

Starmer's antisemitism summit deepens right-wing slander campaign against the left and Muslims

Thomas Scripps
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The stabbing of three men on April 29, of which two were Jewish and one Muslim, by a mentally ill man has been used by the Labour government to declare a national emergency over antisemitism.

Starmer organised a summit at Downing Street Monday calling for a “whole of society response” before an audience of “leaders from the business, civil society, health, culture, higher education and policing sectors”. Among these were trade union officials. The media has put its shoulder to the wheel of the campaign to present British society as in the grip of runaway hatred against Jews.

This is a right-wing campaign, pressing the same buttons used to attack former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and his supporters. Similar attacks are already being ramped up against Green Party leader Zack Polanski.

Left-wing, anti-Zionist, anti-imperialist sentiment is to be intimidated and criminalised by associating it with the crime of antisemitism. Running through the whole affair is a barely disguised Islamophobia.

Prominent British columnist Daniel Finkelstein begins an article in *The Times* warning, “History shows that this ancient hatred destroys nations,” and asking, “is it too late for Britain to wake up and pull back from the brink?” His opening five paragraphs deal with Nazi Germany.

What an insult to the victims of the Third Reich and a slander against millions of workers and young people in the UK and internationally opposed to Israel's genocidal assault on the Palestinians.

The crimes of the Nazis are invoked in connection with 3,700 antisemitic incidents in 2025, following 3,556 incidents the year before and 4,298 in 2023—up from an average of roughly 1,600 in the decade prior.

For comparison, over 3,767 Islamophobic incidents were recorded by charity Tell MAMA in 2023, and 6,313 in 2024, with 2025 figures expected to be similar. But there is no emergency summit on anti-Muslim hate.

Moreover, the figures for antisemitism are compiled by the pro-Zionist Community Security Trust (CST), which applies the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism conflating it with opposition to the Israeli state. This includes entirely legitimate comparisons between the politics and actions of its government and armed forces and those of the

Nazis.

The CST states that 53 percent of the 2025 cases “referenced, or were linked to, Israel, Palestine, the Hamas terror attack or the subsequent war” and also “evidenced anti-Jewish language, motivation or targeting.”

This includes “instances of anti-Jewish hate wherein the terms ‘Zionism’ or ‘Zionist’ were used” (the CST simply claims, “often as euphemisms”), or when “*Israel*, Israelis or Jewish people were equated with Nazi Germany or the Nazis [italics added].”

Finkelstein continues that what worries him “in our national political life” is “A mood that could bring disaster on everyone, Jews first,” which “will intensify support for extremists, including the grotesque development of religious sectarian voting.”

He adds that “The creation of independent Muslim political parties and the alliance with the far left is a predictable but nonetheless disturbing result of rapid mass migration,” responsible for producing “a backlash” on the right. “Neither side,” says Finkelstein, “seems to like Jews very much.”

Allison Pearson is more explicit, writing in the *Telegraph*, “We all know who is to blame for the rise in anti-Semitism—and it is not Israel”.

She claims that “It has been perfectly clear to many of us that, since pro-Palestinian groups applied on October 7, 2023, the very day of the Hamas massacres in Israel, for permission to march through London, an epidemic of Jew-hatred was likely to be the result.”

Her article denounces a “two-tier system that sees police and other groups protecting Islamists at the expense of Jewish safety” and a Labour government “Dependent on votes from the Muslim community”.

The claim that the actions of the Israeli government have had no impact is an absurd lie, told to excuse not only the government in Jerusalem but its defenders in the UK.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his allies repeatedly declare that Israel's genocide of the Palestinians is carried out on behalf of Jewish safety and interests. Marches supposedly against antisemitism organised by Zionist groups are bedecked in Israeli flags. Groups like the CST apply criteria which conflate Jews with supporters of the Israeli state.

This has led to an increase in antisemitic sentiment among a small minority, and to a smaller number of reactionary individuals

responding to Israel's war crimes and ethnic cleansing with ethnic violence and abuse against Jews.

To hold the political left and Muslims responsible for the increase, let alone to conflate it with legitimate hostility to the State of Israel, is grotesque—especially when the Zionist accusers and the Starmer government have blood on their hands. They denounce the equation by others of Jews and the State of Israel and its crimes, while themselves portraying an identity between Jewishness and the Zionist state.

Slander on the scale now being mounted by the government and the media is preparation for sweeping political repression. No area of life went unmentioned in Starmer's opening speech Monday, promising a host of measures to combat alleged antisemitism.

They included "stronger powers to deal with protests, ensuring intimidation is not tolerated on our streets" and "working to speed up sentencing for offences".

The government had also "commissioned independent reviews into antisemitism in education and health services", investing £7 million "to tackle antisemitism" in "our schools, colleges and universities". Starmer added that "We will now expect them to publish the scale of the problem on their campuses, as well as the specific steps they have taken to clamp down on it."

In "cultural venues and spaces", where "public funding is being used to promote or platform antisemitism, the Arts Council must act, using its powers to suspend, withdraw and claw back funding". The government would be "stopping those who spread hatred from entering the country and giving the Charity Commission stronger powers to act against organisations that enable it".

Recent years, especially those of Israel's genocide, have already shown what this means. Protests have been rerouted and cancelled, and thousands of protesters arrested—including under counter-terror laws in connection with the proscription of Palestine Action.

An "Index of Repression" set up by The European Legal Support Centre (ELSC) and Forensic Architecture records 964 instances of repression against pro-Palestinian speech and protest in the UK between January 2019 and August 2025. Regular targets already include students, teachers and academics, public sector workers and cultural figures.

Reports published on steps taken by universities in relation to antisemitism find, in the words of the ELSC and the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRSMES), "a chilling effect among staff and students, deterring individuals from speaking about or organising events that discuss Palestinian human rights".

Thousands of artists have protested the repeated censorship of all forms of cultural expression in sympathy with the Palestinians and opposed to Israel's genocide.

Starmer's summit is a pledge to intensify this censorship and repression. A 2025 Paris Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism was followed by multiple prosecutions of left-wing opponents of the Gaza genocide and the campaign for the "Yadan Bill" outlawing criticism of Israel.

As in France, the Labour government's campaign is carried out in alliance with the most right-wing forces. Depictions of Islam as a fifth column threatening "British values" dovetail with fascist conspiracy theories of the "Great Replacement" of Christian

whites with Muslims.

This line-up was made clear when Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch openly defended seeking a ban of an upcoming demonstration commemorating the Nakba (the mass expulsion of the Palestinians by Israel) while refusing to do the same for a far-right march planned the same day.

They were, she said, "not the same". Tommy Robinson, a self-proclaimed Zionist, and his band of Islamophobic fascists were engaging in legitimate "criticism of religion", whereas with anti-genocide protesters: "It's not the faith that's being attacked, it's the people."

As before, Robinson's "Unite the Kingdom" march will see a forest of Union Flags and St George's Crosses interspersed with Israeli state flags—an accurate reflection of the political company the Israeli government keeps.

An International Conference on Combating Antisemitism held in Jerusalem last March was attended by leading representatives of the far-right French National Rally, Brothers of Italy, Spanish Vox, Sweden Democrats, Dutch Freedom Party and Hungarian Fidesz, plus Argentina's Javier Milei. Robinson himself was welcomed in October.

It is revolting to be lectured to by these people on antisemitism. They are racist representatives of the nationalist sewer which spawned all the horrific ethnic violence of the 20th century, fought against by the socialist working class and the Marxist movement.

As David North, chairman of the International Editorial Board of the World Socialist Web Site, explained in his lecture series "The Logic of Zionism":

Zionism, which emerged as an offspring of imperialist colonialism and as an enemy of socialism and a scientific conception of history and society, necessarily based itself on the most reactionary elements of nationalist politics and ideology.

The socialist left rejects with contempt the campaign to malign and criminalise it by people responsible for the historic crime of waging genocide in the name of the Jewish people, for the rise in antisemitism which has resulted and for boosting the Islamophobic far-right.

Starmer is providing his support to these reactionary ends by cracking down on democratic rights in the name of combatting antisemitism. He must be opposed.



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