



JEWISH LEADERSHIP  
C O U N C I L

## **CST and JLC**

The Community Security Trust (CST) is the UK Jewish Community's leading body on issues of racism, antisemitism, extremism, policing and security.

The Jewish Leadership Council (JLC) is the umbrella body for the 32 leading UK Jewish communal organisations, including CST.

Where this submission states "we", it refers to the jointly held opinion of CST and JLC.

## **Introduction**

The current Labour Party controversy is of significant concern to British Jews, including CST and many of the JLC's members. We regard the Chakrabarti Inquiry as being of the utmost importance in constructively addressing this issue.

The Chakrabarti Inquiry follows a previous inquiry by Baroness Jan Royall, which itself followed a previous inquiry by Labour Students, prompted by allegations concerning antisemitism in the Oxford University Labour Club in February 2016. Many other cases have since come to light, correctly leading to immediate suspensions pending investigation. Regrettably, however, the subsequent disciplinary processes appear to be inadequately resourced and the investigative process blatantly lacks transparency and consistency. This falls far short of what would be expected from a body of the Labour Party's standing and self-image.

We have confidence in the integrity of the Chakrabarti Inquiry itself and seek to cooperate as constructively as possible. There is a perception that political interests from within the Labour Party have impeded constructive outcomes from the previous two inquiries. It is vital that the same does not happen to the Chakrabarti Inquiry. This inquiry and the Party's reaction to it are now the litmus test for future relations between the mainstream Jewish community and the Labour Party as an institution.

1. *We recommend that the Labour Party should fully appreciate the gravity of the situation it now faces, as an institution, regarding the future of its relationship with the majority of British Jews.*

2. *We recommend that the Labour Party should fully appreciate the example it sets in relation to the way in which the rest of British society ought to regard British Jews, their experiences and perceptions of contemporary antisemitism, and how such concerns ought to be respectfully heard and addressed.*
3. *We recommend that the Labour Party set the highest possible standards of institutional transparency and consistency.*
4. *We recommend that the Labour Party's disciplinary process be sufficiently resourced and funded, and that those involved in it be properly trained.*
5. *We recommend that the Labour Party should publish the full report of the Chakrabarti Inquiry and publish a full and detailed response from the Labour Party. Similarly, we recommend that the previous Royall Inquiry also be published in full.*

## **Contemporary Antisemitism**

To further understand the importance of the Chakrabarti Inquiry and the Party's response to it, it is necessary to grasp how British Jews perceive and experience contemporary antisemitism, particularly its anti-Zionist and anti-Israel aspects.

In summary, UK Jewish communal perceptions and experiences of antisemitism have considerably worsened from 2000 to the present. This is due to rising antisemitic hate crime levels (reported to CST by members of the public and Police data exchanges), and the continuing reality and threat of antisemitic terrorism, primarily from Jihadist sources. Anti-Israel provocations have also played an important part in growing communal fears regarding the atmosphere in which antisemitic incidents, attitudes and attacks occur.

Antisemitic incident levels tend to peak whenever Israel is involved in a conflict in the Middle East and is subject to intense scrutiny and criticism in Britain. This occurred in 2014(1,179 incidents), 2009 (931 incidents) and 2006 (598 incidents). The 2014 and 2009 peaks were triggered by antisemitic reactions to conflicts between Israel and Hamas in those years, and the 2006 peak was due to reactions to a conflict between Israel and Hizbollah. Each of those annual totals was a record high at the time it was recorded; showing how the background trend has been generally upwards over that period.

British fears about antisemitism are further heightened by awareness of the even worse situation in France, Belgium and elsewhere, countries in which Jewish communal leaders now openly express doubts as to the future viability of their communities. Thousands of Jews have left France in recent years, seeking a better future in London, Israel and North America. Here in Britain, the situation is better than elsewhere in Europe, but it has the potential to worsen.

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

Zionism and Israel are, in part, responses to the long and often tragic history of antisemitism.

The complex dynamics between antisemitism, anti-Israel activity and anti-Zionism are central to the nature, content and impact of much contemporary British antisemitism, and to the concerns of British Jews about antisemitism.

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

A 2010 survey by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research found that 95% of British Jews say Israel plays some role in their Jewish identity, and 82% say it plays a central or important role. The same survey found 95% of British Jews have visited Israel.<sup>1</sup> A similar survey by City University in 2015 found that 90% of British Jews support Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and 93% said Israel plays some role in their Jewish identity.<sup>2</sup> Importantly for the Labour Party, both surveys found that this was not inconsistent with holding dovish views on Israeli politics or on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

6. *We recommend that any training regarding antisemitism must include training on what Israel and Zionism mean to Jews and the role Israel plays in Jewish identity.*

## **Case Study: July and August 2014. Antisemitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israel**

Concerns about antisemitism rise and fall depending on events, and the quantity (and nature) of political and media coverage they attract. The two most damaging events in recent years were the January 2015 anti-Jewish terror attacks in Paris and Copenhagen; and reactions in Britain to the Israel-Hamas conflict of July and August 2014.

The terror attack in Paris and the following month's attack in Copenhagen are highly pertinent to overall Jewish concerns about antisemitism, but are not relevant to the subject of the Chakrabarti Inquiry.

The summer of 2014, during and immediately after the Israel-Hamas conflict, relates directly to the question of how fierce opposition to Israel, particularly in left wing politics, can affect British Jews. That summer saw an unprecedented number of

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<sup>1</sup>According to one survey in 2010, 95% of UK Jews have visited Israel; 90% see it as the "ancestral homeland" of the Jewish people; 72% consider themselves to be "Zionists". David Graham and Jonathan Boyd, *The Attitudes of Jews in Britain towards Israel*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research (July 2010)

<http://www.jpr.org.uk/downloads/JPR%20Israel%20survey%20report%2015.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.city.ac.uk/news/2015/november/the-attitudes-of-british-jews-towards-israel>

antisemitic incidents reported to CST across the UK. In two months, CST recorded 544 antisemitic incidents (more than the entire 2013 total). 258 of these 544 antisemitic incidents involved some mention of events in Israel and Gaza alongside antisemitic language or imagery. Numerous Jewish newspaper columnists and other public commentators voiced their concern that the Israel-Hamas conflict was creating a climate of unusually heightened antipathy and hostility to British Jews. CST received many complaints from people in the Jewish community expressing the same fears.

This was the first conflict involving Israel at a time when social media is all-pervasive, more so (especially Twitter) than during the last major conflict between Israel and Hamas in 2009. This resulted in a quicker spread of antisemitic discourse, threats and themes than previously seen during any such conflict. Social media makes this antisemitism visible to witnesses, victims and potential offenders. For example, the hashtag *#Hitlerwasright* trended on Twitter, was portrayed on placards at anti-Israel demonstrations and was shouted as verbal abuse against Jews.

In Britain, the use of Nazi-related language to abuse Israel or Jews was a dominant antisemitic theme during the war, featuring in 171 of the 544 incidents reported to CST. Calling British Jews child or baby killers featured in 48 of the 544 incidents. This clearly demonstrates the antisemitic importance and power of these two antisemitic tropes<sup>3</sup>, both of which regularly appear in anti-Zionist and anti-Israel discourse.

It should be noted that other events sparking Jewish communal concern during this time did not fall within what CST would classify as antisemitic incidents. Rather, they were ostensibly anti-Israel actions. These were the large number of highly charged anti-Israel demonstrations (some of which contained examples of explicit antisemitism), the temporary removal of kosher goods at a Sainsbury's store in Holborn (in case they were targeted by anti-Israel demonstrators) and the Kilburn Tricycle Theatre's demand that the Jewish Film Festival return its minor funding from the Israeli Embassy.

The above scenarios were not intentionally antisemitic, but each one shows how some forms of anti-Israel agitation can lead to highly negative impacts for Jews, primarily in left wing settings.

7. *We recommend that the Labour Party appreciate that its reaction to the current Chakrabarti Inquiry will help shape its role in either reducing, or worsening, the damaging domestic UK impacts of future Middle East conflicts.*
8. *We recommend that the Labour Party demonstrably shows that it is committed to limiting, not exacerbating, the impact of overseas conflicts on domestic communities. This should include quickly and clearly condemning antisemitism when it rises during such conflicts; and encouraging members who campaign or protest against Israel to do so responsibly and not to use antisemitic language or*

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<sup>3</sup> We regard the use of Nazism to attack Jews or Israel as a modern day antisemitic trope. The antisemitic trope of Jews as child killers was fundamental to the infamous Blood Libels of medieval and more modern times.

*illegal actions when doing so. This is due to the malign impact of such activities upon inter-communal relations, and upon the emotional well-being of British Jews: malign impacts that would be considerably worsened were they to be echoed or endorsed by the Labour Party.*

9. *We recommend that the Labour Party treat comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany as antisemitic. Such comparisons are grossly offensive and historically inaccurate. They diminish the memory of the Holocaust and play directly and deliberately on Jewish sensitivities to elicit a reaction.*
10. *We recommend that the Labour Party should recognise the particular role played by social media in spreading antisemitism and other forms of hate, and develop a code of conduct for the use of social media by party members, activists and representatives.*

## **Antisemitic incidents and antisemitic discourse**

CST reports annually on antisemitic incident levels and also on antisemitic discourse. These reports are available on the CST website (<https://cst.org.uk/publications/cst-publications>).

Antisemitic incidents include antisemitic hate crimes and antisemitic non-crime incidents.

We define an antisemitic incident as:

- Any malicious act aimed at Jewish people, organisations or property, where there is evidence that the act has antisemitic motivation or content, or that the victim was targeted because they are (or are believed to be) Jewish.

The criminal justice system defines a hate incident as:

- Any non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's race/religion or perceived race/religion.

11. *We recommend that any Labour Party related cases (now or in the future) falling into the category of hate crimes and hate incidents are treated as such.*

We recognise that the Chakrabarti Inquiry primarily concerns discourse rather than hate crimes and hate incidents. Therefore, the bulk of this submission concerns discourse rather than incidents. We do not seek to label all of the Labour Party-related discourse as antisemitic, so we will simply refer to "discourse" in the submission.

'Discourse' is used in this submission to mean 'communicative action': communication expressed in speech, written text, images and other forms of expression and propaganda.

The discourse in question occurs within Labour Party circles. Those expressing or defending it largely self-define as being opposed to antisemitism, but their behaviour can (and does) still impact negatively upon attitudes concerning Jews and antisemitism.

12. *We recommend that the Labour Party more fully understand that antisemitism - like any other form of prejudice - is not solely a matter of discerning the conscious motivation or intention of an individual or group. Antisemitism can also reside in the resonance of a perpetrator's behaviour, where this echoes or repeats older antisemitic accusations and behaviours. Antisemitism can also be the impact (whether intended or inadvertent) of a perpetrator's actions. Antisemitism can also be the consequence of the policies and practises of an organisation.*

## **Antisemitism and anti-Zionism**

13. *We recommend that these sections on antisemitism and anti-Zionism be utilised as guidelines for better understanding what should and should not be acceptable discourse within the Labour Party:*

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

### **Anti-Zionism**

Just as Zionism is an ideological belief in the authenticity of Jewish peoplehood and that the Jewish people have the right to a state, so anti-Zionism is the rejection of those two concepts. It denies that the Jews are a people and rejects their right to national self-determination in Israel. Anti-Zionism should not be confused with criticism of Israeli policies or practices: it falls into a different category entirely.

However, anti-Zionism has become a contested term, because different people use and define "Zionism" in different ways. In particular, mainstream Jewish definitions of Zionism differ markedly from far left, far right and Islamist definitions – all of which tend to reflexively use (and denigrate) Zionism as a short hand, catch-all term of political abuse.

In brief, the more that the word Zionism is perverted and abused, the more antisemitic it becomes. Indeed, in many cases, much of what we now call "anti-Zionism" may be more accurately spelled as "antizionism", on the basis that what is being opposed is now so far removed from what Zionism actually is. (This, by the same logic in which "anti-Semitism" is better spelled as "antisemitism", because its proponents self-define as opposing a construct of their own making, that they term Semitism.)

## **Anti-Zionism and Criticism of Israel**

Antisemitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israel criticism or hatred are not the same as each other. They can, however, be hard to disentangle and distinguish from one another.

Criticisms of Israeli policies and practices that are in keeping with the scale and nature of criticisms made of other governments, and that use normal political language of the kind used to criticise the policies and practices of other governments, are highly unlikely to be antisemitic.

It is not necessarily antisemitic to criticise Israel or Zionism, even if the criticism is harsh or unfair, but repeatedly singling out Israel and Zionism for unique hostility risks fostering enmity against mainstream Jewish perspectives and self-identity. Gauging antisemitic motives and impacts largely depends upon the interaction of the following factors:

- **Motivation:** To what extent is the criticism, or outright hatred, driven by the Jewish nature of Israel and/or Zionism?
- **Content:** Does the criticism, or hatred, use antisemitic or otherwise discriminatory language, themes and motifs?
- **Target:** Are local Jews being singled out as recipients for criticism, bias or hatred that ostensibly derives from anti-Israel or anti-Zionist enmity? Are all Jews blamed, or held to different standards, because of perceived Zionist or Israeli wrongdoing?
- **Denial:** Is the importance of Zionism and Israel to Jews in the religious and historical sense denied? Is the importance of modern day Israel to contemporary and post-Holocaust Jewish life denied? Is the Holocaust largely (or completely) ignored in the historical depictions and assertions that are made by anti-Zionists concerning Jews, Zionism and Israel?
- **Singular response to concerns:** Are local Jewish concerns about the above sincerely and equally heard? Or, are Jewish concerns viewed with singular hostility and scorn, in a way that others' concerns are not?
- **Repeat behaviour:** Does the offender repeat their behaviour, knowing the consequences and concerns that will be raised?

## **Antisemitic Anti-Zionism**

Antisemitism has changed and adapted throughout history to reflect the condition of Jews and the society around them at any given time. Today there is an antisemitic form of anti-Zionism that treats Zionism as a global, malevolent conspiracy, much as antisemites have portrayed Jews in the past. This can be found within far right, far left and extreme Islamist and New Age circles. These separate, different political

groupings all converge upon their use of 'Zionism' and 'Zionist' as a means to pejoratively label political opponents, often regardless of these opponents being Jewish or not. In each different setting, Zionism is discussed and perceived in terms of conspiratorial power and evil that are strikingly similar to each other, and also to older antisemitic depictions of Jewish behaviour (for example, in *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*).

Employing the word 'Zionist' in this way, where the word 'Jew' would have previously appeared in open antisemitic discourse, may, or may not, be a deliberate attempt by the user to avoid the charge of antisemitism. Whatever the conscious or unconscious motivation, the use of the word "Zionist" essentially fulfils the same psychological and political purpose for the user as open antisemitism has done throughout history.

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

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

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

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

## The Labour Party and Anti-Zionism: a Prejudicial “Group-focused Enmity”

The Labour Party contains highly divergent views on Zionism and includes many people (both Jewish and non-Jewish) who are proud to call themselves Zionists. There are also many others who could be defined as Zionists on account of their basic belief in the right of Jews to national self-determination in Israel.

We are, nevertheless, deeply concerned that “Zionists” and “Zio” are increasingly used as a pejorative label to insult and abuse Jewish members who do not publicly disassociate themselves from Israel. This has the potential to become a “group-focused enmity”, defined as “the negative evaluation of groups and of individuals because of their (factual or perceived) group membership. This is different to individual dislike of a specific person. Prejudices are used to legitimise social inequality”.<sup>4</sup>

In the case of anti-Zionist prejudice, this avoids the obviously racist profiling of Jews on the basis of their solely being Jewish, but it effectively forces Jews to choose between Zionism (as they understand and use the term) and being accepted as equal members of the party.

The development of this group-focused enmity for “Zionists” follows a particular pattern. First, the words “Zionism” and “Zionist” are deliberately and malignantly stripped of their essential meaning (belief in a Jewish homeland in Israel) and are instead used in a highly adaptable and hateful manner. Once labelled as “Zionist”, the individual or grouping is denied equal and fundamental rights within the party. In the name of universal and party values, the “Zionist” is excluded and driven out. It is not only Jews who run the risk of being labelled as “Zionists”: but Jews are overwhelmingly those who will be most personally affronted and affected by this. The consequence is that Jewish members and voters are gradually pushed away from the party.

14. *We recommend that the Labour Party recognise that “Zionist”, “Zio” and other derived terms are being used as political insults that disproportionately target Jewish members, and that the party treats such use as a disciplinary offence.*

15. *We recommend that the Labour Party recognise the danger to both it, and its Jewish members, of the developing institutional culture of anti-Zionist group focused enmity. Within this culture, Jews face a deeply troubling test, in which their being Jewish causes a suspicious reaction, lest they actually be allegedly immoral or disloyal “Zionists”. This forces Jews within the party to be firstly or partly defined by their being Jewish, rather than to simply be regarded as equal members of the Party. Jews who are indeed Zionists (in the true sense of the word) will be pushed away from the party, as will Jewish voters.*

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/ikg/zick/Press%20release%2013Nov\\_english.pdf](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/ikg/zick/Press%20release%2013Nov_english.pdf). 2009 paper: European Conditions. Findings of a study on *Group-focused Enmity* in Europe.

## **The Labour Party and opposition to antisemitism**

Many Labour Party MP's, councillors and members voice strong and unequivocal opposition to antisemitism in all its forms. In far too many cases, however, those Labour MPs and activists who speak out against antisemitism then attract hatred and abuse from other members of the party. We find this trend to be extraordinary, outrageous and in need of urgent reversal.

Party members, at all levels, state that they are opposed to antisemitism. We accept that in most cases these statements are held to be entirely sincere by those making them. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the fact that too many of those claiming to oppose antisemitism appear highly partial in what they actually consider to be antisemitic and what they actually oppose. In far too many cases, they willingly and repeatedly ally with those whom most Jews and many other observers would regard as being blatantly antisemitic (as well as being hostile to many other Labour Party values). This includes defending people in the UK who have used antisemitic language, or supporting those overseas such as Hamas, Hizbollah or Iranian state media.

We note that opposition to antisemitism is far too often couched within generalised, formulaic anti-racist and anti-far right statements that obscure the specific characteristics of antisemitism.

*16. We recommend that the Labour Party ensures it immediately gives all possible disciplinary, legal and moral support to MPs and other members, who receive hateful intimidation and abuse from others in the Party, as a result of having opposed antisemitism.*

Antisemitism is an old and enduring hatred, known for its ability to adapt to contemporary circumstance.

It is not sufficient to only understand antisemitism by reference to its racial and exterminatory Nazi variant. Similarly, it is not sufficient to state that one opposes antisemitism, when that opposition is solely limited to recognising and opposing its Nazi variant.

Antisemitic outcomes of anti-Zionist and anti-Israel activism are made more likely if such activism involves inflammatory catch-all language, the use of traditional antisemitic imagery, or appears to single out one particular object or individual for scrutiny due to their being Jewish.

*17. We recommend that Labour Party staff and activists receive training to enable them to better understand antisemitism in both its historical and modern forms.*

*18. We recommend that the leadership of the Labour Party voices unequivocal condemnation of antisemitism, including recognition that it exists in forms other than neo-Nazi antisemitism, and that this includes recognition of the extreme antisemitic ideology and actions of Iran, Hizbollah and Hamas.*

## Definitions of Antisemitism

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

The *All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* invoked the Lawrence Inquiry when it said of these issues:

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

“We conclude that it is the Jewish community itself that is best qualified to determine what does and does not constitute antisemitism.”<sup>5</sup>

The Government command response to the Parliamentary inquiry concurred, stating:

“The Government currently uses the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition of a racist incident which is an incident that is perceived as racist by the victim or any other person, and this would include antisemitism. This is a very wide and powerful definition as it clearly includes the ‘perception’ of the victim and others.”<sup>6</sup>

*19. We recommend that the Labour Party use the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition of a racist incident, commonly known as the ‘MacPherson definition’, for its investigations of allegations of antisemitism in the party. This would require any complaint of antisemitism to be recorded and investigated as potentially antisemitic.*

To assist investigations triggered by such complaints, we recommend that the Labour Party should use the definition of antisemitism recently adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), an intergovernmental body of 31 states including the United Kingdom. This definition is based on the Working Definition of Antisemitism developed by the European Union Monitoring Centre (EUMC) in 2005 (commonly known as ‘the EUMC Working Definition’). The IHRA definition reads as follows:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

“Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why

things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

“Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

“Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

“Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

“Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.”<sup>7</sup>

This definition is non-legally binding and can be used as a practical working guide to identifying potential cases of antisemitism, depending on the specific context of each case. Versions of the same definition are recommended in the UK College of

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<sup>7</sup> [https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/press\\_release\\_document\\_antisemitism.pdf](https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/press_release_document_antisemitism.pdf)

Policing's *Hate Crime Operational Guidance* manual<sup>8</sup> and used by the National Union of Students.

20. *We recommend that the above definition be amongst the materials used by the Labour Party in order to assist its understanding of what may be antisemitic within the context of each case.*

## **All Party Inquiry into Antisemitism**

The 2005-2006 All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism is the most important post 2000 independent UK investigation of antisemitism.

21. *We recommend that much of Inquiry's report and its recommendations - subsequently given Command Status by the then Labour Government - would provide a useful reference point for the Labour Party. In particular, Section 4 regarding Antisemitic Discourse, pages 16 to 23; and pages 32 and 33, Antisemitism on the Left.*

We have attached a copy of CST's submission to the 2005/6 Inquiry and draw your attention to paragraphs 21 to 33. It is with some dismay that, a decade later, the same problems need highlighting in relation to the Labour Party itself. From that submission, please note the following in particular:

### **“Anti-Zionism: the lingua franca of antisemitic movements**

“A narrative has developed that views Zionism as a global force of unlimited power and malevolence. It takes Zionism - a movement of Jewish national liberation, born in the late 19th century with a geographical focus limited to Israel - and inflates it to a movement of global power throughout history. This definition of Zionism bears no relation to the understanding that most Jews have of the concept. Having re-defined Zionism in this way, traditional antisemitic notions of Jewish conspiratorial power, evil, manipulation and subversion are then transferred from Jews (a religious or racial group) onto Zionism (a political movement). This is at the core of the ‘New Antisemitism’ of which so much has been written, and in fact comes bundled with a new anti-Zionism, which reaches far beyond previous campaigns against the nature and politics of the State of Israel and the political movement that founded it. This form of ‘anti-Zionism’ is found across the political spectrum and has become a shared language for political extremes that previously had nothing in common.

“Examples of this phenomenon abound... This view of Zionism inflates its power and reach to such an extent that it cannot be understood simply as criticism of Israel, and only makes sense in the context of the antisemitic narrative of global Jewish

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Support/Equality/Documents/Hate-Crime-Operational-Guidance.pdf>

conspiracy, as promoted in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and countless other similar texts.”

## **Case study: Jackie Walker, Jews, Slavery and Disciplinary Procedures**

The example of the suspension and re-admittance to the party of Jackie Walker epitomises the current lack of process, guidance and transparency within the Labour Party. A recent article on CST Blog<sup>9</sup>, attached to this submission, contrasts the party's procedures with those of the Football Association (whom CST have advised regarding policies and specific cases).

*22. We recommend that the Labour Party note the FA's anti-racism procedures and consider which aspects may be usable for its own purpose.*

## **Other Recent Labour Party Cases**

Dr Dave Rich, CST's Deputy Director of Communications, writing in the *Jewish Chronicle*, summarised concerns regarding many of the Labour Party cases that emerged in the wake of the February 2016 Oxford University controversy. The article<sup>10</sup>, "Jew-hate: a guide for the perplexed" is attached to this submission.

*23. We recommend that the Labour Party note this article, including its opening paragraphs:*

*"It's hard to keep up. Stories about antisemitism in the Labour Party have been in the news for weeks. They began back in February in the lowly ranks of a student Labour Club and have now reached Ken Livingstone, one of the biggest names in the party.*

*The sheer range of allegedly antisemitic statements, tweets and Facebook posts that have emerged is enough to make your head spin. While some reveal straightforward, old fashioned bigotry about Jews, most occurred in anti-Israel contexts and require close interpretation of the differences between antisemitism, anti-Zionism and harsh criticism of Israel.*

*This is not always straightforward, but there is a rule of thumb that can help. There are two types of language that can be used to criticise Israel. One involves the sort of criticisms made of other governments, involving "human rights", "discrimination", "inequality" and so on. The other is the reservoir of antisemitic ideas that lies deep in Europe's culture, with its talk of international conspiracies, bloodthirsty child killers, wealthy manipulators and anything to do with the Holocaust.*

*Criticism that uses language from the first group, even if it is inaccurate, is more likely to be legitimate. Anything from the second is probably antisemitic. With this as*

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<sup>9</sup> <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2016/06/01/should-jackie-walk-what-labour-can-learn-from-football>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.thejc.com/comment-and-debate/analysis/157793/jew-hate-a-guide-perplexed>

*a rough guide, this article will try to explain some of the recent cases of antisemitism in the Labour Party.”*

## **Conclusion**

We regard it as axiomatic that the relationship between the Labour Party, British Jews and British Jewish communal groups should be one of mutual respect, positivity and cooperation. This is the relationship that we seek, at all times, with Government, Opposition and all responsible political parties, regardless of differences of opinion over any particular individual policies or actions. We are deeply concerned that the current controversy threatens this fundamental relationship between the Labour Party and the mainstream of the Jewish community.

We believe that our submission and its recommendations provide a template for the Labour Party to halt, and reverse, the gathering vicious cycle of distrust and alienation within which we now risk being trapped. We remain at your disposal to provide additional information and counsel, and to assist in the implementation of these recommendations for the mutual benefit of all concerned.

# MEMORANDUM FOR THE ALL PARTY INQUIRY INTO ANTISEMITISM IN THE UK

DECEMBER 2005

## Introduction

1. The Community Security Trust (CST) welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to the Inquiry.
2. The CST provides security and defence services and advice for the Jewish community. It was established as a charity in 1994 with the backing of the Home Office and the Metropolitan Police.

## Rise in antisemitic incidents

3. The CST, and its forerunner, the Community Security Organisation of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, have recorded and collated reports of antisemitic incidents in the United Kingdom since 1984.
4. The past five years have seen a significant and sustained rise in the number of antisemitic incidents reported by the Jewish community to the CST. These incidents mainly comprise physical assaults, verbal or written abuse and damage to Jewish property. There were 532 such incidents in 2004, the highest total yet recorded<sup>1</sup>. A similar increase has been recorded in other Western European nations, North America and Australia.
5. This rise has occurred in parallel with the ongoing violence between Israel and the Palestinians, which began in September 2000. In 1999 there were 270 antisemitic incidents recorded by the CST; this had almost doubled by 2004. This sustained rise, over a period of five years, reflects a new stage in patterns of antisemitic incidents.
6. There is a pattern of temporary rises ('spikes') in incidents when there is an escalation of Israeli-Palestinian violence or as a reaction to a particular event in that conflict. This fits more general patterns of racist violence which often experience spikes as a consequence of trigger events. For instance, particularly high monthly incidents were recorded in September 2000, when the current violence began (105 incidents – the highest monthly total on record); and in March 2004, when Israel assassinated Hamas leader Sheikh Yassin (100 incidents). The concern for the Jewish community is that the high number of trigger events since September 2000 has led to an increase in the 'background' level of antisemitic incidents that take place when there are no trigger events.
7. This pattern also suggests that the rise in antisemitic incidents since September 2000 is, in part, a wave of political violence directed against British Jews, as a way for the perpetrators of the incidents to participate in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, it is important to note that very few identifiably Israeli – as opposed to Jewish – targets have been attacked. Jewish people and property have been attacked for their Jewishness, and for the associations that this holds in the minds of their attackers. This is a basic

building block of antisemitism and should not be obscured by the fact that events in the Middle East appear to act as a catalyst for attacks.

8. There is also a similar pattern of spikes in levels of antisemitic incidents as a response to Middle Eastern violence that does not directly involve Israel. For instance, in September 2001, when the 9/11 attacks took place (50 incidents) and in March 2003, when the Iraq war began (48 incidents). This suggests a conspiratorial view of Zionism, Israel and Jews that sees them as actors in global affairs, with responsibility for conflicts beyond that of Israel-Palestine.
9. This focus on Israel, Zionism and the Middle East as a motor for attacks on British Jews is evidenced by the growing proportion of incidents that make explicit reference to these issues. In 2004 124 incidents showed clear anti-Zionist motivation, compared to 84 that were motivated by far right sentiments or ideology. This is a demonstrable change from antisemitic incidents in the 1990s, which were almost exclusively the manifestation of xenophobic or other extreme right wing attitudes.

### **Terrorism against Jewish communities**

10. Al-Qaeda and its supporters in the Global Salafi Jihad have, since 2002, adopted a tactic of devastating terrorist attacks against Jewish communities as part of their wider terrorist campaign. This is rooted in a deeply antisemitic worldview that believes there is a Jewish conspiracy to attack Muslims and subvert Islam.
11. These attacks include attacks on a synagogue in Tunisia (April 2002); a Jewish community centre, restaurant and cemetery, as well as a hotel used by Israeli tourists and a Spanish restaurant, in Casablanca (May 2003); two synagogues in Istanbul (November 2003). All suicide bombings, these attacks killed a total of 86 people.
12. Similar attacks were also planned on a Jewish community centre in Spain, a Jewish museum in Berlin and a Jewish-owned bar in Düsseldorf, but were foiled by successful police action.
13. Al-Qaeda is not the first terrorist organisation to attack Jewish communities in Europe and elsewhere. Between 1968 and 2003 there were 413 terrorist attacks (including attacks foiled by police action) against Diaspora Jewish communities around the world, including attacks by terrorists from the far right, far left, Islamists and Palestinian nationalists<sup>2</sup>. The most recent terrorist attacks against Jewish targets in the United Kingdom were the 1994 car bombings of Balfour House (which houses several Jewish charities) and the Israeli embassy, by Palestinian activists ideologically aligned with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).
14. Al-Qaeda's most vocal supporters amongst British Muslims are to be found in the ranks of al-Muhajiroun and its successor organisations. British supporters or followers of al-Muhajiroun have carried out suicide bombings in Israel and Kashmir and fought against coalition forces in Afghanistan. These organisations and their activists have also, for many years, produced overtly antisemitic propaganda, including calling for Jews to be killed and promoting Holocaust Denial. It is possible that more determined prosecution of al-Muhajiroun activists and leaders for antisemitic incitement during the 1990s may

have had a moderating effect on their political trajectory, and prevented them from becoming overt supporters of the Global Salafi Jihad.

### **Impact on Jewish communal life**

15. This history of anti-Jewish terrorism and the ongoing problem of antisemitic incidents, mean that for many years the Jewish community has been forced to integrate security awareness and activity into its daily life. The CST, which organises much of this activity, is paid for entirely by voluntary donations from the Jewish community.
16. The CST has approximately 3,000 trained volunteers who act as security officers at Jewish events. In 2004 over 600 Jewish events were protected by these volunteers.<sup>3</sup>
17. Over 170 synagogues in the United Kingdom organise their own security rotas, manned by congregants standing outside their synagogue on security duty, rather than inside participating in the service. As an aggregate total, volunteers spend approximately 20,000 manhours conducting security at their synagogues during services.<sup>4</sup> Other synagogues – although fewer in number – employ paid security guards. Most synagogues also have CCTV cameras and other physical security measures.
18. Jewish schools and schoolchildren are not immune from this threat. In September 1995, for example, the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) detonated a car bomb outside a Jewish school in Lyons, France, injuring fourteen people.<sup>5</sup> There are 80 Jewish schools in the United Kingdom that have physical security measures to protect against terrorism or antisemitic attack. These include CCTV, gates with intercom systems and fences with wide perimeters around the school buildings. At over a quarter of these, parents of children at the schools participate in security rotas, totalling approximately 16,600 manhours. Over half the schools employ paid security guards.<sup>6</sup>
19. In addition to schools and synagogues, a further 64 Jewish communal organisations and buildings are protected by volunteer or paid security guards and physical security measures. This includes a further 6,400 volunteer manhours.<sup>7</sup>
20. This security network, whether it involves CST volunteer security officers or synagogue congregants, parents and caretakers, requires extensive training in security methods and procedures. In 2004 approximately 7,000 people were trained by the CST, with an aggregate total of over 17,500 manhours of security training.<sup>8</sup>

### **Recognising antisemitism**

21. The changing and varied nature of antisemitism, illustrated by the shifting content and sources of antisemitic incidents, has revealed that many people have a narrow and often insufficient understanding of antisemitism. The Nazi period, and in particular the Holocaust, created a strong association between antisemitism and far right ideology, often to the exclusion of other possible types of antisemitism.
22. In trying to understand contemporary antisemitism, however, it is important to note that not every antisemite shares the genocidal intentions of the Nazi movement. Antisemitism encompasses many different forms of discrimination against, or prejudice about, Jews; stereotypes of Jewish behaviour and attitudes; demands that Jews prove

their independence from mainstream Jewish group behaviour and loyalty; and holding all Jews responsible for the behaviour of all other Jews, including for the actions of the government and State of Israel.

23. All of these sub-genocidal features of antisemitism are present on both the left and right of the political spectrum, as well the Islamist movement. A trend has developed whereby Jews are expected to demonstrate their disapproval of the government, or even the State, of Israel, in order to be accepted as 'good' Jews. The implication is that any Jews who will not yield to this demand are personally responsible for, and complicit in, any perceived Israeli wrongdoing. Furthermore, this demand is often made by people who see Israel as a uniquely racist state perpetrating uniquely evil crimes, and who either support or refuse to condemn Palestinian violence against Israeli civilians.
24. The consequence of this is that the vast majority of British Jews, who feel a basic emotional and spiritual connection to the State of Israel, become political pariahs and are held to be legitimate targets for displaced anti-Israel violence. An attitude that supports or excuses violence against Israel in this way slips easily into excusing violence and prejudice against British Jews. An editorial in *Palestine Times*, a pro-Hamas monthly published in London, wrote: "Jews, after all, are not hated for being Jews. They are hated for being child killers, home demolishers, vile occupiers, apartheid enforcers and dastardly criminals...As such, they deserve to be hated."<sup>9</sup> This attitude, however unconsciously, may also be the reason why the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) condemned the al-Qaeda terrorist attacks in London, Madrid and Bali, but not those against Jewish communities in Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. Most pointedly, the MCB condemned the terrorist attacks against the British consulate and HSBC bank in Istanbul in November 2003, but failed to condemn the attacks by the same al-Qaeda cell against two Istanbul synagogues just five days previously.
25. The inability of some on the political left to acknowledge as antisemitic attacks on Jews that do not come from the xenophobic far right may be unwitting. For some on the far left, antisemitism is seen as a diversion from the real struggle against imperialism. However this is often compounded by an attitude that dismisses Jewish concerns about antisemitism as being unfounded. This is often accompanied by false claims that Diaspora Jewish communities talk about antisemitism only to aid pro-Israel political campaigning. This not only ignores all the evidence collated by CST and similar monitoring bodies in other European countries; it portrays Jews as cynical, manipulative and deceitful, thereby feeding antisemitic stereotypes.

### **Anti-Zionism: the lingua franca of antisemitic movements**

26. A narrative has developed that views Zionism as a global force of unlimited power and malevolence. It takes Zionism – a movement of Jewish national liberation, born in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with a geographical focus limited to Israel – and inflates it to a movement of global power throughout history. This definition of Zionism bears no relation to the understanding that most Jews have of the concept. Having re-defined Zionism in this way, traditional antisemitic notions of Jewish conspiratorial power, evil, manipulation and subversion are then transferred from Jews (a religious or racial group) onto Zionism (a political movement). This is at the core of the 'New Antisemitism' of which so much has been written, and in fact comes bundled with a new anti-Zionism, which reaches far beyond previous campaigns against the nature and politics of the

State of Israel and the political movement that founded it. This form of ‘anti-Zionism’ is found across the political spectrum and has become a shared language for political extremes that previously had nothing in common.

27. Examples of this phenomenon abound. The Muslim Public Affairs Committee (MPACUK) described Zionism as an “octopus that now penetrates every western nation and pushes it to start world war three upon Muslims”<sup>10</sup>, and warned that “Any man who knows anything of Zionists, knows that they will not stop until the Muslims ‘followed by mankind’ are dead or enslaved.”<sup>11</sup> Sheikh Rachid al-Ghannouchi, a Tunisian Islamist living in the United Kingdom, wrote in a Muslim youth magazine that “The Zionist threat is endangering the Islamic nation and the world, and is a threat to values, family and religion. It aims to get rid of everything good about humanity.”<sup>12</sup> This view of Zionism inflates its power and reach to such an extent that it cannot be understood simply as criticism of Israel, and only makes sense in the context of the antisemitic narrative of global Jewish conspiracy, as promoted in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and countless other similar texts.
28. This use of ‘Zionism’ as a euphemism for Jew is now common and is sometimes quite explicit. MPACUK described the Talmud – a Jewish religious text written many centuries before the emergence of political Zionism – as a “zionist holy book”<sup>13</sup>. They also posed the question: “Is this the most Powerful and Racist book in the world?!”<sup>14</sup> When Tam Dalyell MP claimed there was a “Jewish cabal” around the Prime Minister, Paul Foot wrote that “obviously he is wrong to complain about Jewish pressure on Blair and Bush when he means Zionist pressure.”<sup>15</sup> This idea that, by substituting the word Zionist for the word Jew, all antisemitic meaning can be extracted from the relevant sentence, is, at best, naïve and fanciful.
29. The far right has observed this developing trend and learnt that it, too, can make an antisemitic message more palatable if it redirects it towards Zionism. The war in Iraq provided a platform for the far right, far and mainstream left and Islamists to develop similar conspiracy theories about Jewish or Zionist influence on American foreign policy. The theory that the war was launched to promote a mythical Zionist dream for Israel’s borders to reach from the Nile to the Euphrates was advanced by such disparate sources as The Stop The War Coalition, Ayatollah Khamenei and Ahmad Thompson (the latter was a government adviser on the Preventing Extremism Together working groups). The MCB warned that “UK Muslims reject neo-Conservative/Zionist plans for Iraq”<sup>16</sup>, while the British National Party, in its General Election manifesto, included a promise not to go to war for “neo-con adventures on behalf of the Zionist government of Israel” and separately condemned Tony Blair for swapping “British blood for donations from a clique of filthy-rich Zionist businessmen.”<sup>17</sup>
30. This new anti-Zionism incorporates many traditional antisemitic themes. George Galloway MP has spoken of “the newspapers and news media which are controlled by Zionism”<sup>18</sup>. BNP leader Nick Griffin wrote that “capitalism, particularly at the point at which it intersects with Zionism, is the surviving old enemy”<sup>19</sup>, while MPACUK published an article arguing that “The number one weapon of 20<sup>th</sup> century imperialism is Zionist-Dollarism”<sup>20</sup>. Zionist – and Jewish – conspiracies are everywhere in this worldview. *The Guardian* and *The Muslim Weekly* both published articles suggesting that Israel was behind the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.

31. The anti-Jewish bigotry within this critique of ‘Zionism’ is sometimes impossible to conceal. Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, in a sermon in Qatar on 2 December 2005, said: “We Muslims are besieged by many forces that want to uproot the Muslims under various pretexts...They want to eradicate the nation of Islam...But we will be victorious, Allah willing – despite the traps set by Judaism and the Crusaders”<sup>21</sup>. An article in *The Muslim Weekly* argued that the Iraq war was the project of “an evangelical Christian imperialism wedded to a near-demented judaic banking elite...the judaic fanatics who combine their brilliant control of the banking system with the feverish rhetoric of a Zionist aspiration which sees Israel as nothing more than a primary base station...With all the great ancient posts which defined the law in Britain today in the hands of the jews...we are now participating in the abolition of that entity known as the United Kingdom.”<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusion

32. Antisemitism, like all forms of racism, can be pushed to the margins by a strong united position against it. Antisemitic activity by the far right in the 1990s was moderated and reduced by a series of prosecutions of people producing and disseminating antisemitic propaganda. A similar determination, particularly by prosecuting authorities, needs to be shown to antisemitism from Islamist or other sources. In particular, prosecuting non-violent Islamists who indulge in antisemitic incitement or rhetoric may prevent them from moving towards more overtly violent activities in the future.
33. In this age of instant, global communications, events overseas can impact on local communities in Britain. Similarly, high-profile figures based overseas are capable of damaging community relations in Britain by their use of antisemitic rhetoric and language in their home countries, even though they may temporarily moderate their words when they visit the United Kingdom. Public figures and opinion-formers who consistently use insensitive, inflammatory or offensive language must be condemned, irrespective of their political or religious background; excusing or ignoring their antisemitism implicitly validates it.
34. Terrorism against Jews exists at the extreme end of a spectrum of antisemitic activity, and is encouraged – whether wittingly or otherwise – by the antisemitic rhetoric and ideas of those on other parts of that spectrum who would not, themselves, use terrorist violence against Jewish communities. Efforts to prevent the use and spread of antisemitic language by non-violent actors – whether politicians, religious leaders or public figures – would make a positive contribution to the fight against terrorism.

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<sup>1</sup> The Community Security Trust, *Antisemitic Incidents Report 2004*

<sup>2</sup> The Community Security Trust, *Terrorist Incidents Against Jewish Communities and Israeli Citizens Abroad, 1968 - 2003*

<sup>3</sup> CST figures

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

<sup>5</sup> The Community Security Trust, *Terrorist Incidents Against Jewish Communities and Israeli Citizens Abroad, 1968 - 2003*

<sup>6</sup> CST figures

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

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- <sup>9</sup> “Israeli crimes generate anti-Semitism”, *Palestine Times* December 2003
- <sup>10</sup> “MPACUK Receives Death Threat From Zionists”, <http://www.mpacuk.org>, posted 25 November 2005
- <sup>11</sup> “The MPAC ABC: The Global War of lobbies and institutions has begun”, <http://www.mpacuk.org>, undated
- <sup>12</sup> Rachid al-Ghannouchi, “Islamic Movements – self-criticism & reconsideration”, *Insight* May/June 2002
- <sup>13</sup> MPAC Student Alert, “Lecturer on islam calls Quran ‘grim’”, 10 November 2002
- <sup>14</sup> “Is this the most Powerful and Racist book in the world?!” <http://www.mpacuk.org>, 23 September 2003
- <sup>15</sup> Paul Foot, “Worse than Thatcher”, *The Guardian* 14 May 2003
- <sup>16</sup> “UK Muslims Reject Neo-Conservative/Zionist Plans For Iraq”, <http://www.mcb.org.uk>, 11 April 2003
- <sup>17</sup> “Blair’s Evil War”, *The Voice of Freedom* August 2004
- <sup>18</sup> “UK MP Galloway defends Syria, praises “legitimate Iraqi resistance””, Interview with George Galloway broadcast on Al-Jazeera TV 17 November 2005, transcribed and translated by BBC Monitoring
- <sup>19</sup> Nick Griffin, “Islam, Zionism and the Western Heritage”, *Identity* April 2002
- <sup>20</sup> Lorenzo Kibler, “Zionism, an effectively organized world wide fascist system”, <http://www.mpacuk.org> 20 October 2003
- <sup>21</sup> MEMRI Special Dispatch Series – No. 1045, <http://www.memri.org>, 9 December 2005
- <sup>22</sup> Shaykh Dr. Abdalqadir as-Sufi, “British Election – A Counsel”, *The Muslim Weekly* 27 May – 2 June 2005

# Should Jackie walk? What Labour can learn from football

1 Jun 2016 by Dave Rich

What have Jackie Walker, John Terry and Mario Balotelli got in common? Not much, you might think. Put them together, though, and you start to see why the Labour Party is in such a muddle over antisemitism.

In 2012, John Terry [played](#) for England in the European Championships while facing a charge of racially abusing Anton Ferdinand. He was found guilty and punished on his return, but the sense that the FA was soft on racism, that they prioritised football over principle, lingered.

Two years later, the Italian footballer Mario Balotelli, then playing for Liverpool, was [banned](#) and fined by the FA after he posted an image of computer game hero Super Mario on Instagram. At first glance it was a cute anti-racist cartoon. “Don’t be racist – be like Mario,” it read. “He’s an Italian plumber created by Japanese people who speaks English and looks like a Mexican.”

Then came the racist payoff: “Jumps like a black man and grabs coin like a Jew.”

Balotelli is Black, has a Jewish grandmother and a Jewish foster mother. He clearly isn’t racist or antisemitic and he misunderstood the meaning of the cartoon, which he quickly deleted.

Nonetheless, the FA takes a strict liability approach to the use of racist language. They charged Balotelli under FA Rule E3, invoked the “Aggravated Breach” clause in Rule E3(2) because of the reference to ethnic origin and/or colour, and Balotelli was banned for one match, fined and sent on an educational course about racism in football. His apology was genuine and heartfelt.

We know all of this because the FA [published](#) their findings on the FA website. We also know the names of the people who sat in judgement of Balotelli, an outline of the evidence they heard and the reasons for their decision.

Contrast this with the Labour Party’s murky dealings over Jackie Walker, a party activist from Kent who was recently suspended and then unsuspected for an alleged antisemitic comment on Facebook.

Walker [wrote](#), in a discussion about the Holocaust, that “millions more Africans were killed in the African holocaust and their oppression continues today on a global scale in a way it doesn’t for Jews... and many Jews (my ancestors too) were the chief financiers of the sugar and slave trade.” She continued in a further post: “what do you think the Jews should do about their contribution to the African holocaust? What debt do they owe?”



Jacqueline Walker Oh yes - and I hope you feel the same towards the African holocaust? My ancestors were involved in both - on all sides and as I'm sure you know, millions more Africans were killed in the African holocaust and their oppression continues today on a global scale in a way it doesn't for Jews ....and many Jews (my ancestors too) were the chief financiers of the sugar and slave trade which is of course why there were so many early synagogues in the Caribbean. So who are victims and what does it mean? We are victims and perpetrators to some extent through choice. And having been a victim does not give you a right to be a perpetrator.

👍 2 · 27 February at 13:31



Jacqueline Walker Arab refugees?!! Right, I see where you're come from... How about some real history rather than the narrative of zionists? And what do you think the Jews should do about their contribution to the African holocaust? What debt do they owe? Shall we open an account? The Jewish holocaust does not allow zionists to do what they want. The settlements are illegal. IMO Hamas are in part a product of Israeli actions, including the assassination of Palestinian leaders and political structures

👍 1 · 27 February at 13:45

Walker, like Balotelli, has Black and Jewish heritage. She insists that she didn't mean her words in an antisemitic way but was trying to have a serious discussion about the legacies of enormous historical crimes – the Holocaust and slavery.

Nevertheless, the allegation that Jews played a leading role in the slave trade is a modern antisemitic myth. It was first published in coherent form by Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam in a 1991 book called *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*. Farrakhan, who is banned from entering the UK, has a long record of antisemitic incitement. His book is championed online by former Klansman David Duke and by other Holocaust deniers and assorted antisemites.

Farrakhan's fraudulent scholarship has been [debunked](#) by many reputable historians of the slave trade. Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr., chairman of the Afro-American Studies Department at Harvard University, [called](#) it "the bible of the new anti-Semitism" and "one of the most sophisticated instances of hate literature yet compiled", based on an "unscrupulous distortion of the historical record." Jews were involved in the slave trade, but not in disproportionately high numbers, not as its driving force and those who were involved did not act in the name of "the Jews", as Walker put it.

Walker may well be unaware of this scurrilous history of her claim about Jews and slavery; she may never have read Farrakhan's book. Her sense of herself as an anti-racist seems genuine and comprehensive. None of this changes the fact that she repeated an antisemitic slur and appears completely [unapologetic](#) about it.

If Walker were a footballer, she would be charged by the FA. We would know who heard her case, what evidence was presented and how a decision was made. It is highly likely, under the FA's strict liability approach, that she would be found guilty. A temporary ban would follow, with an educational meeting where she would hear why her words caused such offence and upset.

Instead, because she is a Labour Party activist, she was readmitted to the party with no apology, no punishment and no contrition whatsoever. No information is given about how this decision was reached, nor who reached it. The lack of transparency is staggering.

The Left once taught the rest of society how to do anti-racism. It was the Left that came up with the concepts of institutional racism, of unwitting racism, of how people who genuinely think of themselves as unprejudiced can replicate racist ways of thinking and of how those ways of thinking can become embedded in the structures of organisations.

Now, because Jackie Walker is of the Left, thinks of herself as anti-racist and appears to be a well-liked and valued activist, the possibility that she wrote something antisemitic, even unwittingly, is rejected out of hand. Complaints about antisemitism are [dismissed](#) as a plot between “Zionists, the right of the Labour Party, the Tories and our right wing media.”

The campaign by [Momentum](#) and the [Labour Representation Committee](#) against Walker’s suspension isn’t much different from the FA’s decision to take John Terry to Euro 2012. She’s one of us, she’s a good activist, so hands off.

The consequence of all this is that it is now OK for Labour members to say that Jews were behind the slave trade, and that their living descendants owe some kind of debt as a result. This antisemitic myth has become part of the Left’s conversation about Jews. This is how antisemitism becomes normalised, and how Jews get squeezed out of the Labour Party.

# Jew-hate: a guide for the perplexed

**By Dave Rich, May 6, 2016**

It's hard to keep up. Stories about antisemitism in the Labour Party have been in the news for weeks. They began back in February in the lowly ranks of a student Labour Club and have now reached Ken Livingstone, one of the biggest names in the party.

The sheer range of allegedly antisemitic statements, tweets and Facebook posts that have emerged is enough to make your head spin. While some reveal straightforward, old fashioned bigotry about Jews, most occurred in anti-Israel contexts and require close interpretation of the differences between antisemitism, anti-Zionism and harsh criticism of Israel.

This is not always straightforward, but there is a rule of thumb that can help. There are two types of language that can be used to criticise Israel. One involves the sort of criticisms made of other governments, involving "human rights", "discrimination", "inequality" and so on. The other is the reservoir of antisemitic ideas that lies deep in Europe's culture, with its talk of international conspiracies, bloodthirsty child killers, wealthy manipulators and anything to do with the Holocaust.

Criticism that uses language from the first group, even if it is inaccurate, is more likely to be legitimate. Anything from the second is probably antisemitic. With this as a rough guide, this article will try to explain some of the recent cases of antisemitism in the Labour Party.

## **Oxford University**

### **Labour Club: "Zio"**

It is alleged that the term "Zio" was routinely used by members of the Oxford University Labour Club to refer to Jewish students. This case shows how interpreting antisemitic or racist language is often about context. "Zio" could, at first glance, simply be an abbreviation of "Zionist" with no further meaning. However, this term is only used by people who are hostile to Zionism: Jewish students do not call each other "Zio" as a term of endearment.

It probably originated on the American far right. The wider context for its use at Oxford is the allegation that those same Labour Club members also sang songs celebrating Hamas attacks on Israeli civilians and claimed that US foreign policy was under control of the "Zionist lobby".

Alex Chalmers, who resigned as co-chair of the Labour Club when it endorsed Israel Apartheid Week, says that Jewish students were routinely ridiculed and denounced, while Mr Chalmers himself (who is not Jewish) was called a "Zionist stooge". Put this pattern of behaviour together and the context suggests that "Zio" is a derogatory term used in an abusive and bigoted way.

### **Gerry Downing: "Why Marxists must address the Jewish Question"**

Labour member Gerry Downing was suspended for his article on what Marxists call "the Jewish question". Marxist theory believes that Jews survived in the Middle Ages because they provided an economic function as money lenders. Because capitalism does not need Jewish money lenders, Marxists believe Jews should have disappeared from trace by now; our failure to do so ruins their theory.

Firstly, wishing the disappearance of Jews, by whatever means, is objectively antisemitic. Mr Downing's website compounds the offence by explaining that Jews' failure to disappear is due to a "world Jewish-Zionist

bourgeoisie" that dominates America and Europe. This echoes classical antisemitic conspiracy theories about wealthy Jews manipulating governments.

**Vicki Kirby:** *"Who is the Zionist God? Hitler"*

Vicki Kirby was the vice-chair of Woking Constituency Labour Party when she tweeted "Who is the Zionist God? I am starting to think it may be Hitler #FreePalestine". She also tweeted "we invented Israel when saving them from Hitler, who now seems to be their teacher". This notion - that Israel is inflicting on the Palestinians the same crimes that Jews suffered under the Nazis - is remarkably common in anti-Israel circles. It is, of course, factually incorrect, but that is not enough to make it antisemitic; nor is the fact that it is grossly offensive.

The real reason this trope is antisemitic is because it uses Israel's Jewishness as the basis of its attack: "See how you Jews behave now, you are no better than those Nazis whose Holocaust you still complain about".

It connects the Holocaust, Israel and today's Jews via the thread of their shared Jewishness to cause hurt, while forcing some of the moral guilt of the Holocaust onto its victims. It is a form of abuse that only works against Jews, and for that reason it is antisemitic.

**Beinazir Lasharie:** *"ISIS: Israel Secret Intelligence Service"*

Modern antisemitism relies on conspiracy theories. Beinazir Lasharie, a Labour councillor in Kensington and Chelsea, is accused of posting a video on Facebook called "ISIS: Israeli Secret Intelligence Service" and another post saying "I've heard some compelling evidence about ISIS being originated from Zionists!" This is complete nonsense, of course. Conspiracy theories blaming war, terrorism, financial disaster or other calamities on Jews have been around for well over a century. After the Holocaust and the creation of Israel, these conspiracy theories modified their language slightly to blame Zionists or Israel instead of Jews, but the way of thinking is identical. Without those explicitly anti-Jewish predecessors, today's conspiracy theories about Zionists and Israel wouldn't exist in the way they do. The change in language, though, means contemporary conspiracy theorists may not understand what they are doing.

Lasharie blamed ISIS on "Israel" and "Zionists" while saying "I've got nothing against Jews", so she clearly thinks she isn't antisemitic. In fact she is spreading antisemitism without even knowing it.

**Khadim Hussain:** *"Six million Zionists that were killed by Hitler"*

Sometimes "Zionist" is just a straight swap for "Jew". Khadim Hussain, a Labour councillor in Bradford and its former Lord Mayor, posted on Facebook about "Anne Frank and the six million Zionists that were killed by Hitler". This use of the word "Zionists" is a direct synonym for "Jew". Anything else Hussain has written about "Zionists" should be read with that in mind.

**Naz Shah:** *"Relocate Israel into United States"*

Labour's antisemitism problem went stratospheric last week when Naz Shah MP was revealed to have previously posted an image on Facebook titled "Solution for Israel-Palestine conflict: Relocate Israel into United States". Shah's post was antisemitic for a number of reasons. Israel is, among other things, the world's largest Jewish community. Endorsing the mass deportation of its citizens - ethnic cleansing, effectively - is both racist in itself and has obvious antisemitic antecedents. The post suggested Israel's existence in the Middle East is "foreign interference", thereby denying the historic Jewish connection to the land of Israel and the legitimacy of Jewish sovereignty in the region. Opposing Israel's historical creation or its current existence can be made to sound reasonable as a bland academic or theoretical argument. In the real world, though, the political movements in the Middle East who are trying to end Israel's existence are all violently antisemitic. In the world of real politics, this is the movement to which Western opponents of Israel's existence attach themselves.

**Ken Livingstone:** *Hitler "was supporting zionism" before he went mad*

Ken Livingstone said that Hitler was "supporting Zionism" when he came to power in Germany, and only later "went mad and ended up killing six million Jews". Mr Livingstone did not make this up himself. He was simply regurgitating Trotskyist propaganda that first appeared on the British left in the 1980s and had a strong influence on him. This propaganda cherry-picks examples of contact and negotiations between Zionists and Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s and uses them to place Zionism and Nazism alongside each other, as if they are somehow connected.

Hitler never wanted Jewish rights or self-determination, he wanted the exact opposite. Some Zionists thought they could save Jewish lives by negotiating with Nazis, but this was an act of desperation and nothing more. Then there is the fact that Hitler did not "go mad" and "end up" killing six million Jews. The Holocaust was the result of a genocidal mind-set that was evil but not insane in the way Mr Livingstone says. By the time Hitler came to power he had already written *Mein Kampf*, one of the most antisemitic books in history.

Mr Livingstone, the pub bore, ignores all this to make his ugly political defamation of Zionism, the very movement that Jews invented as an answer to antisemitism.

Many of these examples date from before Jeremy Corbyn became party leader, but they are no less important for that.

This problem has been building on the fringes of the left for years, where it was generally unchallenged and normalised. Now that the fringes have moved to the mainstream this antisemitism is getting the scrutiny it deserves.

There is a separate question about whether the singling out of Israel, via the accumulation of relentless harsh criticism, is itself a sign of something deeper.

Sometimes it is the obsessive and emotional nature of anti-Israel criticism that is problematic rather than its content.

It is for Israel's opponents to explain why they devote so much of their righteous fury to the world's sole Jewish state, while ignoring so much other suffering in the world.

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