

Starmer begins purge of Corbyn supporters from UK Labour Party

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Within hours of suspending former Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, the party leadership under Sir Keir Starmer stepped up its witch-hunt of his supporters. Asked on BBC's *Today* programme if Corbyn could be expelled, Starmer said, "Yes, people have been expelled from the Labour Party," saying hundreds of ordinary members had been expelled since he replaced Corbyn in April.

To enforce its McCarthyite witch-hunt Labour's "Governance and Legal Unit" declared that the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) "Investigation into antisemitism in the Labour Party" could not be criticised by any party member. Corbyn's justifiable questioning of the report's claim of widespread anti-Semitism in the party was the pretext used to suspend him on Thursday.

The guidance to Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) from General Secretary Dave Evans, who formally suspended Corbyn, states, "social media accounts of branches, CLPs and other Party Units should not be used to comment on the EHRC investigation or the publication of its report." To enforce censorship the document continues, "Social media accounts where comments or discussion is permitted (for example Facebook groups) must be closely moderated or access to post at all temporarily suspended."

Another guidance document warns, "The Party has accepted the recommendations in full. Consequently, motions [from CLP's or branches] that seek to question the competence of the EHRC to conduct the investigation in any way, or repudiate or reject the report or any of its recommendations are not competent business and must be ruled out of order."

The witch-hunting of members is being intensified by an online dragnet of members' comments.

The Skwawkbox blog made public a document from the party leadership to officials which states, "If you see any members who you believe may have broken the Party's rules with what they've posted on social media—whether that be on antisemitism, the independence of the EHRC, or reducing the EHRC's report to smears, staff can submit evidence here." This refers to a link where members can be

reported, with the Labour bureaucrat boasting, "I also have an open communication channel with the social media networks if we need to escalate anything quickly."

The Zionist Community Security Trust (CST) stepped in to reinforce Starmer's witch-hunt, with the *Guardian* reporting, "The group said it had used software to search for terms linked to leftwing antisemitism, such as 'Zionist', 'Mossad' and 'Rothschild', alongside Starmer's name over the past 30 days."

In the Labour leadership contest, Starmer and the three other candidates were all asked if they were Zionists and all said they were. He told the *Jewish News*, "I do support Zionism... I support Zionism without qualification." This was widely hailed by Jewish publications, who would all now be identified as part of a spike in anti-Semitism by the CST's software.

Corbyn was forced to deny the EHRC report's claims of widespread anti-Semitism attributed to his leadership of the party, but added, "While I do not accept all of its [the EHRC's] findings, I trust its recommendations will be swiftly implemented to help move on from this period"—giving de facto endorsement to the continued witch-hunt of his own supporters, just as he did while still party leader.

He has urged those ready to quit the party in disgust, "Don't go away, don't leave the party."

Len McCluskey, the leader of the Unite union, said that Corbyn's suspension was an "act of grave injustice" which could lead to a split. But this was a warning to Starmer of a danger he is trying to prevent. He said that a split could "create chaos within the party and in doing so compromise Labour's chances of a general election victory," under Starmer and three and a half years from now! Later he added, "My message, really, to literally hundreds of thousands of our members who are already expressing their anger is to stay in the party."

Corbyn's former shadow home secretary, Diane Abbott, tweeted, "Divided parties don't win elections."

Former Labour general secretary, Ian Lavery said there are

fears that Corbyn's suspension was a "war cry" that could force some MPs to leave the party and stand as "Independent Labour". He replied to the *Guardian*, "I would urge those MPs not to leave and I would urge the leader's office to reach out. We have got to try to keep people calm. This dispute with Jeremy has got to be resolved as quickly as we possibly can and then we can move forward."

The EHRC report is a political fraud that does not establish widespread anti-Semitism on the left because it cannot. The report politely questioned by Corbyn and held up as sacrosanct by Starmer admits, "We examined 70 complaints of antisemitism made to the Labour Party between March 2016 and May 2019." Under the section, "Prevalence of antisemitic conduct in the complaint sample," it states, "[W]e found that the Labour Party is legally responsible for the harassment evidenced in two of the 70 complaint files... These included using antisemitic tropes and suggesting that complaints of antisemitism were fake or smears."

One of these cases was former Mayor of London and Labour MP Ken Livingstone, a member for almost 50 years. Livingstone was kicked out of the party, with Corbyn's backing, after being falsely accused of anti-Semitism.

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As part of their dirty tricks operation, Corbyn's opponents handed over to the Metropolitan Police in 2018--via the LBC radio station--a dossier of what they claimed were 45 cases of anti-Semitism by Labour members. In February, the Met announced that, following its lengthy investigation, just four people had been arrested and two people interviewed under caution. Five files of evidence were sent by the Met to the Crown Prosecution Service. As a result, four of the people were informed they faced no further action. Just one person, out of the 45 cases, was charged. This was a charge under the Communications Act. The Corbyn leadership said that the individual had been expelled from the party before he was arrested.

Corbyn and his backers did nothing to oppose the campaign against them, despite being aware of the main content of the EHRC report months before it published. The *Guardian* reported Wednesday, "A draft report is known to have been shared with the Labour party in July, as well as with a small number of key figures from the Corbyn administration."

Among those denounced by the EHRC in its draft report was former Labour MP Chris Williamson. Williamson was driven out of Labour on false accusations of anti-Semitism because he said the party had "given too much ground (and) been too apologetic" towards politically motivated accusations. Corbyn refused to defend his ally, even though he is now saying much the same thing.

On the release of the EHRC's report, Williamson said that they "decided to name me in their draft report." But he revealed that "despite an intense campaign of vilification against me, the EHRC has determined that I did not contribute towards 'unlawful harassment related to Jewish ethnicity' by the Labour Party."

With the backing of supporters, "I was able to assemble a top legal team which exposed the draft report's monumental flaws." This legal action "secured substantial revisions to what the report says about me, and several others who were maliciously maligned. In fact, many pages and references have been deleted in their entirety."

Corbyn in contrast did nothing. His guiding principle was to conceal the gravity of the attacks being prepared by the right-wing from the working class. Corbyn's refusal to legally challenge the EHRC report was despite his own supporters crowdfunding over £330,000 this year for him to defend himself after it became clear that he faced possible legal action.

Events testify to the complete collapse of Corbynism and all claims that the Labour Party could ever be a vehicle for socialism. The pseudo-left Socialist Party claimed that Corbyn taking the leadership represented the potential formation of a "new workers' party". They responded to Corbyn's suspension with a piece demanding that Unite's leadership "should now institute an immediate conference," to organise for a "council of war"—the same demand the SP has been making of the trade union bureaucracy for more than a decade.

The only actual "council of war" is the one being organised by the Blairites from Starmer's office while his opponents play dead and oppose any fight back.



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