

UK: Momentum's Jon Lansman aids witch-hunt against Corbyn, joins Blairites at Jewish Labour Movement event

Paul Mitchell
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In a weekend that saw an escalation in the campaign by Labour's right-wing to smear party leader Jeremy Corbyn as an anti-Semite, Momentum leader Jon Lansman's appearance on the platform of the pro-Zionist Jewish Labour Movement was damning.

Lansman took his place alongside former Prime Minister Gordon Brown and other Blairite warmongers such as current JLM chair Luciana Berger and Ruth Smeeth, the former director of Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre and someone exposed by WikiLeaks as a "strictly protect" US asset.

The meeting saw Brown declare that anti-Jewish sentiment was "a problem of the conspiracy-theory left."

Dame Margaret Hodge, who in July staged a vicious provocation against Corbyn in parliament, screaming in his face that he was a "fucking anti-Semite and racist," told the press, "I called [Jeremy] an anti-Semitic racist in July, and everything that has emerged since then has confirmed my belief that I was right." Making clear the end-game of the anti-Semitism slanders, she added, "He [Corbyn] is the problem."

In the face of such statements, Lansman advanced himself at Sunday's meeting as the voice of reason best placed to push Corbyn in the direction demanded publicly by his opponents.

The head of an organisation that claims to be the political home of grass-roots supporters of Corbyn happily joked that the Labour leader could be given anti-Semitism training. When he was challenged by an audience member, he replied, to applause and laughter, "I think there is always a place for education and training in everyone's lives and Jeremy Corbyn has a longstanding commitment to lifelong training."

Momentum, he reassured his audience, was determined "to fight anti-Semitism" and "rebuild trust" as "unfortunately there is a perception there is anti-Semitism in our party and that is why we have got to act."

This is a blatant apologia for a campaign to blackguard the left as anti-Semitic. And it was accompanied by a promise that right-wing Labour MPs should not feel their seats are under threat from Momentum, if only they stop "waiting for Jeremy to go so they can turn the clock back..."

Lansman is deliberately downplaying the threat posed by the right-wing plot to keep the Conservatives in power by splitting the Labour Party. He would rather make Labour's 500,000 members hostage to a cabal of pro-austerity, pro-war MPs than risk the development of a genuinely rank-and file movement against them.

Four days earlier, the former welfare minister, Frank Field, quit the Labour group at Westminster complaining of the "tolerance" of anti-Semitism and "culture of nastiness" under Corbyn. Rather than forcing a by-election, as is usual, Field arrogantly declared he would continue as an independent Labour MP.

In 2010, Field accepted Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron's invitation to act as "Poverty Tsar" in the Tory-Liberal Democrat coalition that was overseeing vicious austerity. He has described former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher as a "hero", commenting that he would see "Mrs. T from time to time", during the time she was in office. His decision to quit the Labour group came after he had suffered a "no confidence" motion by his own Birkenhead constituency Labour party, in response to his voting

with the Tory government on Brexit, preventing its potentially damaging defeat.

The *Observer's* Andrew Rawnsley commented that more resignations by the right-wing are on the way and that, "One of the challenges for this group over the summer of Labour ferment has been persuading some of their number to wait rather than resign immediately." He reports that one associate of Mike Gapes, the Labour MP for Ilford South, who says he has been "agonising daily" over whether to quit, stating, "A lot of the summer has been about holding the gang together and stopping people splitting off, one by one. We're all trying to stay in formation until the right moment."

A front-page article in the *Sunday Times*, owned by billionaire oligarch Rupert Murdoch and which has played a central role in the manufactured anti-Semitism campaign, was headlined, "Labour Rebel MPs plot breakaway party and 'no confidence' vote."

It reported that a group of Blairite MPs "plan a no-confidence vote to give MPs a way of expressing their disgust at Corbyn's handling of the affair in the hope that it will embolden others to join a breakaway." It added, "Fury at Corbyn's approach to anti-Semitism has pushed up to 15 MPs to the brink of a breakaway from Labour..."

On the morning of the JLM conference ex-Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks, repeated on the BBC's *Andrew Marr Show* his earlier accusation that Corbyn was guilty of the most offensive comments "since Enoch Powell," the former right-wing anti-immigrant Conservative MP, and author of the infamous "Rivers of Blood" speech in 1968. Sacks said Corbyn had to "repent and recant," and until he did so, "he is as great a danger as Enoch Powell was."

In a hysterical diatribe, Sacks asserted that British Jews were "considering" leaving the country because of the prospect of Corbyn becoming prime minister: "Jews have been in Britain since 1656. I know of no other occasion in these 362 years where Jews, the majority of our community, are asking 'Is this country safe to bring up our children?' When people hear the kind of language that's been coming out of Labour, that's been brought to the surface among Jeremy Corbyn's earlier speeches, they cannot but feel an existential threat."

Replying to Sacks, Labour's Shadow Chancellor

John McDonnell also held out the flag of surrender, stating that he found his remarks "brutally honest" and "quite distressing."

"I just say to Lord Sacks 'you've got it wrong, come and talk to us,'" he begged.

The extent to which the intelligence services are involved in the campaign against him was confirmed by the announcement that Corbyn has been requested to attend a briefing by Andrew Parker, the head of the domestic MI5 intelligence agency. This is supposedly to give Corbyn a lecture on the "facts of life" regarding the threat from jihadist terrorists and Russian spies in Britain.

Coming after months in which MI5 has refused to brief Corbyn on security issues, this is the most overt interference in political affairs by Parker—meant to reinforce the constant accusations that Corbyn cannot be trusted on issues of national security.



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