



PERSPECTIVES

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Anti-Semitic Conspiracy Theories Proliferate in Labour

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Conspiracy theories can usually be found in anti-Semitic environments. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn is a terrorist sympathizer, supporter of Holocaust distorters, anti-Israel inciter, and part-time anti-Semite. He has also promoted conspiracy theories about Israel. Years ago, senior Labourites were heard to promote anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. Nowadays conspiracy theories targeting Jews, Israel, and others are being heard once again in Labour circles.

Conspiracy theories can usually be found in environments where anti-Semitism is substantially present. The classic, most extreme case – a lie originating in Tsarist Russia – is the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Many extreme anti-Semitic conspiracy theories flourish in the Arab world.

In publications about the anti-Semitism scandal in the British Labour party, a slew of conspiracy theories by elected party members have come to the fore.

Jeremy Corbyn, who has been Labour leader since 2015, is a terrorist sympathizer, supporter of Holocaust distorters, anti-Israel inciter, and part-time anti-Semite. He has also promoted conspiracy theories about Israel. In 2010, Corbyn spoke at a meeting of the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign in London at which he mentioned the shooting of Turkish activists by Israeli commandos on a ship of the Gaza flotilla. He remarked that British MPs had made speeches in Parliament on this issue with a pre-prepared script that he was sure had been written by then Israeli Ambassador Ron Prosor. "They all came with same key words," Corbyn said. "It was rather like reading a European document looking for buzz-words. And the buzz-words were: Israel's 'need for security, the extremism of the people on one ship and the existence of Turkish militants on the vessel.'" The *Daily Mail* checked the transcript of the Commons debate

in question and was unable to find any evidence that these buzzwords were used by any MPs.

Two years later, Corbyn gave an interview to the Iranian propaganda outlet *PressTV* in which he commented on a terrorist attack at an Egyptian army base in the Sinai Peninsula that killed 16 Egyptian soldiers. He suggested that Israel had been behind the attack because it had an interest in increased violence in Sinai and a destabilization of the Muslim Brotherhood regime. He said, "In whose interests is it to kill Egyptians other than Israel, concerned about the growing closeness of relationships between Palestine and the new Egyptian government? ... I suspect the hand of Israel in this whole process of destabilization."

There are several classic conspiracy theories about Jews currently circulating within Labour. One was articulated by former Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, who resigned from the party earlier this year after having been suspended for some time. Livingstone claims that charges of anti-Semitism leveled against individual Labourites and the party in general are used to smear the left and silence criticism of Israel, an assertion that British sociologist David Hirsh defines as the "Livingstone formulation."

In 2003, veteran Labour MP Tom Dallyel said that then-Prime Minister Tony Blair was unduly influenced in his policy on the Middle East in favor of Israel by a cabal of Jewish advisers. He specifically mentioned Peter Mandelson, Lord Levy, and Jack Straw. The last of these, who was Foreign Secretary at the time, is an evangelical Christian with one Jewish grandfather.

The same year, Labour peer Lord Ahmed claimed that Jewish lawyers and media were responsible for the length of the prison sentence he received after causing a fatal car crash. He resigned after the party suspended him.

In recent years, some Labour officials have claimed that Israel was behind ISIS. One was Blackburn councilor and former mayor Salim Mulla. He too was suspended by the party.

Muhammad Pappu, a local councilor in the London borough of Tower Hamlets, was praised by Corbyn for his help in creating a "fair, just and decent society." This is the same Pappu who shared messages on Facebook in which he accused Britain of attacking Syria "to install a Rothschild bank." He has also shared posts on social media claiming that Israel staged 9/11 and was responsible for the London terrorist bombings and the Paris terrorist attacks.

While Corbyn has never apologized for his conspiracy claims, some lesser Labour officials have expressed regret for having promoted conspiracy theories alleging Jewish world control and responsibility for terrorism. In December 2015, Labour councilor Irfan Muhammad, of the London borough of Lambeth, posted on his Facebook page:

"Jews working in the World Trade Center received a text message before the incident, 'Do not come to work on September 11th.'" When this was exposed he resigned his post as councilor and apologized. Andy Slack, a Labour city councilor in Chesterfield, shared: "The modern State of Israel was created by the Rothschilds, not God, and what they are doing to the Palestinian people now is exactly what they intend for the whole world." He too later apologized.

On the other hand, John Clarke, a city councilor and prospective Labour parliamentary candidate, shared this tweet in 2017 by a neo-Nazi: "The Rothschilds have used usury alongside modern Israel as an imperial instrument to take over the world and all of its resources, including you and I." Rather than apologize for the retweet, Clarke commented that it contained a great deal of truth.

The trade union leader Mark Serwotka, head of the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), is an avid supporter of Jeremy Corbyn. Referring to the anti-Semitism row within Labour, he told a conference that it was possible "that Israel could have created a story that doesn't 'exist' in order to distract attention from atrocities." Serwotka had been expelled from Labour in the 1990s as an extreme leftist but was allowed to rejoin after Corbyn became its leader.

Ian Hilpus, a former BBC producer and Corbyn supporter, wrote about the Labour leader that the Zionists are "part of a conspiracy to undermine the most honest man in politics today." He posted this on a Facebook group called We Support Jeremy Corbyn that has 70,000 members.

While conspiracy theories proliferate about Jews and Israel, they are not the only targets for attack. Andrew Murray, policy advisor to Corbyn, suggested in an article that the British security services were undermining Corbyn. Mendy Richards, selected as the prospective Labour parliamentary candidate for the constituency seat of Worcester, was banned from bringing claims to the court without the judge's permission after she made nonsensical accusations against the security services, the Metropolitan Police, the army, the postal service, her water company, her gas, electricity, and broadband providers, and more.

An earlier version of this article, co-written with Irene Kuruc, was [published](#) on October 17, 2018 by [Algemeiner](#).

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