

# UK's chief rabbi aids right-wing campaign against Corbyn

Jean Shaoul

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On Tuesday, as Jeremy Corbyn launched Labour's "race and faith manifesto," a hitherto unknown group, the Community United against Labour Party anti-Semitism, set up three billboards mounted on trucks and vans with messages, over a hashtag #NeverCorbyn, reading: "A vote for Labour is a vote for racism," "Keep anti-Semitism out of Downing Street," and "A home for holocaust denial and terrorist supporters." The billboards had been crowdfunded well in advance of the event.

As the Labour leader entered the venue, protesters held up placards reading "Racist Corbyn—unfit to be PM," and chanted "Racist, racist" and "Corbyn is a racist."

Corbyn was about to launch a manifesto that reads, "A Labour government will build a society and world free from all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia."

The day before, the Murdoch-owned *Times* featured an hysterical attack on Corbyn in the form of an op-ed by Ephraim Mirvis, Britain's chief rabbi. The piece was headlined, "What will become of Jews in Britain if Labour forms the next government?"

Mirvis' attack was unprecedented for an election campaign in the UK, where it is the convention for faith leaders to refrain from endorsing candidates. Accusing Corbyn of anti-Semitism, Mirvis wrote that the Labour leader was responsible for a "poison sanctioned from the top" taking root in the party. Jews were justifiably anxious about the prospect of the party forming the next government, Mirvis claimed.

"The Jewish community has watched with incredulity," he wrote, "as supporters of the Labour leadership have hounded parliamentarians, members and even staff out of the party for challenging anti-Jewish racism."

Advising on how to vote, he declared, "How complicit in prejudice would a leader of Her Majesty's opposition have to be to be considered unfit for office?"

Within hours, the chief rabbi's slanders were followed

by more smears from Justin Welby, the archbishop of Canterbury and leader of the Church of England, long known as "the Tory Party at prayer." Welby tweeted about the "deep sense of insecurity and fear felt by many British Jews."

On Tuesday evening, amid McCarthyite-style media coverage, Corbyn was interviewed for 30 minutes on the BBC by the former editor of Murdoch's *Sunday Times*, Andrew Neil. Neil opened the interview by citing Mirvis' comments, saying that he was right and repeatedly insisting that Corbyn apologize to British Jews.

Corbyn's efforts to defend himself and his party prompted a second round of front-page headlines and editorials denouncing him as a "hard left" danger.

Everyone should be clear about what is going on.

The persecution and hounding of Corbyn is a coordinated right-wing political destabilisation operation aimed at preventing his election and facilitating his subsequent removal as Labour leader.

The US is orchestrating this black propaganda campaign, in cahoots with Israel's lobby groups and the security agencies of the UK and Israel. It is politically led by right-wing Blairites in Corbyn's own party, the Liberals Democrats, the Conservative government and a pliant and corrupt pro-business media.

The game plan for this offensive was revealed by US President Donald Trump and his secretary of state Mike Pompeo. Trump said earlier this month on LBC Radio to far-right Brexit Party leader Nigel Farage that he opposed Corbyn being elected as prime minister. This followed an intervention in June when Pompeo warned that Washington would not allow a Corbyn-led Labour government to take office and would "push back" to prevent it.

At a conference of American Jewish organisations, Pompeo was asked whether, should Corbyn be elected, he would be willing "to work with us to take on actions if

life becomes very difficult for Jews in the UK?"

Pompeo replied, "It could be that Mr. Corbyn manages to run the gauntlet and get elected. It's possible. You should know, we won't wait for him to do those things to begin to push back. We will do our level best... It's too risky and too important and too hard once it's already happened."

The "push-back" is now underway.

The *Jewish Chronicle* has played a central role. On November 7, it published a front-page appeal urging non-Jews not to support Labour, which was said to represent "an existential threat" to the Jewish community in Britain. Stephen Pollard, a free market advocate who is the newspaper's editor, also writes frequently for the *Daily Express*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Sun* and the *Daily Telegraph*—the right-wing stable of Britain's press.

Jonathan Freedland of the anti-Corbyn *Guardian* stepped into the fray, suggesting that British Jews "will approach the coming election with a trepidation they have rarely known before." The *Guardian* also featured a letter from opponents of Corbyn proclaiming that they would not vote for Labour in the December 12 general election because his leadership had made the party anti-Semitic.

The signatories included Eurosceptic Conservative author Frederick Forsyth, self-identified "Tory scum" Tony Parsons, the actress Joanna Lumley, Tory businessman Ghanem Nuseibeh, who chairs Muslims Against anti-Semitism, and Maajid Nawaz, the founding chair of Quilliam, a think tank with intimate connections to the state.

All claims that Labour is an anti-Semitic party are filthy lies. The 2016 Chakrabarti Inquiry found "no evidence" of systemic anti-Semitism in Labour, while a cross party parliamentary Select Committee in 2016 concluded that "there exists no reliable, empirical evidence to support the notion that there is a higher prevalence of anti-Semitic attitudes within the Labour Party than any other political party." Incidents of anti-Semitism within Labour account for 0.08 percent of its membership of around 500,000 people, one-third the rate in the general population.

More generally, a detailed study of attitudes towards Jews and Israel in Britain by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research found that the levels of anti-Semitism were among the lowest in the world, with just 2.4 percent expressing multiple anti-Semitic attitudes. This contrasts to some 70 percent having a favourable opinion of Jews. It added that only 17 percent had a favourable opinion of Israel, with 33 percent holding an unfavourable view.

The *Economist* published a survey last month finding

that the "very left wing" were the least likely to hold anti-Semitic views, while holding by far the most critical views of Israel. Most people made a clear distinction between Israel and Jews, and did not hold Jews responsible for the crimes committed by successive Israeli governments. In contrast, both the "right" and the "centre" tended to conflate Israel and the Jewish people.

Aside from a tiny number of fringe figures, those who are being targeted and accused of anti-Semitism within the Labour Party are anti-Zionists. As the *Al Jazeera* film *The Lobby* revealed, the Israeli embassy in London funded a campaign managed by the Labour Friends of Israel to undermine Corbyn because of his longstanding support for Palestinian rights. To this end, the Zionist lobby sought to brand any opposition to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far right government and its oppression of the Palestinians as anti-Semitism.

Accusations that Corbyn is an anti-Semite and that Labour under his leadership is a threat to Jews must be unconditionally opposed. But those responsible could mount this filthy campaign only because of Corbyn's refusal to mobilise the hundreds of thousands who joined the Labour Party based on his pledge to oppose austerity and militarism against the Blairite right wing.

Instead, faced with slanderous attacks on key allies such as Ken Livingstone, Marc Wadsworth, Jackie Walker and Chris Williamson, Corbyn accepted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism, which declares calling Israel a "racist endeavor" to be anti-Semitic, and then threw his allies to the wolves. From that moment on, opposing the Zionist slanders became impossible under Corbyn's leadership.

In his BBC interview with Andrew Neil, Corbyn squirmed pathetically while accepting that the chief rabbi—a fanatical Zionist who has described the anti-Muslim racist Boris Johnson as a "longstanding friend"—speaks for the "Jewish community."



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