

Greens' anti-Zionist policy triggers right-wing firestorm in UK and internationally

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A furious backlash has followed the adoption, at the Green Party conference in Brighton, of a motion condemning Zionism as an ethno-nationalist project based on the dispossession and genocide of the Palestinian people.

Motion A105 is now party policy. It states that anti-Zionism should not be equated with antisemitism and calls for Palestinian liberation, the right of return, Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS), and a full arms embargo against Israel. It advocates for a single democratic state throughout historic Palestine.

Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar immediately announced that Green Party leader Zack Polanski, who is Jewish, is barred from entering Israel. Its foreign ministry declared Sunday night that the Greens' resolution "constitutes a clear antisemitic text" legitimising "the destruction of the state of Israel".

In the UK, screaming media headlines denounced left-wing activists for taking over the party, accusing the Greens of creating a hostile environment for Jews, and branding the motion's founder, Lubna Speitan, as a supporter of terrorism.

US President Donald Trump's antisemitism tsar, Ambassador Rabbi Yehuda Kaploun, told a press briefing in Washington that the administration would make "representations" to the UK government over the Greens' motion.

Unsurprisingly, the Labour Party has responded with the most vitriol. Its chair Bridget Phillipson—who voted to support the proscription of Palestine Action and who refused to back an arms embargo against Israel's genocide—called the Greens' resolution "shameful", saying it "crossed a line".

She demanded the Greens leadership repudiate the motion, saying the vote by members "underlines how important it was that we changed the Labour Party from top to bottom and ripped out the scourge of antisemitism from within the party."

Senior Labour figures demanded that Burnham rule out any future coalition with the Greens. If an election were held tomorrow, Labour would need the support of at least two other parties to secure a majority.

Tony Blair, former Labour prime minister and unindicted war criminal, warned Prime Minister Andy Burnham, "There are those in my party, Labour, who might be tempted by the so-called progressive Red-Green coalition—an alliance between Labour and the Greens to unite the British left. But this vote should serve as a warning of the dangers such an alliance would bring."

Blair, whose "Gaza Economic Blueprint" was offered to Trump as part of his grotesque plans for a "Riviera" over the bodies of 80,000 Palestinians killed, including 21,638 children, also declared the Greens had crossed a "dangerous line".

On its face, the response to Sunday's motion is massively disproportionate. Fewer than 2,000 Green Party members voted on the motion, around 1 percent of its total membership. It carried narrowly: 1,022 votes in favour and 813 against.

Nevertheless, it is the first time a major capitalist party in Britain has declared itself to be anti-Zionist. For decades, support for Israel and Zionism has been an article of faith for every parliamentary party, beginning with the Atlee Labour government's recognition of Israel in 1949-50.

Britain has backed each of Israel's expansionist wars since the Nakba. Anthony Eden's Conservative government helped orchestrate Israel's invasion of Egypt in 1956 during the Suez crisis. The Wilson Labour government backed Israel during the Six-Day War against Syria, Jordan and Egypt. Since 2023, Britain has provided military, financial and political backing for the Gaza genocide and Israel's criminal wars against Lebanon and Iran.

The anti-Zionist vote at the Green Party conference reflects a massive shift in popular consciousness. Israel's brutal war on the Palestinians has utterly discredited the Zionist project in the eyes of millions around the world. Hundreds of thousands in Britain have protested the genocide month after month. Artists and intellectuals have expressed outrage over the Israeli government's war of annihilation, declaring their support for the Palestinians.

The shift in public sentiment over Gaza has created major problems for the Labour Party. Elected in July 2024 on the lowest-ever vote for an incoming government, Labour's support haemorrhaged in Muslim areas and among young people outraged by Burnham's predecessor Keir Starmer's naked defence of genocide. Starmer's pathological crusade against the left, culminating in the proscription of Palestine Action as a terrorist organisation and followed by thousands of arrests of peaceful activists, served only to inflame public anger.

Mass left-wing and pro-Palestinian sentiment among millions of workers and youth forced Zarah Sultana and Jeremy Corbyn—witch-hunted out of the Labour Party on accusations of antisemitism—to announce in July 2025 the creation of a new left party to challenge Labour, which attracted 850,000 sign-ups within weeks. But Your Party soon imploded. On the eve of its founding conference, Corbyn launched his own witch-hunt against "dual members" of nominally socialist parties. He was determined to prevent any working-class mobilisation against the Labour government.

Polanski capitalised on the resulting political vacuum. He distanced himself from his earlier support for Zionism and offered mea culpas for having repeated the bogus allegations of antisemitism against Corbyn in 2018 ("I got lost in propaganda", he told the *Times* in April). Polanski positioned himself as a "green-socialist". Condemning the Gaza genocide, austerity and climate change, the Greens have signed up more than 250,000 members.

Zionism in crisis

Right-wing backlash in Green Party

A warning must be made. Notwithstanding the ferocious witch-hunt following Sunday's anti-Zionist vote, the Greens offer no genuine means of reversing British imperialism's support for the Gaza genocide.

Polanski absented himself from Sunday's vote on the anti-Zionist motion. He had publicly argued for substantial amendments, opposing the resolution's denunciation of Zionism as racism and its call for a single Palestinian state. He belatedly fell in behind the motion to avoid destroying his credibility.

The Greens' leadership overwhelmingly opposes the motion. Four of its five MPs—Sian Berry, Carla Denyer, Ellie Chowns and Adrian Ramsay—have signalled they will fight to overturn it.

Deputy leader Rachel Millward said the motion was “problematic”, telling *Sky News* she “certainly would not be voting for that”. Former Greens leader Caroline Lucas spoke against the motion at conference. Phil Davies, former deputy leader in Wales, resigned in protest, describing the motion as “pointless” and “idiotic”. He said Welsh party leader Anthony Slaughter supported his decision to quit, adding he hoped the Welsh Greens would vote to split from the Green Party of England and Wales at next month's annual conference.

Sandy Ruthven, chair of Amnesty International UK and the Greens' mayoral candidate in Bristol in 2021, quit the party, saying the motion marked “the end of the line”. He posted on X: “In seeking to court the hard-left vote, we have failed to confront prejudice when it appears on our own side.”

The European Green Party, which represents 47 affiliated parties, condemned the resolution, saying it “goes against our agreed positions of the EGP and its Member Parties, therefore as EGP we unequivocally distance ourselves from it.”

Felix Banaszak, co-leader of the German Greens, said the motion was “intolerable and unacceptable” and “runs counter to everything that Alliance 90/the Greens stands for in Germany”.

Preparations to overturn the resolution and block any future membership initiatives are underway. Chowns, a former co-leader of the Greens, said the party's governance and policy-making structures “urgently need to be modernised”.

Pseudo-left anti-Marxists

Polanski now faces the same type of witch-hunt that greeted Corbyn's mealy-mouthed opposition to Zionism. He will be no less ready to capitulate to his critics, and based on past performance, perhaps more so.

At this juncture, socialist-minded workers and youth are being systematically disarmed by the anti-Marxist politics of the pseudo-left parties, which have sought to dress up Polanski and the Greens in socialist clothes.

Responding to the furore over the Greens' anti-Zionist motion, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) wrote on October 6, “This whole debacle has exposed what we have explained from the beginning. Since last year's ‘Green surge’ there have really been two Green Parties existing side-by-side: an old guard of liberals, who stand for a nicer, greener form of capitalism; and the tens of thousands of radicalised workers and youth, who were galvanised on the basis of anti-imperialism, fighting for Palestine, radical wealth redistribution, and taking on the political establishment.

“There had been an uneasy coexistence between these two camps ever since Polanski's victory. The Green leader himself has done all he can to

smooth over this divide – much in the same way that Jeremy Corbyn tried (and failed) to do in the Labour Party in the 2010s.”

The depiction of the Greens as “two parties in one” insists that mass pressure from below can push them toward socialism. It repeats the claims made by the Socialist Party (another opportunist offshoot from Ted Grant's Militant tendency) that Corbyn's 2015 leadership victory in the Labour Party created “two parties in one” that “opened up the possibility of undoing the Blairite transformation of the Labour Party into a pro-capitalist party safe for big business.”

On October 6, the RCP wrote: “To cut across the ‘Burnham bounce’ and Reform's populism, the Greens need to assert themselves as a genuine anti-establishment party of the left, and certainly not a pressure group for Labour. This can only happen if they are armed with a clear and consistent programme of anti-austerity, anti-imperialism, and anti-capitalism.”

But the Greens are a pro-imperialist, pro-NATO, and pro-capitalist party. This basic class designation is not changed one iota by the “left” rhetoric of Polanski, nor the actions of various anti-Zionist activists within its ranks.

The Greens' anti-Zionist resolution provides no effective basis for the struggle to defeat Zionism and for Palestinian liberation. It portrays Zionism as the outcome of “European settler-colonial systems of domination and oppression”, not capitalism. Its slogan “Zionism is racism” reduces a political and class question to a moral-racial one. It implies that the problem of Zionism can be remedied by anti-racism—the inclusion of Palestinians as equal citizens within the existing capitalist state framework.

Zionism, a national-exclusivist ideology developed by a section of the Jewish bourgeoisie in its struggle against Marxism, has long been utilised by the imperialist powers to secure control of the oil-rich Middle East. It must be fought by the working class on a socialist basis, in opposition to the Arab bourgeois states that collude with Washington and Tel Aviv in the brutal repression and displacement of the Palestinians.

This Marxist class analysis (see David North's *The Logic of Zionism: From Nationalist Myth to the Gaza Genocide*) calls for the dismantling of the Zionist state and its replacement by a unified socialist state of Arab and Jewish workers, part of the broader struggle by the working class and oppressed masses for the United Socialist States of the Middle East.

The conditions to develop such a fight are emerging. The explosive eruption of the class struggle in France and Spain shows that workers and youth in the imperialist countries are searching for a vehicle to fight war, genocide, austerity and the threat of fascism.

Workers and youth must not allow themselves to be drawn into yet another reformist trap. No substitute or opportunistic shortcut can replace the task of building a genuine revolutionary, socialist, internationalist party of, for, and by the working class. The fight against the genocide in Gaza must be waged by workers across Europe, the Middle East and globally to defeat the violent drive by the imperialist powers to redivide the world, and to establish socialism.



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