

Enough is Enough – Huge crowds join Jewish community protest against antisemitism, in Westminster



Yesterday the Board of Deputies of British Jews said ‘enough is enough’ by publishing a fierce letter calling Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn to task for aiding and abetting anti-Semitism in his party.

[This was followed by a demonstration in Westminster](#) in which about 1500 people came out to protest and condemn the Labour leader’s “systematic failure” to deal with what some feel has become his party’s endemic anti-Semitism.

The letter and the demonstration follow on from recent revelations regarding Mr Corbyn’s beliefs and associations – three Facebook groups to which he belonged which were all [teeming with anti-Semitic tropes](#) and his support for a mural painted back in 2012 that was obviously anti-Semitic.

[The work, *Freedom for Humanity*, was painted near Brick Lane in London’s](#) East End by “graffiti artist” Kalen Ockerman (see above) and showed businessmen and bankers counting their money in a style that could have emerged directly from the pages of *Der Sturmer*.

So enough was enough. Here is an extract from the Board of Deputies letter to Corbyn:

Jeremy Corbyn did not invent this form of politics, but he has had a lifetime within it, and now personifies its problems and dangers. He issues empty statements about opposing anti-Semitism but does nothing to understand or address it. We conclude that he cannot seriously contemplate anti-Semitism, because he is so ideologically fixed within a far-left worldview that is instinctively hostile to mainstream Jewish communities.

When Jews complain about an obviously anti-Semitic mural in Tower Hamlets, Corbyn of course supports the artist. Hizbollah commits terrorist atrocities against Jews, but Corbyn calls them his friends and attends pro-Hizbollah rallies in London. Exactly the same goes for Hamas. Raed Salah says Jews kill Christian children to drink their blood. Corbyn opposes his extradition and invites him for tea at the House of Commons. These are not the only cases. He is repeatedly found alongside people with blatantly anti-Semitic views but claims never to hear or read them.

Again and again, Jeremy Corbyn has sided with anti-Semites rather than Jews. At best, this derives from the far left's obsessive hatred of Zionism, Zionists and Israel. At worst, it suggests a conspiratorial worldview in which mainstream Jewish communities are believed to be a hostile entity, a class enemy.

...There is literally not a single day in which Labour Party spaces, either online or in meetings, do not repeat the same fundamental anti-Semitic slanders against Jews. We are told that our concerns are faked, and done at the command of Israel and/or Zionism (whatever that means); that anti-Semitism is merely "criticism of Israel"; that we call any and all criticism of Israel "anti-Semitic"; that the Rothschilds run the world; that Isis terrorism is a fake front for Israel;

that Zionists are the new Nazis; and that Zionists collaborate with Nazis.

Rightly or wrongly, Jeremy Corbyn is now the figurehead for an anti-Semitic political culture, based on obsessive hatred of Israel, conspiracy theories and fake news that is doing dreadful harm to British Jews and to the British Labour Party.

It would seem that someone close to Corbyn understood that these issues were calling into question the moral basis of the Labour party itself, so the Labour leader responded to the Board of Deputies with this letter: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-43540795>

Thank you for your letter to the Labour Party concerning anti-Semitism issued as a press statement last night.

First of all, let me acknowledge the anger and upset that provoked it, and repeat my offer of an urgent meeting to discuss the issues you have raised as soon as possible.

I stated yesterday, and repeat today, that I will not tolerate any form of anti-Semitism that exists in or around our party and movement. I am committed to eliminating anti-Semitism wherever it exists.

As I told the Labour Party conference in 2016, anti-Semitism is an evil that led to the worst crimes of the 20th century. Prejudice and hatred of Jewish people has no place whatsoever in the Labour Party, and every one of us has a responsibility to ensure it is never allowed to fester in our society again.

I recognise that anti-Semitism has surfaced within the Labour Party and has too often been dismissed as simply a matter of a few bad apples. This has caused pain and hurt to Jewish members of our Party and to the wider Jewish community in Britain. I am sincerely sorry for the pain which has been caused, and pledge to redouble my efforts to bring this anxiety to an end.

While the forms of anti-Semitism expressed on the far Right of politics are easily detectable, such as Holocaust denial, there needs to be a deeper understanding of what constitutes anti-Semitism in the labour movement. Sometimes this evil takes familiar forms – the east London mural which has caused such understandable controversy is an example. The idea of Jewish bankers and capitalists exploiting the workers of the world is an old anti-Semitic conspiracy theory. This was long ago, and rightly, described as “the socialism of fools”.

I am sorry for not having studied the content of the mural more closely before wrongly questioning its removal in 2012.

Newer forms of anti-Semitism have been woven into criticism of Israeli governments. Criticism of Israel, particularly in relation to the continuing dispossession of the Palestinian people, cannot be avoided. Nevertheless, comparing Israel or the actions of Israeli governments to the Nazis, attributing criticisms of Israel to Jewish characteristics or to Jewish people in general and using abusive phraseology about supporters of Israel such as “Zio” all constitute aspects of contemporary anti-Semitism. And Jewish people must not be held responsible or accountable for the actions of the Israeli government.

The Labour Party has always opposed anti-Semitism, old and new, and always will. We are proud of our deep historical links with Jewish communities, and to have fought alongside generations of Jewish men and women against fascism, prejudice and discrimination. This is a part of our common heritage from which we will never be separated. But I acknowledge that anti-Semitic attitudes have surfaced more often in our ranks in recent years, and that the Party has been too slow in processing some of the cases that have emerged. Early action has nevertheless been taken, and we will work to speed up procedures, to deal with cases of anti-Semitic abuse or attitudes.

I am committed to making our Party a welcoming and secure place for Jewish people. Zero tolerance for anti-Semites means what it says, and the Party will proceed in that spirit. That demands among other things the overdue full implementation of the recommendations of the Chakrabarti report, including a programme of political education to increase awareness and understanding of all forms of anti-Semitism.

The battle against anti-Semitism should never become a party-political issue. It must unite all of us if we are both to honour the memory of the victims of the bestial crimes of the 20th century and build a future of equality and justice for all.

In that spirit, I must make it clear that I will never be anything other than a militant opponent of anti-Semitism. In this fight, I am your ally and always will be.

This letter is welcomed but with caution. [Melanie Phillips, questions its sincerity.](#)

I think too that It remains to be seen just what Mr Corbyn will do to erase the perception that he and his allies are deeply anti-Semitic.

They are anti-capitalist and anti-West, and because they see Israel as part of the West they question her very existence. They have sided in the past with Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran in seeking Israel's destruction, and Jews who mostly support Israel, even if subliminally, are therefore guilty by association.

But as it is 'racist' to be anti-Semitic and racism is a big no-no, Jews are not officially the enemy of the Corbynistas, but Israel probably still is.