

New Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer pledges stepped-up “anti-Semitism” witch-hunt

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11 April 2020

Labour Leader Sir Keir Starmer’s first few days in office make clear the forced march to the right on which the party has embarked.

Even amid a catastrophic pandemic made worse by the criminal policies of the Conservative government, his priority has been to ingratiate himself with the Zionist and Blairite forces leading the witch-hunt of Labour members on bogus charges of anti-Semitism that has now raged for over four years.

The slanderous campaign has provided a mechanism for the Labour Party to drive out thousands of members attracted to the party based on illusions that Jeremy Corbyn would push it to the left. Instead, he did nothing even as some of his closest allies, such as Ken Livingstone, Chris Williamson, Jackie Walker and Marc Wadsworth, were branded as anti-Semites for opposing Israeli crimes against the Palestinians.

In his acceptance speech, Starmer claimed, “Anti-Semitism has been a stain on our party ... And I will tear out the poison by its roots ...”

On Tuesday, he published a letter in the *Evening Standard* saying he would “leave no stone unturned in the fight against anti-Semitism.” Promising to “throw open the books and the files” to the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s politically motivated inquiry into the Labour Party, Starmer added, “we cannot wait until the commission completes its inquiry before we get a grip on this situation.”

“I will also be requesting that a report on all outstanding cases of anti-Semitism within the party is on my desk by the end of this week and that there is a timetable for their resolution. Clear cases of anti-Semitism must be dealt with robustly and swiftly if people’s faith is to be restored.”

During the Labour leadership election, every candidate signed up to 10 pledges demanded by the Zionist Board of Deputies of British Jews (BoD). These include plans to

turn over members’ confidential information to the BoD and other “representative groups” and to expel any members “who support, campaign or provide a platform for people who have been suspended or expelled in the wake of anti-Semitic incidents ...” Starmer’s promise to deal with cases even more “robustly and swiftly” is preparation for a wider purge.

His agenda was made clear by an editorial in the *Financial Times* Monday, which urged Labour’s new leader to “use the first weeks to take a firm grip on the party and rid it of some of the factional Corbynite officials who so damaged its reputation. Sir Keir was right to apologise to the Jewish community for Labour’s failings on anti-Semitism but he must act to root out the problem.”

The political character of Starmer’s pledge is revealed by the “leaders of the Jewish community” he met with later on Tuesday “to talk about how we can work together to stamp out anti-Semitism from the Labour Party.” In a video call with Starmer and Deputy Labour Leader Angela Rayner, the four groups represented were the BoD, the Jewish Leadership Council, the Community and Security Trust and the Jewish Labour Movement. The organisations described the meeting as a “good start” and released a statement saying, “Keir Starmer has already achieved in four days more than his predecessor in four years in addressing antisemitism within the Labour party.”

Later that day, Britain’s chief Rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, told BBC Radio 5 Live: “I welcome Sir Keir’s comments since assuming the role as leader of the Labour Party. He has recognised there is only one thing that matters and that is action. I hope he will indeed take swift and decisive action to eradicate the scourge of anti-Semitism from within the Labour Party.”

These organisations, united by Zionist politics, were all closely involved with the slander of Corbyn and his

supporters. Mirvis is a supporter of Tory Prime Minister Boris Johnson and staged an unprecedented and hysterical intervention in the 2019 general election, asking in a *Times* op-ed, “What will become of Jews in Britain if Labour forms the next government?” Their concern is not “the Jewish people,” but the state of Israel and its freedom to continue the savage oppression of the Palestinians.

Starmer has in the past made his ritualistic pledges of support for a non-existent “two-state” solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict and is a member of Labour Friends of Palestine and the Middle East (LFPME). As such he has also ritualistically opposed US President Trump’s open abandonment of the “two-state” solution.

But even prior to his election, Starmer was at pains to reposition himself to be acceptable to the Zionist and Blairite right. Asked during the leadership contest whether he would call himself a Zionist, he told *Jewish News*: “I do support Zionism. I absolutely support the right of Israel to exist as a homeland. My only concern is that Zionism can mean slightly different things to different people, and ... to some extent it has been weaponized. I wouldn’t read too much into that. I said it loud and clear—and meant it—that I support Zionism without qualification.”

Lisa Nandy, Starmer’s leadership rival and now his shadow foreign secretary, was asked during the leadership campaign whether a Twitter post which demanded the Board of Deputies of British Jews “condemn all Israeli military atrocities in the West Bank” was anti-Semitic. She replied, “Yes, it is. And we have a clear policy in the Labour Party that when anti-Semitism is *alleged*, or particularly where you’ve got clear examples of that in writing, we suspend and then we investigate” (emphasis added).

Nandy is a co-director of the campaign group Labour Together—a combination of Blairite New Labour and nationalist Blue Labour—along with Edwin Chinn, a major donor to Labour Together and to Nandy personally, according to *The Canary*.

Chinn is a member of the executive committee of the British Israel Communications and Research Centre, another lobby group for the Israeli state. He has also donated money to former Labour Friends of Israel chair Joan Ryan—exposed by *Al Jazeera* as having lyingly accused a fellow party member of making anti-Semitic comments—and former Deputy Labour Leader Tom Watson, who helped to organise the “Operation Icepick” expulsion of “Trots” from Labour’s

membership and called for automatic exclusion from the party of members accused of anti-Semitism.

Incredibly, Nandy was chair of the Labour Friends of Palestine and the Middle East group for the last year. Her leadership has seen the organisation’s activity virtually cease. She can be trusted to ensure Labour’s continued complicity in the crimes of the Israeli government through its foreign policy.

Starmer’s cabinet includes a rogues gallery of Blairite witch-hunters such as Jess Phillips, Liz Kendall, Lucy Powell, Wes Streeting, Stephen Doughty and Pat McFadden. Shami Chakrabarti—falsely accused of conducting a “whitewash” investigation into anti-Semitism in 2016—has been replaced as shadow attorney general by arch-Blairite and Iraq War enthusiast Lord Falconer.

Labour’s new director of communications, replacing the Stalinist Seumas Milne, is Ben Nunn—an adviser to Labour MP Heidi Alexander. Alexander, the first of Corbyn’s shadow cabinet to resign in the right-wing 2016 coup against him, then co-organised Owen Smith’s dismal leadership challenge to Corbyn. Starmer’s chief of staff, Morgan McSweeney, organised Blairite favourite Liz Kendall’s bid for the Labour leadership in 2015.

The five years of Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership were a political rout before this toxic anti-Semitism campaign. Workers and young people must draw the balance sheet of this experience. The Labour Party is not institutionally anti-Semitic, it is institutionally anti-socialist. A fight against social inequality, war and all the crises of the capitalist system (from climate change to the COVID-19 pandemic) can only be waged through the construction of a new, independent party of the international working class—the Socialist Equality Party.



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