

A reply to Britain's Community Security Trust

Chris Marsden
16 February 2019

The following is a reply by Socialist Equality Party (UK) national secretary Chris Marsden to Mark Gardner, Deputy Chief Executive & Communications Director at the pro-Zionist Community Security Trust.

*Gardner wrote to the World Socialist Web Site on February 9, replying to an article, *Corbyn leadership bows before Blairite's anti-Semitism witch-hunt*, posted on the site that day. His letter reads:*

Your characterisation of Community Security Trust as “Zionist” is pathetic and typical of hard left attempts to smear mainstream Jewish communal organisations. What do you actually mean by Zionist? And in what way is it more accurate to describe CST as “Zionist”, rather than as a Jewish British charity?

Contrary to your article's explicit claim, CST's report does have a page explaining what it means by antisemitic incidents that show direct relation to the Labour Party. It includes examples.

Your ideological contempt for the experience of British Jews is a damning example of how far your “anti Zionism” has taken you.

Mark Gardner

Dear Mr Gardner,

Your reference to our “typical” “hard left smear” of the Community Security Trust (CST) is bogus. We describe the CST as Zionist because that is its political standpoint—and this is far more significant than its supposed role as a charity.

One important difference between the World Socialist Web Site (WSWS) and the CST is that you consider it expedient to conceal your political agenda, whereas we do not. You are, as a Zionist, very clear what Zionism means. Historically, it refers to the nationalist movement to create a Jewish state in the Middle East and now indicates active political support for the State of Israel.

The Socialist Equality Party and the WSWS opposes Zionism based on our opposition to all forms of nationalism and insistence on a unified offensive of Arab and Jewish workers for the overthrow of capitalism and for the formation of the United Socialist States of the Middle East. Here in the UK we seek to unite workers irrespective of national, ethnic or

religious differences in a common struggle for socialism.

Your accusation of anti-Semitism is a political slander. The socialist movement has historically been at the forefront of the struggle against anti-Semitism, attracting many of its best representatives from among Jewish workers and intellectuals. In Germany, our comrades in the Socialist Equality Party are right now waging a determined struggle against efforts to rehabilitate Nazism involving attempts by leading historians and the Alternative for Germany to downplay Hitler's crimes against the Jews.

Your pose of outrage at our use of the term Zionism is part of a political campaign waged by the CST to equate all opposition to Zionism with anti-Semitism, hence your references to our “ideological contempt for the experience of British Jews.” The CST has repeatedly insisted that all “mainstream” Jewish opinion is Zionist. Therefore, in your view, to define the CST politically as Zionist is automatically anti-Semitic.

This is transparent nonsense, but you have been playing this ideological game for years—denouncing as anti-Semitic not only Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn but vast swathes of left-wing opposition to Israel's brutal suppression of the Palestinians.

The CST is no more a representative of the Jewish community than are the political forces it represents—the Conservative government, the right-wing of the Labour Party and, one must add, the British and the Israeli state.

The CST was given a dispensation by the Charity Commission, meaning that it does not have to publish the names of its trustees. This serves to shield the CST from public scrutiny that would reveal its intimate connections with those waging a political offensive to tar the left as anti-Semitic—often using propaganda material prepared by the CST. However, management of the CST is carried out by Support Trustee Ltd, established in May 2003, whose personnel make clear the organisation's right-wing and unambiguously Zionist political agenda.

The directors of Support Trustee Ltd include CST chairman Gerald Ronson, imprisoned for false accounting, conspiracy and theft in the Guinness shares scandal. He was nevertheless given a CBE for his charitable work by then Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron. Other directors are Keith

Black and Douglas Krikler, who are both also connected to the United Jewish Israel Appeal, a registered charity dedicated to cultivating an enhanced sense of Jewish identity among Jewish youth and their connection with Israel.

Another director is David Menton, who is a director of the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM), a pro-Israeli advocacy group. BICOM established the We Believe in Israel advocacy organisation in the UK to counter opposition to Israel following its brutal repression of the second Palestinian intifada. We Believe in Israel is headed by right-wing anti-Corbyn Labourite Luke Akehurst. Among those playing a leading role in the anti-Semitism smear campaign against Labour and the left is Ruth Smeeth MP, who in the past worked for BICOM.

David Young, Lord Young of Graffham, is another director of Support Trustees Ltd who previously served as Margaret Thatcher's chief of staff and her privatisations minister.

The CST's advisory board includes leading Conservatives Michael Gove MP, Baroness Verma of Leicester, Lord Wolffson of Sunningdale and Lord Feldman of Froggnal.

Top military figures include Field Marshal Lord Guthrie of Craigebank, the former head of the British Army, Brigadier Richard Andrews and Colonel Richard Kemp. Kemp's most notable political intervention came in 2017 when, in response to Corbyn's statements that "any use of nuclear weapons is a disaster for the whole world," he replied, "Quite literally if Jeremy Corbyn as prime minister enacted the policies he describes, he would have blood on his hands ... he must never be elected to lead this country."

Top police officers include Chief Constable of Manchester Peter Fahy, Chief Constable of Strathclyde Stephen House, former commissioner of the Metropolitan Police John Stevens (now Lord Stevens of Kirkwhelpington), former assistant commissioner of the Met John Yates and former deputy assistant commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police, John Grieve.

Niall Ferguson, the right-wing historian and member of the Hoover Institute, is another advisor.

To imply that such figures are impartial representatives of the "Jewish community" is ludicrous on its face. But these are not even the most damning presence on the advisory board. It includes right-wing Labour MPs Louise Ellman, Ivan Lewis, Denis MacShane, Jim Murphy and John Mann. They are joined by four Blairite peers, including Tony Blair's former Middle East envoy, Lord Levy of Mill Hill. The five MPs have all played a leading role in the witch-hunting of Corbyn as an anti-Semite.

The CST's director of communications is Dave Rich, whose political obsessions are epitomised by his 2016 book, *The Left's Jewish Problem: Jeremy Corbyn, Israel and Anti-Semitism*. The CST funded the doctoral thesis research that produced this book.

In March 2018, then Home Secretary Amber Rudd committed

to £13.4 million in annual security funding to protect Jewish schools, institutions, etc., which she announced at the CST's annual dinner alongside Gerald Ronson. The CST is given the right to dispense these funds.

This political pedigree accounts for the CST's inflated role in British political life, its undeclared war against Corbyn and the "left"—and the fact that it appears to be virtually blind in its right eye about where the real threat of anti-Semitism comes from. It has no representative function for the Jewish community at all.

Your claim that the CST's report clearly explains "what it means by antisemitic incidents that show direct relation to the Labour Party" is also false. The CST claims to have recorded 148 incidents in 2018 "that were examples of, or occurred in the context of discussions about, antisemitism in the Labour Party." But you provide no evidence to support this assertion, merely stating that they occurred largely during two months that were characterised by "repeated allegations of antisemitic statements and behaviour by Labour Party figures, including Corbyn himself" and that the alleged victims were "prominent MPs and peers who were either Jewish or who had spoken out against antisemitism" and who "received direct, targeted threats and hate mail."

You produce just four examples of the above—two internet posts and two anonymous letters that could each have been written by anyone. We address one example in the article you criticise. It should be noted that in her latest accusation that Labour is not doing enough to combat anti-Semitism, Blairite MP Margaret Hodge declared that she herself had submitted 200 examples of alleged antisemitism to Labour's disciplinary process. Given that anyone who criticises the Blairites' witch-hunt risks being denounced as anti-Semitic, one can only imagine what these accusations consist of—just as one can only imagine what the CST is referring to in its own unpublished list of incidents.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Marsden

National Secretary, Socialist Equality Party



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