"Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism". Published September 2006, London: The Stationery Office. <http://www.antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/All-Party-Parliamentary-Inquiry-into-Antisemitism-REPORT.pdf>

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

CST, however, ultimately defines incidents against Jews as being antisemitic only where it can be objectively shown to be the case, and this may not always match

the victim's perception as called for by the Lawrence Inquiry. CST takes a similar approach to the highly complex issue of antisemitic discourse, and notes the multiplicity of opinions within and beyond the Jewish community concerning this often controversial subject.



Antisemitic graffiti in Broughton Park, Greater Manchester.  
June 2009

## **British Jews: Relationship with Israel and Zionism**

**The multiple dynamics between antisemitism, anti-Israel activity and "anti-Zionism" are fundamental to the nature, content and impact of contemporary British antisemitism; and to the concerns of British Jews.**

In recent years, Israel has become the subject of repeated criticism and outright hostility from relatively large sections of the liberal-left, including campaigning groups, trade unions, politicians, journalists 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 the anti-Israel activity, to those who regard anti-Israel actions as antisemitic per se.

As stated elsewhere in this report, CST (and other UK Jewish bodies) do not believe that it is necessarily antisemitic to criticise Jews, Israel or Zionism, even if that criticism is harsh or unfair. Antisemitism is, however, a form of racist and political activism. Because of its nature, antisemitism thrives upon criticism of Jews, Israel and Zionism, regardless of how fair or unfair that criticism happens to be.

Criticism of Israel or Zionism is not antisemitic per se, but it risks becoming so when traditional antisemitic themes are employed or echoed. This commonly occurs when the word "Zionist" or "Israeli" is employed where "Jew" would have previously appeared.

Calls for the actual destruction of Israel or "Zionism" transcend both criticism and hostility. Such incitement may not be regarded as antisemitic by its proponents; but if they were to succeed, it would be profoundly harmful to the morale and self-identity of many British Jews.



## Anti-Zionism: A Unifying Language for Different Political Extremists

The corruption and debasement of the word "Zionism" in both extremist and mainstream circles is central to contemporary antisemitic discourse.

When mainstream journalists and politicians use the word "Zionism" in a pejorative way, it can be very difficult to distinguish their words from those of actual antisemites who conceal their antisemitism by swapping the word "Zionist" for "Jew".

These overlapping phenomena make modern antisemitism an often complex and controversial subject of public debate.

To many self-described "anti-Zionists", the word "Zionist" now resonates as a political, financial, military and media conspiracy that is centred in Washington and Jerusalem, and which opposes authentic local interests. Many "anti-Zionists" believe themselves to be sincerely opposed to antisemitism, but extreme definitions of "Zionism" echo previous antisemitic beliefs about 'the Jews'.

Worse still, the prejudices of conscious antisemites are reinforced by the ever-evolving anti-Zionist lexicon of words, phrases and charges. This discourse encourages antisemites, many of whom take expressions such as "pro-Israel" or "well-financed" to be coded public expressions for their own publicly restricted opinions.

### Lessons from anti-racism

Israel's critics should limit the antisemitic content and impact of their behaviour by utilising the basic principles of anti-racism. They should avoid inflammatory catch-all terms such as "Israel's supporters" and "Zionists" – both of which can be easily understood to mean most Jews, but are frequently used in a demonising and dehumanising manner. They should avoid replicating older antisemitic narratives and themes

in modern guise. Furthermore, anti-Israel actions such as boycotts should at least be acknowledged by their proponents as activities that will genuinely concern and isolate many Jews.

The Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism found that:

*"...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, 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>12</sup>*

<sup>12</sup> "Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism". Published September 2006, London: The Stationery Office. <http://www.antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/All-Party-Parliamentary-Inquiry-into-Antisemitism-REPORT.pdf> Finding 83.



### **Continuities between antisemitism and anti-Zionism**

There are numerous continuities between historical antisemitic themes and modern anti-Zionism. These include:

- Alleging that Jewish holy books preach Jewish supremacy and that this is the basis for alleged Zionist racism.
- The image of the shadowy, powerful “Zionist” repeats the antisemitic charge that Jews are loyal only to each other, and that Jewish leaders secretly conspire to control media, economy, and government for their nefarious ends.
- Historically, Jewish converts to other modes of identity, such as Christianity, nationalism or communism, had to show that they had cast off their ‘Jewishness’. Today, some people (mainly on the political left) expect Jews to declare their attitude to Israel before they will treat them decently. No other section of British society is similarly treated.
- Dehumanising antisemitic language comparing Jews to rats, cancer, plague and bacteria is now repeated in some depictions of Israel and Zionists. This reduces its target to a pest or disease, encouraging the notion that ‘cleansing’ or ‘extermination’ must occur.
- Scapegoating Jews as “the other”; blaming them for local and global problems; and demanding their destruction or conversion as a vital step in the building of a new, better world is echoed in the notion that Zionism is uniquely illegitimate; and that the destruction of Israel is paradigmatic of theological and political struggles for the future of the world.

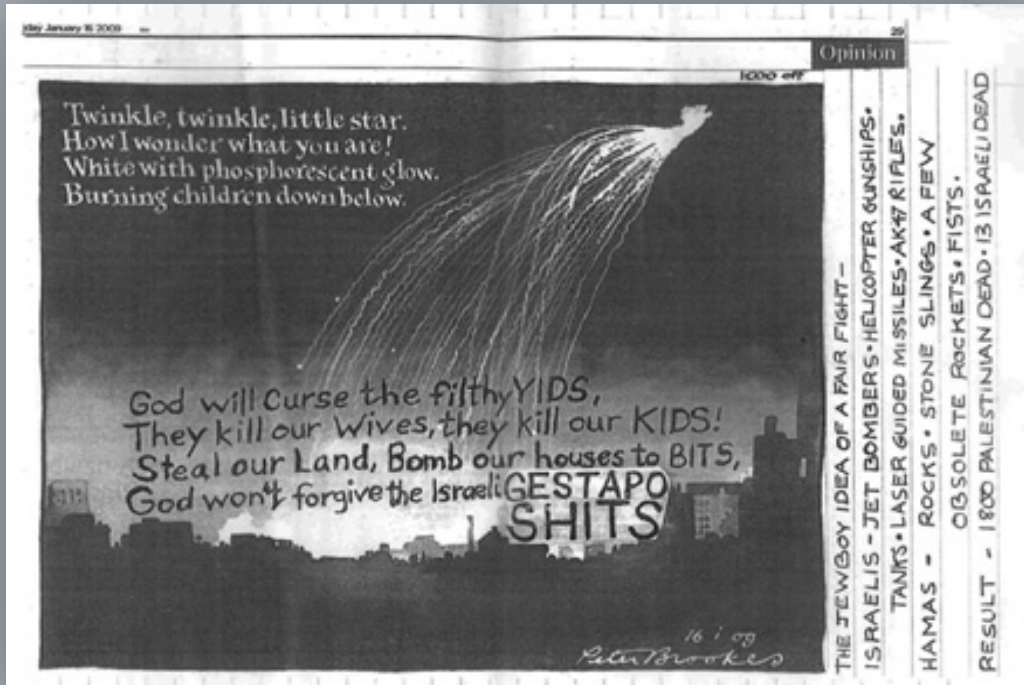
- The image of Jews as alien corruptors of traditional, authentic society and established moral values survives in contemporary portrayals of pro-Israel lobbyists as illegitimate hijackers of the true will and nature of people throughout the world. It persists in some mainstream UK media depictions of American pro-Israel lobbyists.

### **Antisemitic impacts of anti-Zionism**

Anti-Israel and anti-Zionist discourse, especially from the liberal-left, media, charities and trade unions may not in any way be inspired by antisemitism. Indeed, these activists may specifically warn against the danger of antisemitic outcomes arising from such activities: because they understand that hostile discourse about Israel and Zionism can – however inadvertently – have antisemitic impacts. Nevertheless, otherwise sincere anti-racists sometimes adopt, echo or condone antisemitic positions that are ostensibly fostered by their hostility to Israel and Zionism. Antisemitic impacts arising from anti-Israel, and, in particular, anti-Zionist discourse, include the following:

- British Jews and British Jewish organisations fall victim to antisemitic race hate attacks over international events that are blamed upon Israel and/or Zionists. These attacks, combined with the threat of antisemitic terrorism, impact against Jewish morale, and require a security response that imposes further psychological and financial burdens.
- Providing concealment, encouragement and self-legitimation for antisemites.

- Depicting the Jewish state as a uniquely racist or imperialist enterprise serves to threaten, isolate and demonise all those who believe that Jews have a right to statehood. Indeed, anyone who shows support for Israel or Zionism risks being defined and castigated for this behaviour, rather than gauged by any of their other actions and beliefs.
  - The fostering of a reflexive hatred, fear, suspicion or bias against Jews, leading to Jews and Jewish organisations being prejudicially treated due to their supposed support for Israel or Zionism.
  - Extreme hostility to mainstream Jewish representative bodies that actively support Israel.
  - The use of "Zionist" as a pejorative description of any organised Jewish (or Jewish related) activity, such as the "Zionist Jewish Chronicle" or the "Zionist CST". These bodies are then maltreated for being allegedly Zionist, rather than properly engaged with in their own right.
  - Contemporary antisemitism is judged by its supposed utility to Zionism and is reacted to on that basis. There is widespread contempt for mainstream Jewish concerns about antisemitism. No other minority's concerns about hate crime are treated so harshly by the self-professed anti-racism movement. Similarly, Holocaust commemoration is sometimes judged by its supposed utility to Zionism and is reacted to on that basis.
  - Employing anti-Israel rhetoric or actions specifically because they have unique resonance for Jews.
- For example, comparing Israel to Nazi Germany, or advocating an academic boycott of Israel on the basis that education is a particularly Jewish trait.
- Enacting anti-Israel activities, especially boycotts, that inevitably impact against local Jews far more than any other sector of society.



This cartoon from *The Times*, 16 January 2009, charged Israel with "burning children". It was therefore critical of Israel, not antisemitic, but nevertheless evoked the old antisemitic charge about Jews killing innocents, particularly children. In the following weeks, Jewish organisations in London and Manchester received photocopies of the cartoon, with blatantly antisemitic discourse written across it; and also the Israel-Nazi charge.

This is a very clear example of mainstream media comment about Israel being directly used for an antisemitic purpose.

## Gaza Conflict and UK Antisemitic Discourse

**The Gaza conflict in December 2008 / January 2009 excited a wave of fury and scrutiny from many political activists and some mainstream circles. The conflict triggered more antisemitic attacks in the UK than any other single event in recent memory.**

Anti-Israel discourse during the Gaza conflict included distinct echoes of far older antisemitic themes that may not be deliberate on the part of their proponents, but can still have antisemitic consequences.

Antisemitic incidents levels were wholly unprecedented during the Gaza conflict and did not subside to pre-conflict levels until May. In total, more antisemitic incidents occurred in the first six months of 2009 than in any entire year previously on record<sup>13</sup>.

Longer lasting political and social negative impacts against mainstream Jewish communities derive from Israel being treated as a racist pariah state; and by some as a new Nazi Germany.

### **Resonance and Reinforcement of Antisemitism**

Jews were not the target of media scrutiny of Israel or demonstrations against Israel. Indeed, Jews played full roles in both the media scrutiny and anti-Israel demonstrations. Nevertheless, some of the news coverage, and much of the public demonstrations, echoed the following deeply rooted antisemitic motifs and themes:

- Jews are intrinsically evil and set against the rest of humanity
- Jews are bloodthirsty and kill innocents: children in particular
- Jews are vindictive

These themes, directed against Israel and Zionists, rather than Jews per se, culminated in a contemporary antisemitic charge:

- Israel is the new Nazi Germany

The Israel-Nazi Germany comparison is directly hurtful and damaging to Jews. Those who make the comparison want to shock and enrage their audience.

The Nazi charge appeared repeatedly on anti-Israel demonstrations: made by organisers, speakers and demonstrators. It takes the Holocaust away from Jews and replaces Palestinians as its victims. The Nazi charge is explored in further detail on pages 20 to 26.

Furthermore, allegations in both mainstream media and anti-Israel demonstrations implied that pro-Israel or Zionist lobbies were ensuring that the USA did not stop the Gaza conflict; and similarly preventing meaningful intervention from Britain. It was also implied that the BBC's refusal to show a charity appeal for Gaza was due to this same pressure. Taken together, this echoed three widespread and interlocking Jewish conspiracy themes:

- Jewish conspiracy controls politicians
- Jewish conspiracy controls the media
- Jewish conspiracy facilitates wars

<sup>13</sup> CST "Antisemitic Incidents Report 2009".

The overwrought claim that the defeat of Israel and/or Zionism holds the key to bringing about a new, fair and better world was repeatedly seen at anti-Israel demonstrations. This echoed the motivation of antisemitism throughout the ages, namely:

- Jews must be defeated in order to save the world

All of this adds to the complexity surrounding what responsibility lies with commentators and activists when Israel and/or Zionism is being discussed; and how this responsibility should reflect the (hotly disputed) reality of both Israel's actions and those of its Jewish supporters.

At the very least, influential critics of Israel should know the volatility of the subject matter. Accordingly, their language should be precise and should avoid being open to easy interpretation as supporting deeply ingrained antisemitic notions about Jews.

### **Antisemitic Impacts of Media and Public Discourse**

A small number of antisemitic incidents<sup>14</sup>, including those summarised below, made direct reference to mainstream media discourse about the Gaza war<sup>15</sup>.

- A Jewish organisation in London received an email reading: *"Just watching the report on Gaza, on the BBC. The hatred for your people that didn't exist before certainly exists now...The next Jew I see, I will spit in his face."* (This was sent during a BBC Panorama documentary on Gaza.)
- Several Jewish organisations received hate-mail featuring a cartoon from *The Times* about the Gaza war with

writing on it: *"God will curse the filthy YIDS, They kill our Wives, they kill our KIDS! Steal our Land, Bomb our houses to BITS, God won't forgive the Israeli GESTAPO SHITS."*

- The head of a Jewish organisation received a telephone text reading: *"u fuckin jew u r dead I know u live"*. The caller then phoned directly and held the phone to his/her television, which was playing a news report of events in Gaza (4/1/09)
- Rowan Laxton, a senior diplomat at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was heard to shout *"F\*\*king Israelis, f\*\*king Jews"* whilst exercising in a gym and watching a news report from Gaza.

14 Of the 924 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST during 2009, 23% included the perpetrator making a reference to Gaza. It is clear that the conflict had a profound impact on the level and nature of antisemitic incidents during 2009.

15 This demonstrates that antisemitism may be sparked by such material. It is not to allege that the media discourse cited was in any way illegitimate or antisemitic.

# Abuse of the Holocaust

Comparisons of Israel with Nazi Germany, formerly restricted to the extremist fringes, became relatively mainstream in anti-Israel activities during the 2009 Gaza conflict. This is an antisemitic discourse, deliberately abusing and diminishing the tragedy of the Holocaust and playing upon Jewish sensitivities in order to provoke.

## Background: the Holocaust, Jews and Israel

The Holocaust was an act of industrialised genocide without parallel in human history. It remains the dominant trauma in the collective memory of Jews.

Although the Jewish connection to biblical Israel greatly predates modern Zionism and the Holocaust, mainstream Jewish belief in the necessity for Israel's existence (and therefore Zionism in the

essential meaning of the word) is central to the Jewish response to the Holocaust.

Outright denial that the Holocaust occurred is correctly regarded as obviously antisemitic propaganda that delegitimises its proponents. Nevertheless, the political imperative to separate the link between Holocaust, Jews and Israel remains highly seductive for many opponents of Israel and/or Jews.



The Palestinian Forum in Britain and the British Muslim Initiative helped organise anti-Israel demonstrations during the 2009 Gaza conflict. Their official placards included the comparison of Israel with Nazi Germany.



### **Antisemitism: Israel–Nazi Germany comparison**

The greater the hatred of Israel, the greater the hatred of Israel's supporters. Labelling Israel as the new Nazi Germany essentially removes the moral limits upon all actions against Israel and its (real and imagined) supporters.

Today it is increasingly commonplace for Israel to be compared to Nazi Germany, or for Holocaust imagery to be used when depicting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Those who perpetrate this are not necessarily antisemitic<sup>16</sup>, but the comparison is historically and morally indefensible and is inherently antisemitic:

- It targets all Jews, not just Israel or Zionists
  - It is a grotesque, immoral and deliberate abuse of Jewish history and Jewish memory
  - It causes direct and significant hurt to Jews
  - It provokes popular shock and outrage against Jews
  - It trivialises and essentially denies the Holocaust: both in its overall scale of murder and the destruction of European Jewry; and in its particular components, such as race laws, propaganda, deportation, and the purpose and reality of ghettos
  - It is a double-standard directed against Jews that would not be similarly tolerated against other peoples
- It displaces Jews as victims of the Holocaust and supersedes them with Palestinians
  - It displaces the blame for the Holocaust from the perpetrators and bystanders: and transposes the blame onto Jews
  - It effectively legitimises the singling out of Israel's supporters (real and imagined) for intimidation, abuse and attack: because they are the new Nazis who must be defeated for the good of mankind

Nazi analogies appear likelier to be used in the Israel context, rather than other conflicts involving greater loss of life and human rights abuses. The impression is that the Nazi analogies are gratuitously employed in relation to Israel, precisely because of the shock that they cause in a Jewish-related context.

<sup>16</sup> The comparison is far more likely to be made by those who perceive themselves to be on the left of the political spectrum, rather than the right. This leftist positioning can add credence to the abuse.

## **DCLG: Understanding and Addressing 'The Nazi card'**<sup>17</sup>

The 2006 Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism recommended that research be conducted into antisemitic discourse. The Department for Communities and Local Government subsequently funded an academic study by the European Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism (EISCA) into the use of Nazism as a form of antisemitic discourse. This was published in 2009 under the title "Understanding and Addressing 'The Nazi card' – Intervening Against Antisemitic Discourse".

DCLG Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Shahid Malik MP, wrote the preface to the report, saying:

*"It focuses on the consequences of discourse, rather than how it might be labelled. It unravels the deep hurt inflicted when the Nazi card is played. It serves to underline what should be obvious; those who play it bear a heavy responsibility for the hurts they inflict."*<sup>18</sup>

EISCA Chairman, Denis MacShane MP, began the foreword with this:

*For over 60 years, antisemitism – the hatred and abuse of Jews – has been guided by the legacy of the Holocaust. The Nazi salute and swastika daubing... is the most immediate form of anti-Jewish insults, and is easily applied by anyone who wants to hurt Jewish sensibilities.*

He continued:

*"...Now, from elsewhere in the political spectrum comes a new variation: a strand of discourse that uses the memory of the Holocaust as a means of vilification. Nazi Germany, we are*

*told, has been reborn in Israel... [why this] association between the eliminationist ideology of Nazism and Jews who either support Israel, refuse to denounce it or fail to reject Zionism?*

*...The notion that any comparison with Nazism and the Holocaust can be honestly made constitutes a systematic attempt to denigrate Jews, and to straightjacket them into the category of citizens without legitimacy or the right to respect.*

*...Yet it is now considered acceptable by some newspapers, cartoonists and commentators – to brand Jews as Nazis and to allow the swastika to be used as an image that stirs up hate against Israel and the Jews, no matter where they may reside. This is modern antisemitism.*

*...to play the Nazi card is to play an antisemitic card. The hurt it causes Jews is no less when it is played against Israel today than when it was used in its previous incarnations. And this time it is not simply Nazis or neo-Nazi thugs who are playing it."*<sup>19</sup>

## **The "Anti-Racist" Far Left and Gaza Equals Holocaust**

Demonstrations against Israel's 2009 conflict with Hamas in Gaza and Southern Israel were marked by repeated allegations that Israel was in some way analogous with Nazi Germany. Such allegations have been heard on previous anti-Israel demonstrations, but the charge was significantly more pronounced than ever before.

The tone was set by the profusion of "STOP the Holocaust in Gaza" placards produced by British Muslim Initiative (BMI), one of the main organisers

<sup>17</sup> Paul Iganski and Abe Sweiry "Understanding and Addressing 'The Nazi card' – Intervening Against Antisemitic Discourse". European Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism, London 2009.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p.6

of the Gaza demonstrations. Placards of another organising group, the Palestinian Forum in Britain (PFB), featured a swastika entwined with a Star of David and the words "HISTORY SEEMS TO BE REPEATING ITSELF". Many individual demonstrators carried their own home-made signs and banners making similar statements.

BMI and PFB are ideologically orientated towards the Muslim Brotherhood (as is Hamas), and are currently in broad alliance with Far Left groups whose complicity and enthusiasm for the Israel-Nazi comparison is troubling: especially given their influence within many less obviously extreme groups, such as trade unions and other NGO's, including anti-racist groups.

In particular, the Socialist Workers Party has long practised the tactic of infiltrating and influencing other groups. During the Gaza conflict, one of its commentators, Richard Seymour, asserted that those attending a Jewish community rally for peace<sup>20</sup>:

*"ought to be shunned, and treated as the moral and political degenerates that they are."*<sup>21</sup>

George Galloway, (then) Respect MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, repeated the Israel-Nazi alligations, telling thousands of anti-Israel demonstrators:

*"Today, the Palestinian people in Gaza are the new Warsaw Ghetto, and those who are murdering them are the equivalent of those who murdered the Jews in Warsaw in 1943."*<sup>22</sup>

### **"Holocaust Survivors – Some Graphic Pictures – Stand up to Hatred"**

The importance of electronic media was demonstrated by a viral email campaign, entitled *Holocaust Survivors – Some Graphic Pictures – Stand up to Hatred*, in which the recipient received 42 (unsolicited) images comparing Israel to Nazi Germany. Each image consisted of two photographs, one relating to Israelis and/or Palestinians; the other relating to the Holocaust victims and/or World War Two.

The email was accompanied by an introduction saying:

*"The grandchildren of Holocaust survivors from World War II are doing to the Palestinians exactly what was done to them by Nazi Germany"*

CST was forwarded many copies of the email by individuals who had received it in extensive emailing lists that included staff at universities, local and regional councils, commercial and cultural premises, as well as private email addresses. It is likely that thousands of people received the email.

Lancashire County Council sacked four of its staff for their role in sending the *"highly inappropriate email"* to colleagues<sup>23,24</sup>. This followed a three month investigation in which 14 staff had been suspended.

One councillor, Salim Mulla, senior vice chair of Lancashire Council of Mosques, sent the email to 63 colleagues, but was not disciplined. He told the press:

*"...I wanted to share it with the elected members. I speak my mind – some*

20 Mainstream Jewish community leadership bodies held a rally during the Gaza War with the slogan, "Stop Hamas Terror: Peace for the people of Israel and Gaza". This included a Jewish community fundraising campaign for hospitals in both Gaza and Israel.

21 <http://leninology.blogspot.com/2009/01/extremist-minority-who-should-be.html>

22 3 January 2009 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFzPm2GWtLA>

23 <http://www.lep.co.uk/news/Council-workers-sacked-over-39racist.5434850.jpg>

24 <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1198021/Four-council-staff-sacked-email-compared-Holocaust-Israeli-occupation-Palestine.html>

*people like it, some people do not. I have supported Holocaust Memorial Day every single year and I will continue to do that. But if there are other similar atrocities going on, not just in Gaza, I will say that they are not acceptable."*

When announced, the 14 suspensions were opposed in a press release by Preston Stop the War group. This included Tony Benn, President of National Stop the War Coalition saying:

*"I do not know the full details of the case, but to dismiss people for receiving or sending their opinions on any subject would be a denial of freedom of speech. In a democracy these are the values we are supposed to be defending."*<sup>25</sup>

### **John Pilger: Gaza "Holocaust denied: the lying silence of those who know"**

Writing in the New Statesman magazine, John Pilger not only compared Israel to Nazi Germany, but also invited comparison between those who deny the Israel-Nazi equation with those who deny the reality of the Nazi Holocaust.

The article resonated with older antisemitic themes of Jewish control of the media and politics, with Pilger referring to *"the world's most efficient propaganda"*, *"mostly supine"* media and claiming (then) President-elect Obama was *"obsequious"* to Zionism.

The New Statesman entitled the article as *"Gaza Under Fire"*<sup>26</sup>. Pilger's own website prioritised the Holocaust denial aspect, entitling it as *"Holocaust denied: the lying silence of those who know"*<sup>27</sup>. The article appeared on numerous other websites, mostly under one of these titles.

Pilger's opening described Gaza as *"that death camp by the sea"*, before making numerous claims about what the *"Anglo-American intelligentsia"* supposedly do and do not secretly know about Israel.

Having said that Yitzhak Rabin was *"promoted by the world's most efficient propaganda as a peacemaker"*<sup>28</sup>, Pilger cited Jews who have accused Israel of genocidal policies, including Richard Falk's *"Holocaust in the making"*<sup>29</sup>, which Pilger claimed *"is in its final stages"*. Pilger also attacked the silence of (then) President-elect Obama, saying that it showed his *"obsequiousness"* (i.e. servility or compliance):

*"Obama's silence on Palestine marks his approval, which is to be expected, given his obsequiousness to the Tel Aviv regime and its lobbyists during the presidential campaign and his appointment of Zionists as his secretary of state, chief of staff and principal Middle East advisers..."*

Pilger continued, claiming that Israel's actions were pre-determined by the *"Dagan Plan"*:

*"...a 'solution' that has seen the imprisonment of Palestinians behind a ghetto wall snaking across the West Bank and Gaza, effectively a concentration camp...a quisling government in Ramallah under Mohammed Abbas is Dagan's achievement, together with a hasbara (propaganda) campaign relayed through a mostly supine, if intimidated, Western media..."*

This section of Pilger's article seemingly uses the words *"ghetto"*, *"concentration camp"* and *"quisling"* to evoke Nazism. This sense is reinforced by his placing

25 ["Lancashire council suspends staff for receiving e-mails about Palestine?"](#) Press release by Preston Stop the War, 14 April 2009.

26 <http://www.newstatesman.com/middle-east/2009/01/pilger-israel-gaza-palestine>

27 <http://www.johnpilger.com/page.asp?partid=519>

28 Pilger wrote this whilst accusing Rabin of expelling Arabs in 1948. Pilger makes no mention of Rabin's signing the Oslo Peace Accords with Yasser Arafat in 1992, nor his being assassinated for this in 1995.

29 Richard Falk, *"Slouching toward a Palestinian Holocaust"*, 29 June 2007.

A viral email campaign entitled *"Holocaust Survivors - Some Graphic Pictures - Stand up to Hatred"* comprised 42 images comparing Israel to Nazi Germany. It was accompanied by an email introduction stating *"The grandchildren of Holocaust survivors from World War II are doing to the Palestinians exactly what was done to them by Nazi Germany."* Four staff at Lancashire County Council were sacked for sending it to colleagues. In a press release, Tony Benn said that he did not know the details of the case, but the sackings *"would be a denial of freedom of speech."*



Jewish family enters a concentration camp.



Soldiers cut the beard of an elderly Polish Jew.



Arrivals at Auschwitz-Birkenau await separation by Nazi doctors, who will decide which prisoners will be killed immediately.

Many of the images were far more shocking than those shown here, including photographs of dead Jewish and Palestinian children.

the word "solution" in quotation marks, reminiscent of the Nazi Holocaust term, "the final solution", despite the same article later claiming that Ariel Sharon regards the "Dagan Plan" as a "1948-style solution".

The depiction of the "Western media" as "mostly supine" (i.e. lying down, or passive and indifferent) and "intimidated" implies that Israel somehow controls overseas media. Pilger also alleged that the BBC is "cowed" (i.e. frightened or intimidated) as is "much of journalism" due to being "ever fearful of the smear of anti-Semitism. The unreported news, meanwhile, is that the death toll in Gaza is the equivalent of 18,000 dead in Britain. Imagine, if you can."<sup>30</sup>

The article's reference to actual Holocaust denial was not written by Pilger.

Rather, Pilger cited Dr Dahlia Wasfi, an American with "a Jewish mother and an Iraqi Muslim father: 'Holocaust denial is anti-Semitic,' she wrote on 31 December. "But I'm not talking about World War Two, Mahmoud Ahmedinijad (the president of Iran) or Ashkenazi Jews. What I'm referring to is the holocaust we are all witnessing and responsible for in Gaza today and in Palestine over the past 60 years...".

Pilger concluded by noting how "in the dark year of 1939", intellectuals in New York had spoken out against Nazism. He then contrasted this with the current situation, writing "...what happens in Gaza is the defining moment of our time, which either grants the impunity of war criminals, while we contort our own intellect and morality, or gives us the power to speak out...".

<sup>30</sup> The notion that the BBC, or any other media outlet, somehow failed to report the news from Gaza due to fear of being called antisemitic is questionable: particularly when compared to the lesser coverage that the bloodier Sri Lanka conflict received during and after the same time.





## “Seven Jewish Children”

The play “Seven Jewish Children”, by Caryl Churchill, a highly respected playwright and patron of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, displayed many of the worst characteristics of the fury over Gaza.

**It also showed the direct antisemitic danger of using the word Jew instead of Israeli; and revealed the failure of many on the liberal-left to grasp this.**

CST objected to the play, particularly its online production by the *Guardian* newspaper<sup>31</sup>. CST’s objections were written as an article for the *Guardian’s* Comment is Free website and began by noting that the *Guardian’s* production was illustrated by a photograph of a Jewish Passover Seder meal, showing participants dipping their fingers in red wine that is reminiscent of blood<sup>32</sup>. This rooted the play in Jewish family tradition, rather than anything to do with Israel.

CST noted that the play, supposedly about Israel, only mentioned Jews; and criticised the play’s admirers for failing to note this:

*“Seven Jewish Children is not a play about Israel...The words Israel, Israelis, Zionism and Zionist are not mentioned once in the play...We are often told that when people talk about Israel or Zionists, it is mischievous to accuse them of meaning Jews. Now, we are expected to imagine that a play that talks only of Jews, in fact, means Israelis.*

*...A spokesman for the Royal Court Theatre, where the play was performed, had defended it with the formulaic argument that:*

*‘While Seven Jewish Children is undoubtedly critical of the policies of the state of Israel, there is no suggestion that this should be read*

*as a criticism of Jewish people. It is possible to criticise the actions of Israel without being antisemitic.’*

*The anti-Zionist conceit that, as long as you are talking about Israel, you can say whatever you want about Jews, is laid bare here... The Guardian’s illustration of a Jewish family seder table is far more appropriate than a photograph of the Israeli cabinet table would ever have been.*

*...By presenting the play with just a single performer, speaking every Jewish voice in each time and place, the Guardian distils the play into an internal conversation inside the head of every Jew – the increasingly manic neuroses of a screwed-up people.*

*...This nameless Jew, seemingly representing any and every Jew, who cannot escape the pain of the Holocaust and the shame of Gaza, can now feel nothing for the other, dead, non-Jewish child, covered in its own blood.*

*Jews, children, blood and, for the Guardian at least, the Passover seder: this mixture has a murderous antisemitic past.”*

The article concluded:

*“The virus of antisemitism is easily transmitted by those who are not aware they are carrying it. Churchill*

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/may/01/carylchurchill-theatre>

<sup>32</sup> The *Guardian* subsequently removed the photograph, but it remains within the body of the online production.

*almost certainly does not intend it, but her play culminates in powerful antisemitic resonances. The Guardian's online production further amplifies them. People sometimes ask when does anti-Zionism become antisemitism. Here is a rule of thumb: when people describe Israel with the same language and imagery that antisemites use to talk about Jews, the difference between the two disappears."*

Reviewing the play in the Jewish Chronicle, John Nathan also described it as antisemitic:

*"For the first time in my career as a critic, I am moved to say about a work at a major production house that this is an antisemitic play."*

BBC Radio 4 decided not to broadcast the play on the basis that it could not be counter-balanced. Their decision was revealed by the *Guardian's* publication of an email from Radio 4 drama commissioning editor Jeremy Howe, saying that both he and Radio 4 controller, Mark Damazer, believed the play to be "brilliant":

*"It is a no, I am afraid. Both Mark [Damazer] and I think it is a brilliant piece... cannot run with it on the grounds of impartiality – I think it would be nearly Caryl Churchill's view. Having debated long and hard we have decided we can't do Seven Jewish Children."*

In the response to the email story, the BBC officially stated:

*"This play was not commissioned and no indication was given it would be broadcast. After due consideration, we felt it would not work for our audience."*

## **Language Sleepwalking to Racism: *Guardian* Theatre Critic**

*Guardian* theatre critic, Michael Billington, favourably reviewed "Seven Jewish Children" in the paper's *Theatre blog*<sup>33</sup>. This included his writing:

*"But Churchill also shows us how Jewish children are bred to believe in the "otherness" of Palestinians and how, for generations to come, they stand to reap the bitter harvest of the military assault on Hamas."*

The novelist Howard Jacobson responded to this in a lengthy article for *The Independent* (see also p.54,55):

*"...any accusation of anti-Semitism would horrify Michael Billington. And I certainly don't make it. But if you wanted an example of how language itself can sleepwalk the most innocent towards racism, then here it is. 'Churchill shows us', he writes, 'how Jewish children are bred to believe in the 'otherness' of Palestinians...'*

*...what's most chilling is that lazy use of the word 'bred', so rich in eugenic and bestial connotations...Jews breed children in order to deny Palestinians their humanity. Watching another play in the same week, Billington complains about its manipulation of racial stereotypes. He doesn't, you see, even notice the inconsistency."<sup>34</sup>*

33 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/theatreblog/2009/feb/11/royal-court-theatre-gaza>

34 <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/howard-jacobson/howard-jacobson-let8217s-see-the-8216criticism8217-of-israel-for-what-it-really-is-1624827.html>

# The Jewish Conspiracy, the Zionist Lobby and the Israel Lobby

The charge of secret Jewish power distinguishes antisemitism from all other racisms.

In 2009, the conspiracy charge was evoked by two stories in *The Independent* surrounding the appointment of Jews to the Government's Iraq War Inquiry, and by a Channel 4 documentary about pro-Israel lobby groups.

*The Independent* and *Guardian* newspapers, in particular, continued to portray American foreign policy and media as being dominated by this lobby: with the word "Jewish" used to describe the lobby in two separate articles by *The Independent* writers.

The conspiratorial lobby accusations reinforce the notion that Jews and/or Zionists are disloyal to all but their own kind. The accusation casts mistrust upon all Jews and/or those who are assumed to be "Zionists"; and can lead to demands that such people be excluded from public life.

## Lobby or Conspiracy?

The distinction between a lobby and a conspiracy lies in the lawfulness and treachery of its behaviour, the ethical and legal legitimacy of its objectives and the openness it displays.

Journalists may, for ethical, legal or other reasons, resist calling someone a conspirator rather than a lobbyist. However, this neither prevents their output (and its publicity) from alluding to such conspiracies; nor does it stop readers or viewers inferring that such a conspiracy exists. This was the case with the Iraq inquiry articles and the Dispatches programme; and with several other articles and public statements about Jewish, Zionist or pro-Israel lobbyists during the course of 2009.

These examples and many others, revealed the dangerous elasticity

and adaptability of terms such as lobby, conspiracy and Zionist in today's media and politics.

## Background: Jewish Power and Conspiracy

Notions of Jewish power and conspiracy are central to antisemitic discourse. The allegations are deeply rooted and derive from the need to explain how Jews could have had sufficient power to kill Jesus.

In more modern times, the allegations became codified in the notorious hoax "*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*", and have dominated antisemitic discourse within Nazism and other ideologies.

Open accusations of specifically "Jewish" power remain relatively common in much of the Muslim world and are implicit in the Central and Eastern European tendency to blame Jews for the Communist era.

In Western Europe, the overt "Jewish" power accusation is relatively rare. Accusations of "Zionist" power are, however, quite common. This is not to allege that those using such language are antisemitic, but the fact remains that the "Jewish" and "Zionist" power

discourses share striking similarities in both their actual composition and in their scapegoating function.

### Responsible Behaviour

The risk of exciting antisemites should not prevent media coverage or public comment on pro-Israel, Zionist or Jewish lobbies. It does, however, mean that journalists and their publishers should recognise the risks inherent in the subject matter and behave responsibly, as they would in other sensitive areas.

### The Independent: Jews on Iraq Inquiry Panel

Chaired by Sir John Chilcot, the official inquiry into the Iraq War had five members on the panel, including two distinguished historians, Sir Martin Gilbert and Sir Lawrence Freedman, both of whom are Jewish. Controversy about the inclusion of Gilbert and Freedman raised fears that Jews were somehow being depicted as unsuitable for such roles and led Gilbert to note:

*"this terrifying sort of rise in crude anti-Israel anti-Semitic feeling on the one hand, often fuelled by one or two newspapers."*<sup>35</sup>

Writing in his *Independent* newspaper column (1 August 2009), Richard Ingrams noted that there had been scepticism from the media and "more than a few MPs" about the composition of the inquiry,

*"no military or legal experts, two Jewish historians thought to have been in favour of the war and a token woman, Baroness Prashar, whom few people have hitherto heard of."*<sup>36</sup>

This association of "Jewish" and supposedly "in favour of the war" was a singling out

of the Jews on the panel. This followed the same pattern seen in other public controversies: where the religion of Jews is pointed out, but that of others goes unmentioned.

### The Independent on Sunday: Sir Oliver Miles

Prior to the inquiry's first public hearing, Sir Oliver Miles, a former UK ambassador to Libya, wrote an article for the *Independent on Sunday* (22 November 2009) that noted in part:

*"Both Gilbert and Freedman are Jewish, and Gilbert has a record of active support for Zionism. Such facts are not usually mentioned in the mainstream British and American media, but The Jewish Chronicle and the Israeli media have no such inhibitions, and the Arabic media both in London and in the region are usually not far behind.*

*All five [inquiry] members have outstanding reputations and records, but it is a pity that, if and when the inquiry is accused of a whitewash, such handy ammunition will be available. Membership should not only be balanced; it should be seen to be balanced."*<sup>37</sup>

The *Times* editorial of 25 November 2009 criticised Miles for his wider assumptions that the inquiry would be a whitewash and began by criticising his comments about Jews (but not about his assertions of media silence over Zionists):

*"...[Miles] already knows what he thinks of the Iraq war inquiry. He thinks that the panel...has too many Jews on it. ...Some people – other people, you understand – might think that the panel is not balanced."*<sup>38</sup>

35 <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article7006269.ece>

36 <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/columnists/richard-ingrams/richard-ingramsrquoos-week-tony-blairs-reputation--is-safe-from-destruction-1765907.html>

37 <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/oliver-miles-the-key-question-ndash-is-blair-a-war-criminal-1825374.html>

38 [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/leading\\_article/article6930416.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/leading_article/article6930416.ece)

Miles responded with a letter in *The Times* denying that he had pre-judged the inquiry outcome and stating his concern that his remarks should not be "interpreted as a statement that the panel "has too many Jews on it", suggesting prejudice against Jews. I do not believe that I have written anything to support such a charge."<sup>39</sup>

### **The Independent: Richard Ingrams**

Richard Ingrams then returned to the subject in an *Independent* column of 28 November 2009, entitled "Will Zionists' links to Iraq invasion be brushed aside?"

Ingrams column claimed that *The Times* objection to Miles, proved that Miles had been correct to claim a media silence over Gilbert and Freedman<sup>40</sup>:

"Sure enough, to prove the ambassador's point, he was swiftly denounced by a leading representative of the mainstream media, *The Times*."

Ingrams then repeated the allegation that the 2003 invasion of Iraq "was initiated, well before 9/11, by a group of influential American neocons...nearly all of whom were ardent Zionists, in many cases more concerned with preserving the security of Israel than that of the US."

Ingrams cited this as an "undeniable fact", making "the pro-Israel bias of... Gilbert and...Freedman, both of them supporters of the 2003 invasion... a perfectly respectable point to raise." He concluded by doubting that the inquiry would "even refer to the US neocons and their links to Israel."

### **Response: Sir Martin Gilbert "rise in crude anti-Israel anti-Semitic feeling"**

In January 2010, Sir Martin Gilbert responded to the comments, saying

that in Britain, being Jewish was no bar to holding senior office, but noting<sup>41</sup>:

"...this terrifying sort of rise in crude anti-Israel anti-Semitic feeling on the one hand, often fuelled by one or two newspapers.

...a really unpleasant series of newspaper articles in just two newspapers and also on the blogosphere pointing out that two of the five members...were Jews and saying that this would make us unsuitable because as Jews we would support Israel.

...they said that as Israel supported the war... and America supported it and America is of course controlled by the Zionist lobby therefore we would not be impartial...we would favour the war because Israel favoured the war... it is just appalling."<sup>42</sup>

Gilbert called for more people to speak out against "the crude popular anti-Israel attitude here", and asserted "People follow the trends and newspapers... the two that are especially hostile to Israel, have a tremendous influence."<sup>43</sup>

### **Channel 4 Dispatches: "Inside Britain's Israel Lobby"**

#### **Peter Osborne, "It is important to say what we did not find"**

On 16 November 2009, Channel 4's investigative documentary strand, Dispatches, broadcast a programme entitled "Inside Britain's Israel Lobby". Its presenter Peter Osborne had previously written and broadcast about the dangers of anti-Muslim racism arising from media coverage<sup>44</sup>. He seemed well aware of the antisemitic risk of discussing the "Israel Lobby" and ended the programme by sternly warning

39 <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/letters/article7004999.ece>

40 <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/columnists/richard-ingrams/richard-ingrams-week-will-zionists-links-to-iraq-invasion-be-brushed-aside-1829896.html>

41 <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/Radio/News.aspx/1870>

42 <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article7006269.ece>

43 Gilbert did not specify which two newspapers he was referring to, but it appears that *The Independent* would be one of them.

44 Dispatches, Channel 4: "It Shouldn't Happen to a Muslim", broadcast 7 July 2008. Accompanying pamphlet, "Muslims Under Siege: Alienating a Vulnerable Community" by Peter Osborne and James Jones, Democratic Audit, University of Essex.



*"In making this programme we haven't found anything even faintly resembling a conspiracy but we have found a worrying lack of transparency and the influence of a pro-Israel lobby continues to be felt."*

Osborne repeated the message in his opinion piece, promoting the programme, in that morning's *Guardian*:

*"It is important to say what we did not find. There is no conspiracy, and nothing resembling a conspiracy."*

His final paragraph repeated the warning:

*"...the present obscurity surrounding it [the pro-Israel lobby] can, paradoxically, give rise to conspiracy theories that have no basis in fact."<sup>45</sup>*

### **Pre-Broadcast Publicity: Ignoring the "no conspiracy" warning**

Jewish communal fears prior to, and following, the programme were focussed upon its potential antisemitic impact. (Due to both the subject matter and the programme maker's behaviour towards some Jewish organisations during the making of the film.)

Peter Osborne's warning about there being *"nothing resembling a conspiracy"* was welcomed, but was shown to be largely futile by publicity for the programme on Channel 4's own *Dispatches* website, which made no such declaration. On the contrary, it alluded to shady characters, with financial influence, underhand tactics and treacherous goals:

*"Dispatches investigates one of the most powerful and influential political lobbies in Britain, which is working in support of the interests of the State of Israel.*

*Despite wielding great influence among the highest realms of British politics and media, little is known about the individuals and groups which collectively are known as the pro-Israel lobby.*

*...Osborne sets out to establish who they are, how they are funded, how they work and what influence they have, from the key groups to the wealthy individuals who help bankroll the lobbying.*

*...The pro-Israel lobby aims to shape the debate about Britain's relationship with Israel and future foreign policies relating to it.*

*Osborne examines how the lobby operates from within parliament and the tactics it employs behind the scenes when engaging with print and broadcast media."<sup>46</sup>*

The *Guardian*'s news article about the programme, entitled, *"Pro-Israel lobby group bankrolling Tories, film claims"*, repeated *Dispatches*' most salient claims about pro-Israeli finance and (supposed) resultant power, and included denials by some of those highlighted. It omitted the *"no conspiracy"* warning.

### **Content evoking the Jewish conspiracy motif**

The 'Jewish conspiracy' motif was strengthened by the overall depiction of those featured in the documentary as all being subservient to one goal: despite whatever actual organisation or individual was being scrutinised. The insinuation that the different pro-Israel organisations in Britain are part of a unified lobby, which in turn is itself merely an arm of a singular international operation, further reinforced this impression.

45 Peter Osborne  
*"Friends in High Places"*, *Guardian*,  
16 November 2009

46 <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches/episode-guide/series-42/episode-1>

# FREE BRITAIN FROM JEWISH CONTROL



The meeting the Jews want banned  
**TRAFALGAR SQUARE 3 p.m. SUNDAY  
JULY 1st**

Come and hear what the Jews fear

**NATIONAL SOCIALIST  
MOVEMENT**

74 Princedale Road, LONDON W. 11.

Printed and Published by the above.



This British Nazi cartoon from 1962 is a stark warning of the potential antisemitic resonance of some contemporary mainstream depictions of "Zionist" or "pro-Israel" lobbies.

In the cartoon, a wealthy Jew uses his money whip to dominate Labour, Conservative and Liberal politicians. The Jew's other hand holds open a sack of coins and his belt buckle is a Star of David. The politicians cower, beg like a dog and lick the Jew's shoes.



This graphic appeared on Islamist anti-Israel and antisemitic websites at the time of the Channel 4 Dispatches film "Inside Britain's Israel Lobby" (November 2009). It is a modern version of the same Jewish money power accusation shown in the 1962 British Nazi flyer, "Free Britain from Jewish Control" (see facing page).

The 2009 graphic combines both anti-Israel and antisemitic imagery and shows an Israeli hand paying money to Parliament, which is held in the palm of a Jewish hand. The face of Conservative leader (and now Prime Minister) David Cameron MP smiles approvingly and the Israeli flag can also be seen.



(Continued from page 33)

In reality, lobbyists for Israel have significant differences of opinion, ideology and methodology: and politicians and media have many reasons for the decisions that they take. This was not reflected in the film.

The conspiracy theorist's belief that there can be no innocent explanation for an individual's behaviour permeated the film. For example, it was not conceded that politicians might back Israel due to anything other than financial pressure. Similarly, it insinuated that the BBC's refusal to broadcast an appeal for Gaza was due to pro-Israeli protests, rather than the reasons given by the BBC.

The 'Zionists run the media' motif was also evoked by claims in both the film and Osborne's *Guardian* article that "pro-Israeli intimidation of British media" is widespread and influential; and the attendant suggestion that there are "rules of media discourse" about discussing the pro-Israel lobby.

The programme makers wrote to CST's Chairman (two weeks prior to broadcast), saying that they were "looking at a number of groups and leading individuals who collectively make up the pro-Israel lobby including the Community Security Trust." CST replied, stating that its work on antisemitism did not make it a "pro-Israel lobby" group any more than its exposure of Holocaust denial made it a Holocaust education group. CST did not feature in the programme.

Ultimately, the conspiracy charge relied upon the film's attempts to prove that political parties and the media had indeed been unduly influenced by the lobby. Crucially, therefore, evidence to the contrary was all but ignored by the film<sup>47</sup>

### **Public use of Dispatches and the conspiracy motif**

Martin Linton MP, chair of Labour Friends of Palestine, told a public meeting in the House of Commons:

*"There are long tentacles of Israel in this country who are funding election campaigns and putting money into the British political system for their own ends."*

When Linton subsequently faced criticism for evoking antisemitic conspiracy imagery with the use of the word "tentacles", he told the *Jewish Chronicle*:

*"I'm sorry if a word I used caused unintended offence because of connotations of which I was unaware, but completely understand and sympathise with. On the substantial issue I was echoing the findings of a recent Channel 4 programme on political donations and lobbying... I hope one day Channel 4 will have cause to do a programme on the effectiveness of our [pro-Palestinian] lobby."*

### **Dispatches Producer: Where is the evidence of antisemitism?**

David Henshaw, Executive Producer of Dispatches, complained on the *Guardian's* Comment is Free website<sup>48</sup> that he had gone "from being Britain's top Islamophobe...to Britain's top antisemite" as a result of (what he saw as) unfair reactions to Dispatches journalistic investigations into Islamist extremism<sup>49</sup> and Britain's Israel Lobby.

He described complaints that such programmes could incite racism as "an insidious and evasive argument for censorship" and noted:

47 For example, much of the film's premise was about a supposed adverse and influential reaction by Conservative Friends of Israel (CFI) to William Hague's use of the word "disproportionate" concerning the Lebanon war in 2006. The film failed to state that Hague defended his remarks when at CFI's 2008 event; nor that David Cameron defended and repeated the comments in an interview with the *Jewish Chronicle* in 2007.

48 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2009/nov/23/censorship-dispatches-antisemitism-islamophobia>

49 Undercover Mosques <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches/episode-guide/series-24/episode-1>

*"Alan Rusbridger, the Guardian editor, made the point in last Monday's Dispatches film that it would be astonishing if newspaper articles critical of Israel led directly to racist attacks. Where was the evidence?"*

*organisations because of their alleged actions and activities and not because of their religion...accepted standards were applied by the broadcaster and there was no breach of Rule 2.3.<sup>51</sup>*

Henshaw made no mention of having contacted CST and asking for<sup>50</sup> *"CST's analysis that criticism of Israel in the media leads to anti-Semitic hate crimes."* CST had replied to Henshaw, saying that his question *"overly simplifies CST's analysis of what is a complex and nuanced phenomenon"*. CST then explained the relationship between the two issues and stressed that the blame for antisemitic incidents lies with antisemites.

CST received no reply from Henshaw and its explanation was not referred to in the programme, leaving Rusbridger's claim to stand without balance.

### **OFCOM ruling in favour of Dispatches**

The broadcast regulator OFCOM received 50 complaints concerning the programme, none of which were from those featured in it. None of the complaints were upheld.

On the specific subject of antisemitism, OFCOM ruled:

*"It is inevitable that a programme of this nature will include frequent references to Israel and Judaism. It can also be expected to refer to prominent figures in the Jewish community and portray groups that are pro-Israel... However, such a critical analysis does not, in Ofcom's view, constitute anti-Semitism. Importantly, Ofcom found that these references, and the programme overall were directed towards individuals or*

50 Letters and email correspondence between CST and Dispatches, October and November 2009.

51 Ofcom Broadcast Bulletin, Issue 154 22 March 2010.

# Der Stürmer

Deutsches Wochenblatt zum Kampfe um die Wahrheit  
HERAUSGEBER: JULIUS STREICHER

Nummer <b>19</b>	Nürnberg, im Mai 1939	17. Jahrgang <b>1939</b>
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## Die Entscheidungsschlacht

### Das Bekenntnis eines Tschechen

Bei einem Besuch... Die Entscheidungsschlacht... Das Bekenntnis eines Tschechen...

Ein alter Mann... Die Entscheidungsschlacht... Das Bekenntnis eines Tschechen...

Land der Freiheit



Wo man dem Juden untertan, ist Freiheit nur ein leerer Traum

**Was dem Inhalt**  
Die Welt der Juden und Judenbünde  
Freiheit oder Sklaverei  
Wohl und Gesundheit  
Die Juden im Weltmarkt  
Wohl und die Reichswehrmacht  
Der Zusammenbruch des Reichswehrministeriums  
Wapfen  
87 fähriger Halbschützen

## Die Juden sind unser Unglück!

The July 1939 edition of Nazi propaganda newspaper "Der Stürmer" shows the antisemitic allegation that America is controlled by Jews. (The Star of David can be seen hanging from the belt of the unseen man who is standing upon his victim.)

The caption reads "Where one is ruled by the Jews, freedom is only an empty dream."



## **The Independent and the American "Jewish" Lobby**

CST, and others who monitor antisemitism, have long warned that depicting a dominant Zionist lobby in America, reflects and invites the longstanding antisemitic motif of Jewish conspiracy.

This was vividly illustrated by two instances in which senior *The Independent* journalists explicitly referred to the "Jewish lobby".

It is common for mainstream journalists to allege that a Zionist or pro-Israel lobby dominates American foreign policy and American media. This can especially be seen in coverage of American Middle East policy in the *Guardian* and *The Independent* newspapers.

### **"Fears over the Jewish lobby's excess influence"**

An article on 13 March 2009 by Rupert Cornwell, an *The Independent* correspondent on international relations and American politics was entitled "*Israel lobby' blamed as Obama's choice for intelligence chief quits.*"<sup>52</sup>

The opening paragraph, however, replaced "*Israel lobby*" with "*Jewish lobby*", stating "*Fears over the Jewish lobby's excess influence on US foreign policy flared anew after a former diplomat and strong critic of Israel backed out of a key national intelligence post, saying his appointment by President Barack Obama had been torpedoed by a campaign of lies against him.*"

Having associated this "*Jewish lobby*" with "*excess influence*" on behalf of Israel and a "*campaign of lies*", Cornwell wrote that the diplomat (Charles Freeman) had "*fallen victim to what*

*he called the 'Israel lobby'*". So, despite quoting Freeman as referring to the "*Israel Lobby*" and having placed this in quotation marks, Cornwell (or an editor) had changed this to "*Jewish lobby*" in his reporting.

Cornwell's article ended by his quoting a notorious remark by Pat Buchanan: "*Congress unfailingly supports Israel. Pat Buchanan, a right wing commentator and erstwhile presidential candidate, once described Capitol Hill as 'Israeli-occupied territory'*".

### **"Wrath of the Jewish lobby in the US"**

An article on 5 June 2009 by *The Independent's* Washington correspondent and US editor, David Osborne, concerning a speech by President Obama, was subtitled:

*"White House shows willingness to ignore US Jewish lobby by risking confrontation with Netanyahu over Palestinian statehood".*

The opening paragraph of the article stated that Obama's "*chiding*" of Benjamin Netanyahu "*risked the wrath of the Jewish lobby in the US*".

Osborne then inferred that all previous US presidents had been dominated by the same lobby, "*Mr Obama showed he is willing, perhaps more than any US president before him, to ignore the Jewish lobby by getting firm with Israel*".

When using the words "*pro-Israel*" or "*Zionist*", such analysis is not unusual in *The Independent*. Nevertheless, replacing these terms with the word "*Jewish*" directly risks antisemitism, particularly as Osborne portrayed all previous US presidents as having been cowed by this lobby; and also depicted it as anti-peace<sup>53</sup>.

52 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/israel-lobby-blamed-as-obamas-choice-for-intelligence-chief-quits-1643976.html>

53 An estimated 78% of American Jews voted for Obama, and studies have repeatedly shown that American Jews favour a peaceful two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

## **Jewish Media Control**

The allegation that Jewish finance controls the media (and thereby indoctrinates the masses) is a central antisemitic charge.

Today, few commentators repeat the charge in its original form (i.e. against Jews per se): but it is very common to allege that Israel is somehow dictating the extent and nature of international media coverage of its actions.

This notion, that media throughout the world is somehow subservient to Israeli or Zionist demand, can be seen repeatedly within pro-Palestinian activists circles.

In mainstream UK media, it is most commonly heard in relation to American coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

### ***Guardian: "Israel barks, the US media wags its tail"***

Peter Preston, former editor of the *Guardian* (1975-1995), wrote an article for the *Guardian's* Comment is Free website on 7th January, entitled "*Israel barks, the US media wags its tail*".

The actual article noted a study of American media coverage of the Gaza conflict. In the article, Preston included the caveat "seemed" in his allegation of Israeli control:

*"there was no balance, no fairness and precious little you could call independent thought. Tel Aviv seemed to bark orders: the US media just wagged its tail."*

Preston then gave a range of potential reasons as to why this may be the case: post 9/11 attitudes; disparate

Arab narratives; and the possibility that dissenting coverage could come at financial cost, writing:

*"Maybe the mantra of 'Israel, Our Ally' simply trumps thought. Maybe – at a difficult financial time – disapproval is perceived to carry too much of a price. Maybe readers just need to be told what they think already."*

This linkage of (supposed) financial realities and prevailing pro-Israel attitudes, amplifies the echo of Jewish media control that is evoked by the headline given to Preston's article.

£1.00

# Who are the MIND-BENDERS



**The people who rule Britain  
through control of the mass media**

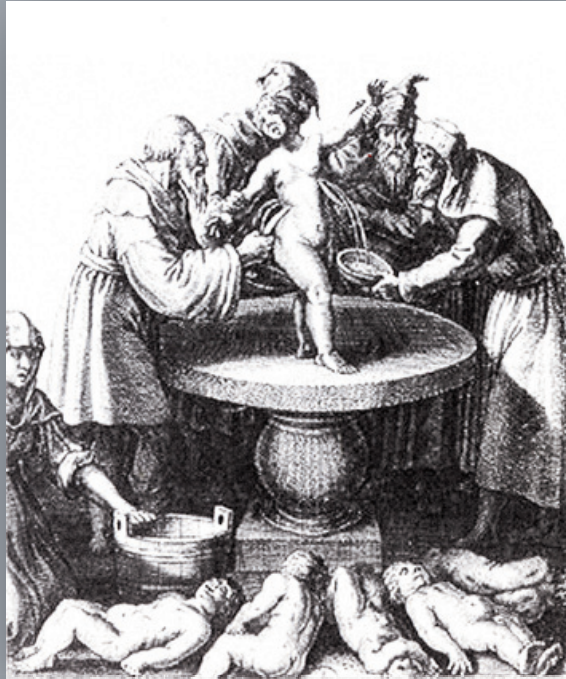
This British National Party publication, "*Who are the MIND-BENDERS?*" (1997) listed hundreds of Jews and others wrongly believed to be Jewish. It claimed to be "a study of the workings of the mass media: who the people are who own, control and operate those media, and to what purposes their immense power is being put."

Prior to listing the Jewish names (and making assertions against them), the publication states:

*"...very few people in Britain are aware of the huge influence over the mass media exercised by a certain ethnic minority, namely the Jews..."*

*...It is not our claim in this booklet that Jews necessarily outnumber non-Jews in all sections of the media...but only that the former's solidarity and oneness of loyalty, interest and purpose gives them an immense advantage over others in any bid for power and influence."*

The publication shows how narrow the dividing line can be between antisemitism and anti-Zionism. In this instance, the charge that Jews run the media is explicit, can be seen to be antisemitic and would be readily condemned as such by most observers. Nevertheless, when the charge is made that British and / or American media is somehow subservient to Israeli or Zionist demands, this is seen as legitimate comment.



The charge that Jews kill children and use their blood is one of the most sickening of antisemitic accusations.

The first of these engravings is from 18th Century France and depicts a case in 1476 when Jews were accused of murdering six Christian children in Regensburg.

The second engraving is from Poland, c.1900 and shows Jews directly sucking blood from their young victim.

# The Blood Libel: Today's "Rumour About the Jews"

A series of accusations that Jews and Israelis steal body parts, for profit and medical use, followed the publication in a Swedish newspaper of an article insinuating that Jews and Israel are especially involved in such criminality.

The accusations were roundly condemned around the world, but spread rapidly: for example, on the website of Iranian state media outlet, Press TV, a satellite broadcaster with a large studio in London, whose output is available (free) on the Sky platform<sup>54</sup>.

If the blood libel emerged from medieval village mentality, this was a striking example of what could be termed as 'global village antisemitism'.

## Antisemitic resonance in coverage of Israel

The illegal trade in body parts is a modern reality. In recent years, stories on this subject have emerged in Britain (Alder Hey), India, China, USA and many other countries.

Nevertheless, the writing, headlining and evolution of Jewish and Israel-related stories revealed a unique element of scrutiny and attribution of blame to a religion, or a nation itself<sup>55</sup>: rather to those individuals and institutions that bore responsibility.

In its components, this particular story bore strikingly similar characteristics to the medieval Blood Libel charge.

## "The rumour about the Jews"

The German philosopher, Theodor W. Adorno, described antisemitism as "the rumour about the Jews" in his critical theory book, *Minima Moralia* (published 1951).

The development of the body part story demonstrated how "the rumour about the Jews" still works: only now it is globalised in the digital media and Internet age. As with so much

contemporary antisemitism, it also showed how interchangeable the terms "Jewish", "Zionist" and "Israeli" can be.

## The Blood Libel: Then and Now

The so called Blood Libel is often regarded as the ugliest antisemitic charge of all. It emerged in medieval times, and alleges that Jews kidnap and kill others, in order to drain their blood for ritual purposes.

The charges predominately involved the alleged kidnapping of children: this was repeated in the 2009 case by references such as "our sons" and "kids".

Another characteristic of the Blood Libel was that its appearance in one locale sparked allegations elsewhere. This pattern repeated in 2009. The original Swedish article depicted Palestinian youths as the victims of body part theft, but subsequent stories claimed children in Algeria and Ukraine were also being targeted. Indeed, Hezbollah's al-Manar website explicitly predicted such an outcome<sup>56</sup>:

"The organ theft scandal in Israel is likely to have a domino effect as similar

54 <http://www.sky.com/shop/tv/free-to-air-channels/>

55 For example, *Guardian*, 21 December 2009, page 15, headline "Israel admits harvesting Palestinian organs". (This was subsequently changed online, as it wrongly implied that only Palestinian organs had been removed.)

56 <http://www.almanar.com.lb/newssite/NewsDetails.aspx?id=103349&language=en>



*crimes by Israeli organizations in the Arab world have been unearthed; an international Zionist conspiracy to kidnap Algerian children and harvest their organs."*

The website of official Iranian media outlet, Press TV, headlined the Algerian stories as, "New Jewish organ theft gang busted"<sup>57</sup> and "Algerian kids falling prey to Jewish 'organ harvest'"<sup>58</sup>. The latter article began: "An international Jewish conspiracy to kidnap their children and harvest their organs is gathering momentum".

By comparison, the neo-Nazi Adolf Hitler Research Society called the story "Missing Algerian Children Had Their Organs Removed By Vampires".

The Algerian story also appeared on the website of the Muslim Association of Britain (a member of the Government-backed Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board). This version was translated from Arabic media and featured "American Jews", "Jewish rings" and a "Jewish led network". It was later removed from the Association's website<sup>59</sup>.

The concentration upon children throughout the world as the victims of a Jewish or Zionist or Israeli conspiracy was then repeated in allegations that no less than 25,000 Ukrainian children had been smuggled to Israel in 2008 and 2009. Press TV's coverage of this began:

*"An international Israeli conspiracy to kidnap children and harvest their organs is gathering momentum as another shocking story divulges Tel Aviv's plot to import Ukrainian children*

*and harvest their organs...Israel has brought some 25,000 Ukrainian children into the occupied entity over the past two years in order to harvest their organs."*

The article also displayed the antisemitic conceit of replacing the word "Jews" with "Zionists", stating: "...two professors who presented a book blaming 'the Zionists' for the Ukrainian famine of the 1930s, as well as the country's current condition."<sup>60</sup>

The Blood Libel theme then re-emerged in January 2010 with the accusation that Israeli relief efforts in the Haiti earthquake were motivated by their search for body organs. Baroness Jenny Tonge was sacked by Liberal Democrat party leadership after she backed calls for an inquiry to disprove this accusation<sup>61</sup>.

### **"Our Sons are Plundered of Their Organs"**

The 2009 Blood Libel was premised upon an article by Donald Bostrom, in Sweden's popular evening tabloid, Aftonbladet (17 August 2009). Entitled, "Our Sons are Plundered of Their Organs", the article began by referencing the arrest in July 2009 in New Jersey, of:

*"Rabbis, politicians and trusted civil servants...involved in money laundering and illegal organ-trade...buying and selling kidneys from Israel on the black market...from poor people."*

From this true case, Bostrom strongly implied that Israel was kidnapping and killing young Palestinians to harvest their organs. He cited an Israeli medical institute as complicit: but failed to state that its director had been sacked after

57 <http://www.presstv.com/detail.aspx?id=105711&sectionid=3510203>

58 <http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=106466&sectionid=351020506>

59 <http://thecst.org.uk/blog/?p=579>

60 <http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=112772&sectionid=351020606>

61 <http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/27160/jenny-tonge-stripped-lords-role>





9 September 2009



17 September 2009



3 December 2009

The website of Iranian broadcaster, Press TV, shows the development of a modern-day Blood Libel ranging from the United States to Algeria, Morocco, Israel and the Ukraine.

Press TV broadcasts from London and is available on the Sky platform.



These photographs, taken at an anti-Israel demonstration in Central London on 10 June 2009, show a demonstrator wearing a grotesque mask, pretending to eat blood-soaked Palestinian children. It combines many anti-Israel and antisemitic themes, including the charges that both Israel and Jews are (literally) bloodthirsty, especially against children. This also plays its role in the medieval Blood Libel charge against Jews, revived in 2009 on the website of Iranian satellite channel, Press TV, which broadcasts from London and is available on the Sky platform.

Israeli media revealed the illegality in 2004. Nor did Bostrom acknowledge that dead Israeli soldiers, citizens, Palestinians and foreign workers had all been similarly abused and that this had ended in the 1990s.

In subsequent interviews, Bostrom stressed that he did not actually know if his claims were true. For example, telling Israel Radio:

*"It concerns me, to the extent that I want it to be investigated, that's true. But whether it's true or not — I have no idea, I have no clue."*<sup>62</sup>

### **George Galloway: "Dark Echoes of the Holocaust"**

George Galloway combined the organ theft with the Holocaust in the popular Scottish tabloid, the *Daily Record*. The article<sup>63</sup>, entitled, "*Dark Echoes of the Holocaust*", noted the theft of the Arbeit Macht Frei sign from Auschwitz, described "*The Satanic evil of Nazism*" and the mostly Jewish victims of the gas chambers, adding:

*"After they were dead their gold fillings were extracted, their body parts were harvested, some were subject to medical experimentation even before death."*

Galloway stated "*on such as a scale of barbarism the Holocaust remains unique*", before moving on to say that the Israeli parliament had revealed "*the body parts of Palestinian prisoners were systematically harvested*". He said of the controversy "*When the story first broke...I frankly did not believe it. Implacable critic of Israel as I am, it was beyond belief that a country calling itself the 'Jewish State' could ever do such a thing.*

*I met the correspondent...and rigorously questioned him about it. I was not satisfied and didn't use the information. The man was offended and I owe him an apology."*

Galloway credited Israel's press and parliament for showing the truth, but complained "*...there is little evidence of national soul searching of how such a thing could happen.*

*Still less of anyone being held accountable for playing mini-Mengele on Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails."*

The article therefore blamed Israel as a whole, and implied that only Palestinians had been victims and Bostrom had brought it all to light.

Furthermore, Galloway compared the Palestinian victims with Jewish Holocaust victims by making the highly unusual (if not unique) claim that Jews had suffered body part harvesting at the hands of the Nazis: and he then used this as the basis for the highly insulting and hurtful depiction of "*playing mini-Mengele*".

Galloway's reference to the notorious Dr Mengele (who conducted perverse experiments upon Auschwitz captives) therefore endorsed the notion that organs were systematically removed from living prisoners as a part of Israel's conflict with the Palestinians; and facilitated an unusually ugly example of the Israel-Nazi Germany theme.

62 <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,540502,00.html>

63 <http://blogs.dailyrecord.co.uk/georgegalloway/2009/12/dark-echoes-of-holocaust.html>

# Antisemitism and Political Debate

**The Michal Kaminski controversy showed the risk to Jewish communities of being caught up in heated arguments about alleged antisemitism.**

## Introduction

The controversy centred upon Polish MEP, Michal Kaminski, whom the Conservative Party had agreed could lead the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) group<sup>64, 65</sup>. Another ECR member, Roberts Zile of Latvia, was also embroiled.

Jewish communities in Britain, Poland and Latvia were left in near impossible positions by the controversy: raising challenging questions about how British politicians and media should relate to the significant Jewish component of (competing) Central and East European national mythologies, histories, and identity, regarding World War Two and the era of Soviet Communism.

## Background: Attitudes to Holocaust, Jews, Communism and Israel

The position of Jews and the memory of the Holocaust is strongly debated in some former Soviet bloc countries. These arguments about recent history are central to competing narratives regarding modern national identities, and past roles as victims and perpetrators (or often both) under Nazism and Communism.

Jewish communities in these countries are the merest fraction of their pre-Holocaust size, but are quite widely associated with Communism by those blaming others for the Communist era. Furthermore, Jewish suffering in the Holocaust is often seen as distracting attention from the suffering that non-Jewish populations also endured under Nazism and Communism. The Jew-Communist motif also lessens

the burden of national guilt for the Holocaust, particularly where local populations assisted in its perpetration and seized Jewish properties.

Against this backdrop, attitudes to modern antisemitism vary greatly, from sincere support of local Jewish communities, to regarding Jews as enemies of the nation. As in other scenarios elsewhere, some say that they are not opposed to Jews per se: merely to those who (allegedly) behave in a wrongful manner.

The situation is further complicated by the relatively strong support for Israel that such countries may show. Partly a reaction to Soviet anti-Israel hostility, and a sense that Israel's position is analogous to their own independence struggles, this can occur regardless of attitudes to local Jews, the Holocaust or the Jew-Communist motif.

## Michal Kaminski

The main criticism of Kaminski was that, as MP for Jedwabne, he led local opposition to the Polish President's issuing of a national apology in 2001 for the pogrom that occurred in the town in 1941. Several hundred to 1,600 Jews were murdered by their fellow townsfolk in Jedwabne. This was only properly revealed in post-Soviet times<sup>66</sup>.

Kaminski was quoted as having told the far right newspaper, *Nasza Polska*, that Poles should only apologise when someone "from the Jewish side" apologised for "the mass collaboration of the Jewish people with the Soviet

64 Bruno Waterfield and Matthew Day "Tory MEPs 'led by Pole with extremist past'", *Daily Telegraph*, 15 July 2009.

65 A European Parliamentary coalition comprising UK Conservatives and various other European parties.

66 The massacre and its historical content are shown in the play "Our Class" by Tadeusz Slobodzianek.



occupier, for fighting Polish partisans in the area. And eventually for murdering Poles." Other allegations centred upon Kaminski's affiliations when Poland was emerging from Soviet occupation. Furthermore, Kaminski's current Law and Order Party has a close relationship with the blatantly antisemitic and Holocaust denying radio station, *Radio Maryja*.

Much of the above was subject to heated UK media and political debate, in which Kaminski strenuously denied being, or having been, antisemitic. His support for Israel was unquestioned, but its relevance to his attitudes to Jews was disputed.

### **Roberts Zile**

The charge against Roberts Zile centred upon his, and his party's, alleged role in commemorative events for Latvian Waffen SS units.

For Jews and the vast majority of the British public, the Waffen SS epitomises all that was worst about Nazi Germany. In the Baltic states, however, some view non-German SS personnel as anti-Communist patriots. Arguments also surround how avoidable it was to serve in such units, and their responsibility for the mass murder of local Jewish populations. This Holocaust element is then further complicated by the Jew-Communist motif.

### **Party Politics and Media**

In Britain, the controversy peaked during the party political conference season: the last prior to a looming General Election. The Conservative Party was accused by the Labour Party, and its supportive media<sup>67</sup>, of allying with antisemites. The Conservatives strongly denied this and alleged antisemitism against some of Labour's own European allies<sup>68</sup>.

Those making, or countering, the accusations, did not necessarily act out of ill-will. For example, Denis MacShane MP and *Guardian* journalist Jonathan Freedland, were both highly critical of the Conservative position but both have long campaigned on East European attitudes to antisemitism and Jews. Similarly, *Jewish Chronicle* editor, Stephen Pollard and David Cameron MP, are sincere opponents of antisemitism, but both defended Kaminski.

In Britain, through its timing and dynamics, Jewish reactions risked being regarded as a test of party political loyalties. In Poland and Latvia, the potential consequences were more grave, concerning relations between these states and their Jewish citizens.

The position of Poland's Chief Rabbi Michael Schudrich exemplified Jewish concerns. Schudrich had criticised Kaminski's past actions, saying these should be understood by those now seeking to work with him, but complained that the *New Statesman's* headlining of this as "*Jewish Leaders Turn on Cameron's Tories: Poland's chief rabbi and others call on Cameron to sever ties with Polish MEP*", was "*misleading and untrue*". (The NS subsequently changed its headline.)<sup>69</sup>

Schudrich did not retract his criticism of Kaminski's past, but stated it was "*a grotesque distortion that people are quoting me to prove that Kaminski is an antisemite*". He also stressed the need for context, noting Kaminski's "*strong*" support for Israel; his having "*spoken out against antisemitism on several occasions*"; and the danger of stereotyping Poles as antisemites.<sup>70</sup>

67 Ian Traynor, Julian Glover and Matthew Taylor, "Row escalates over 'vile' Tory allies", *Guardian*, 3 October 2009.

68 <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-1224443/WILLIAM-HAGUE-How-David-Miliband-tried-smear-me.html>

69 Jessica Elgot, "Chief Rabbi of Poland: Kaminski's no antisemite", *Jewish Chronicle*, 29 October 2009.

70 Ibid.

# Opposition to Antisemitism

**Antisemitic race hate attacks and discourse surrounding the Gaza conflict led many public commentators to express their concerns. Rarely (if ever) in recent memory has antisemitism been so condemned in such a short time frame.**

## **Public letter by Leading Muslims**

On Friday 16 January, in the midst of a surge of antisemitic race hate attacks, twenty prominent British Muslims sent a letter condemning antisemitism to coincide with Friday prayers in nearly 1,000 British mosques. The statement was much appreciated by Jewish community leadership but received little mainstream media coverage.

The letter read as follows:

In the name of God, most compassionate, most merciful,

Dear Fellow Muslims,

We are deeply saddened to hear about antisemitic assaults on British Jews, and a recent arson attack on a London synagogue. Although the perpetrators are yet unknown, we unreservedly condemn attacks on innocent British citizens and the desecration of all places of worship.

The ongoing killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza by Israeli forces has angered us all.

However, this does not, and cannot, justify attacks on our fellow citizens of Jewish faith and background here in Britain.

Most Muslims are completely against such behaviour. However, we call on all Muslims to continue to remain vigilant against attempts to bring our own faith and community into disrepute. British Jews should not be held responsible for the actions of the Israeli government.

Yours in Islam and peace.



### **Guardian Editorial: "Language and history"**

On 7 February 2009, the *Guardian* newspaper published a strong editorial warning against antisemitism arising from anti-Israel discourse and campaigning. It noted CST's statistics regarding antisemitic incidents and stressed that Jews must not be regarded as "conterminous" (ie within the same boundary) "with Israel and its supporters", warning that this "aligns ethnicity with a political perspective, and it is simply racist."

The editorial, entitled "Language and history", also noted how "some within 'the left'" had allowed "their horror of Israel's actions to blind them to antisemitism".

It ended with an appeal for greater "sensitivity" so as not to "erode...racial tolerance".

Excerpts included the following:

*"...On average, there is an antisemitic attack of some kind every single day in the UK...the number of such incidents has risen again since Christmas, and the assault on Gaza...*

*...There is no 'Jewish lobby' in the conspiratorial sense that the slur implies... To present all Jewish people as conterminous with Israel and its supporters is a mistake with potentially terrible consequences. It aligns ethnicity with a political perspective, and it is simply racist...*

*... There is an ill-considered tendency to reach for the language of Nazism in order to excoriate Israel, regardless of its impact on the climate of tolerance. Last month, a rally in defence of the*

*people of Gaza that included verbal attacks on the so-called 'Nazi tendencies' of Israel was followed by actual attacks on Jewish targets in north London. That is not, of course, to say we should not criticise Israel and judge it by the same criteria as any other state.*

*...[condemning Israel] must not create the climate that allows scrawling 'kill Jews' on synagogues in Manchester. For that is what is at stake: what might merely be insensitivity can, cumulatively, erode the conditions that foster racial tolerance. For they depend not only on the laws, but on a respect for all people's sensitivities."*

### **Nick Cohen: "Hatred is turning me into a Jew"**

Writing in the *Jewish Chronicle*, 12 February 2009, Nick Cohen<sup>71</sup> wrote of how anyone opposing antisemitism and the current anti-Israel mood risked being labelled as Jewish:

*"...Fight back and you become a Jew, whether you are or not. Mark Lawson recently described an argument at the BBC over the corporation's decision not to screen the charity appeal for Gaza. His furious colleague declared that the only reason Lawson supported the ban was because he was Jewish. Lawson had to tell him that he was, in fact, raised a Catholic.*

*A furious Labour MP was no different when he told a colleague of mine that I had gone off the rails when I married a 'hard-right' Jewish woman from North London. My friend replied that this would be news to my wife, a liberal Catholic from Stoke-on-Trent."<sup>72</sup>*

71 Describing himself as a non-Jewish atheist.

72 <http://www.thejc.com/comment/comment/hatred-turning-me-a-jew>

Cohen called such accusations racist and noted:

*"...It is cowardly to stammer that you are not a Jew because you concede the racist's main point — that there is something suspect about being Jewish — as you do it.*

*...I will tell them that the opponents of totalitarianism must never be frightened. If their enemies say they are Jews, they should shrug and say: 'All right, I am.'"*

### **Howard Jacobson: "Let's see the 'criticism' of Israel for what it really is"**

Novelist Howard Jacobson wrote a lengthy article<sup>73</sup> in *The Independent*, 18 February 2009, attacking the language and emotion displayed by anti-Israel protestors. The article was perhaps the most excoriating mainstream media attack on antisemitic and anti-Israel discourse in recent years.

It began by describing the atmosphere surrounding Israel as:

*"...A discriminatory, over-and-above hatred, inexplicable in its hysteria and virulence whatever justification is adduced for it; an unreasoning, deranged and as far as I can see irreversible revulsion... You can taste the toxins on your tongue.*

*But I am not allowed to ascribe any of this to anti-Semitism. It is, I am assured, 'criticism' of Israel, pure and simple...and you are either not listened to or you are jeered at and abused, your reading of history trashed, your humanity itself called into question...in this newspaper last week, Robert Fisk argued that*

*'a Palestinian woman and her child are as worthy of life as a Jewish woman and her child on the back of a lorry in Auschwitz'. I am not sure who he was arguing with, but it certainly isn't me."*

Jacobson explained the rationale and consequences of equating Israel with Nazi Germany. This included the notion that Zionists were somehow psychologically compelled to inflict their own suffering upon others:

*"...What do we, in the cosy safety of tolerant old England, think we are doing when we call the Israelis Nazis and liken Gaza to the Warsaw Ghetto?"*

*...It is as though, by a reversal of the usual laws of cause and effect, Jewish actions of today prove that Jews had it coming to them yesterday.*

*Berating Jews with their own history, disinheriting them of pity, as though pity is negotiable or has a sell-by date, is the latest species of Holocaust denial... the Jews have betrayed the Holocaust and become unworthy of it, the true heirs to their suffering being the Palestinians. Thus, here and there throughout the world this year, Holocaust day was temporarily annulled or boycotted on account of Gaza, dead Jews being found guilty of the sins of live ones.*

*Anti-Semitism? Absolutely not. It is 'criticism' of Israel, pure and simple...One particularly popular version, pseudo-scientific in tone, understands Zionism as Jews visiting upon others the traumas suffered by themselves...This is pretty well the thesis of Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children*, an audacious 10-minute encapsulation of Israel's moral collapse.*

<sup>73</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/howard-jacobson/howard-jacobson-let8217s-see-the-8216criticism8217-of-israel-for-what-it-really-is-1624827.html>

*...This is the old stuff. Jew-hating pure and simple – Jew-hating which the haters don't even recognise in themselves, so acculturated is it – the Jew-hating which many of us have always suspected was the only explanation for the disgust that contorts and disfigures faces when the mere word Israel crops up in conversation. So for that we are grateful. At last that mystery is solved and that lie finally nailed. No, you don't have to be an anti-Semite to criticise Israel. It just so happens that you are.*

*...And so it happens. Without one's being aware of it, it happens. A gradual habituation to the language of loathing. Passed from the culpable to the unwary and back again..."*

Caryl Churchill later replied<sup>74</sup>, stating that neither she, nor her play, was antisemitic. This included allusions to Jacobson deliberately trying to shield Israel; and the passing remark that "if" antisemitism had increased then "we should all stand up against it":

*"...But it's the usual tactic. We are not going to agree about politics...we should be able to disagree without accusations of anti-Semitism, which lead to a pantomime of, 'Oh yes you are', 'Oh no I'm not', to distract attention from Israel.*

*...If one of the main pieces of evidence for the rise of anti-Semitism is this play, I don't think there's much to worry about. If it's really on the increase, then we should all stand up against it. But calling political opponents anti-Semitic just confuses the issue. When people attack English Jews in the street saying, 'This is for Gaza', they are making a terrible mistake, confusing the people who bombed Gaza*

*with Jews in general. When Howard Jacobson confuses those who criticise Israel with anti-Semites, he is making the same mistake. Unless he's doing it on purpose."*

## **Political Opposition to Antisemitism**

### **London Declaration on Combating Antisemitism**

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) hosted the inaugural conference of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism<sup>75</sup>, organised in conjunction with the London based Parliamentary Committee Against Antisemitism. Held in Parliament and the FCO's Lancaster House on 16 and 17 February 2009, nearly 100 parliamentarians and legislators from 35 countries agreed upon The London Declaration on Combating Antisemitism, a resolution of 35 points culminating in the establishment of a permanent international grouping, with the next conference scheduled for Canada in 2010.

In parallel to the parliamentarians' event, the Foreign Office also hosted a conference of global experts, organised by CST at the request of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition.

The Declaration stated:

*"We, as Parliamentarians, affirm our commitment to a comprehensive programme of action to meet this challenge.*

*We call upon national governments, parliaments, international institutions, political and civic leaders, NGOs, and civil society to affirm democratic*

74 <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/letters/letters-jacobson-on-gaza-1628191.html>

75 <http://www.antisem.org/london-declaration/>

*and human values, build societies based on respect and citizenship and combat any manifestations of antisemitism and discrimination.”*

There then followed a range of recommendations concerning hate crime monitoring; prevention of hate speech; the importance of new media; and behaviour of governments and other regulators and authorities.

On the specific subject of discourse, it noted:

*“We are alarmed at the resurrection of the old language of prejudice and its modern manifestations in rhetoric and political action – against Jews, Jewish belief and practice and the State of Israel.”*

### **UK Walkout on Iranian President**

On 20 April 2009<sup>76</sup> and 24 September 2009, Britain’s representatives at the United Nations made important physical demonstrations against antisemitism when they joined walkouts of UN delegates<sup>77</sup>, protesting against the antisemitism of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad.

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hlxvMYu28Y>

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/6224954/Britain-walks-out-of-Irans-Ahmadinejads-anti-Semitic-speech-at-UN.html>

# Survey of Attitudes to Jews: Loyalty to Israel and Impact on Attitudes

**Over one-third of Britons believe their fellow Jewish citizens are more loyal to Israel than to Britain. One in five Britons admitted that Israel influences their opinion of British Jews; and the majority of those said that they felt "worse" about Jews.**

## Background

The US-based Anti-Defamation League (ADL) survey<sup>78</sup> into antisemitic attitudes in Britain, Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Spain, conducted 500 telephone interviews per country between 1 December 2008 and 13 January 2009. Largely similar ADL surveys were conducted in 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2007.

The timing of the Dec 08-Jan 09 survey meant that it was conducted before and during the Gaza conflict between Israel and Hamas that began on 27 December 2008. It is not known if the survey results fluctuated before and after the conflict.

## Overview

As previously, Britain was markedly less antisemitic than the other countries on most of the questions asked. The survey does not, however, show which of the questions are important to the dynamics of antisemitic race hate incidents in each country.

In Britain, statistics show that in 2009 the Middle East conflict was by far the likeliest single factor to be cited by those who committed acts of antisemitism. (In 2009, 48% of antisemitic race hate attacks, 442 out of 924 recorded by CST, showed a political motivation<sup>79</sup>: of which 66%, 293 out of 442, included some reference to Israel and the Middle East.) References to Jews as financiers, Christ-killers or speaking too much about the Holocaust were not significant factors in UK antisemitic incidents in 2009.

## Statistics

The percentage of people in Britain replying "*probably true*" and "*agree*" to the questions posed by the 2009 survey (and the average of all seven countries polled) were as follows:

37% - *Jews are more loyal to Israel than to this country.* (Average 49%)

20% - *Is your opinion of Jews influenced by Israel's actions.* (Average 23%)

66% (of the above 20%) - *Opinion of Jews is worse due to Israel.* (Average 58%)

20% - *Jews still talk too much about... the Holocaust.* (Average 44%)

19% - *The Jews are responsible for the death of Christ.* (Average 23%)

16% - *Jews in the financial industry bear some blame for the 2009 global economic crisis.* (Average 16%)

15% - *Jews have too much power in the business world.* (Average 40%)

15% - *Jews have too much power in international financial markets.* (Average 41%)

## Analysis

37% of British respondents believe that their fellow Jewish citizens are probably more loyal to Israel than Britain. This is essentially the old antisemitic charge of 'dual loyalties'. It means Jews can neither be trusted nor regarded as true citizens of their countries.

<sup>78</sup> Anti-Defamation League survey: "Attitudes Toward Jews in Seven European Countries", February 2009 .

<sup>79</sup> 48% is an unusually high figure and is due to the Israel-Hamas war of Dec 08 and Jan 09. In 2008, only 32% of incidents analysed by CST showed political motivation.

Of the other questions, associating Jews with money holds for approximately 15% of respondents. The figure rises slightly to 19% for those who blame Jews in some way for the death of Jesus. These results show the enduring strength of older antisemitic motifs, but also their limited purchase compared to more contemporary ideas.

37% of people believe Jews are more loyal to Israel than Britain; and 20% replied "yes" to "*Is your opinion of Jews influenced by actions taken by the State of Israel?*". From the 20% of British respondents, 66% of them said that their opinion of Jews was "worse".

Taking 66% of 20% reveals that 13.2% (ie more than one in eight) British respondents effectively admit that negative perceptions of Israel lead them to have a worse opinion of British Jews (the overall European average for this calculation is also 13.2%).





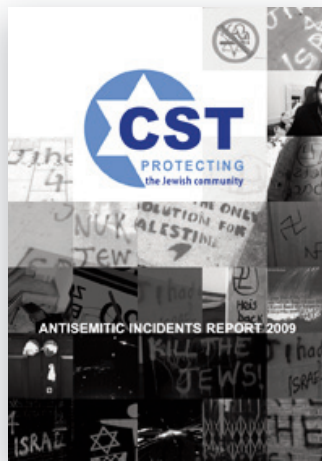


This graphic shows a typical page of CST's blog. The blog is regularly updated and is a valuable resource for those seeking news, commentary and analysis of contemporary antisemitism and related issues. It may be accessed via CST's website [www.thecst.org.uk](http://www.thecst.org.uk), or directly at <http://thecst.org.uk/blog>

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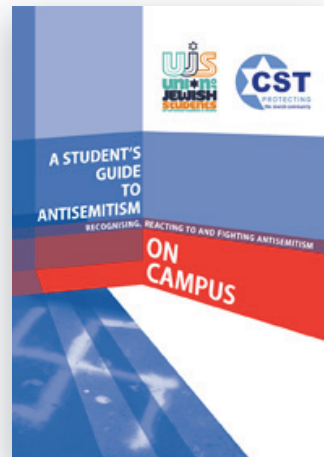
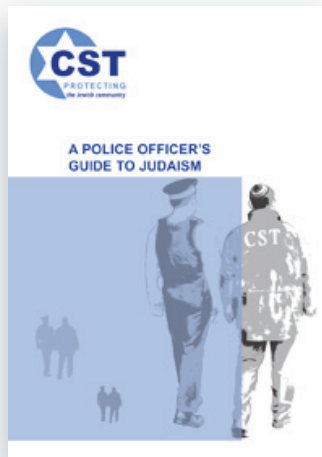
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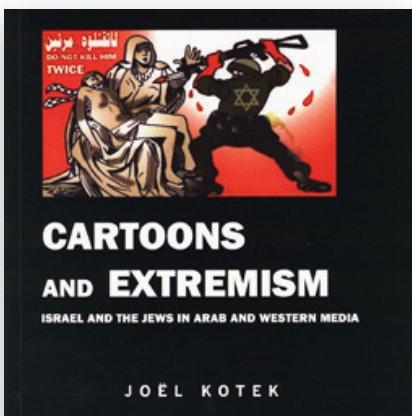
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ISBN: 978-0-9548471-3-5