



ALWAYS with the
oppressed

NEVER with the
oppressor

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144 Jews who felt safe in Corbyn's Labour Party

In August 2018, JVL put out a Call for Testimonies about whether Jews felt safe in the Labour Party.

We received 144 testimonies from Labour Party members of Jewish heritage. They were submitted within little more than a week of the 'Call' being published. They are members of scores of constituencies spread right across England and Wales. They include responses from Holocaust survivors and children of Holocaust survivors; from refugees from the Nazis; and from children and grandchildren of refugees from the Nazis and pogroms. Some are from regular attenders at Orthodox and Reform and Liberal shuls as well as others from secular Jews; some describe themselves as Zionists others as anti-Zionists; some are strong supporters of Jeremy Corbyn, others are more sceptical; some are long-standing Party members, others are Jews who were attracted to join by the vision laid out by Jeremy Corbyn.

They are more diverse than they are homogenous except in one crucial aspect: they all felt safe, welcome and valued in the Corbyn-led Labour party as Jews; their many experiences of antisemitism are elsewhere. Sadly, more than a few no longer feel safe and welcome in Starmer's Labour Party and have recently left

The responses have been anonymised as, bizarrely, speaking out about not being subject to antisemitism as Jews risks disciplinary action in today's Labour party.

The testimonies were sent with the intention that they be submitted to the EHRC. However, we did not seek and do not have permission to disclose witness identities in the public record. We therefore requested that EHRC safeguard the confidentiality and privacy of those who volunteered to testify.

They were submitted to the EHRC but there is no reference to them in their report.

The call read:

Labour Jews, Speak Up! A Call for Testimonies

The misnamed Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) has stated that its goal is the eviction of Jeremy Corbyn from public life.

To this end, the CAA has referred the Labour Party to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) alleging 'institutional antisemitism'.

The Chief Executive of the EHRC already stated in 2017 that Labour 'must do more to establish that it is not a racist party'. She did so on the basis of hearsay that had not been investigated and in fact was false.

Notwithstanding its reckless and cavalier record on this issue, the EHRC's judgement is likely to carry weight in public discussion.

The CAA is now soliciting testimonies from Labour Party members in support of its complaint.

The Time Is Now for the Silent Majority of Labour Jews to Stand Up and Be Counted!

Resist the Cynical Attack on the Labour Party!

Resist the Trivialisation and Instrumentalisation of Antisemitism!

Defend Our Party and Its Democratically Elected Leadership!

If you believe Labour is being misrepresented and traduced, now is the time to speak up.

We need your testimonies about your experiences in the Labour Party to submit to the EHRC.

Please note: While we have edited these testimonies to remove identifying information we have not edited them for spelling and grammar

1. **Name:** Female

CLP: Wales

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I write to give my testimony.

I've only been in the party for three years but I've never heard a single antisemitic comment or experienced any hostility against Jewish people in Labour Party circles. I've attended meetings where Israel and the Palestinian cause were discussed with great reasonableness and courtesy and there has certainly been no antisemitism.

Two things for context - first, it's only recently that I've learned that the term 'Zionist' has been appropriated by right-wing racists as a term of racial abuse. Of course it has a much longer history as a political term to describe certain ideas about Israel and I have heard the term used often by both Jews and non-Jews in this sense.

Secondly, to be clear about my 'credentials'. My name is Jewish, my father's father was Jewish. The latter lost cousins in Auschwitz and had family property appropriated by the Nazis. The family has been 'secular' and intermarried for three generations and I have never been in a synagogue. Nonetheless I think I have a fair idea what antisemitism looks like.

2. **Name:** Male

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 12 years (1992-2001; 2015-)

Testimony:

I was a Jewish member of the Labour Party from 1992 until 2001, when I left because of Tony Blair's attacks on single parents. I re-joined in 2015 after Jeremy Corbyn won the leadership and restored the Labour Party on a path towards democratic socialism. I have attended many meetings and conferences over these years and not once have encountered any personal anti-semitism towards me, nor have I even witnessed a single anti-semitic comment. That does not mean there are no anti-semitic people in the Labour Party of course, it just means I have never experienced any.

I have, on the other hand been critical myself of (and heard others criticise) Israeli domestic and foreign policy when I saw its persecution of its Palestinian population and its aggressive militarism. If that means I hate Jews, then logic has been turned on its head.

3. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 30 years

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour party on and off for about 30 years. My membership number is xxxx. I have always felt welcome in the Labour party and at no time have I ever suffered any antisemitism. However it is vital in this context to accept that many people in the labour party justifiably are critical of Israel and of its ideology Zionism. In my view their sensitivity to robust criticism should never be mistaken for antisemitism which is prejudice against Jews as Jews. Israel is a state and not a protected characteristic under equalities law. Zionism is a political ideology subscribed to by both Jews and non Jews and its adherents must recognise that like all political ideologies it is open to debate which could get heated. This can never be anti-Semitic even if many Jews feel offended. That is the price we pay for free speech.

4. **Name:** Male

CLP: Notts

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am a Jewish member of the Labour Party and currently Press Officer for the xxx CLP, one of the largest in the East Midlands. I have had a lifetime of activism in the Labour Party, the Trade Union movement and innumerable national and international campaigns and was employed as a fulltime TU Organiser until my retirement. I have also lived in several different parts of the country, including London, Birmingham, Brighton and Nottingham, my present home.

I believe this breadth of experience makes me particularly well able to comment on the current allegations against the Labour Party in general and Jeremy Corbyn in particular.

In terms of antisemitism generally, I have personally experienced this in the past, from being physically threatened as a child to hurtful and inaccurate stereotypes as an adult. Those in the recent past have been very much rooted in ignorance rather than outright racism and those responsible have often been shocked to realise how their words could be interpreted.

At this point, I need to say quite unequivocally that I have never had an antisemitic statement made either to me or in front of me by any member of the Labour Party. Does this mean there are no antisemites in the party? No, it doesn't: there are antisemites everywhere and antisemitism isn't going away anytime soon. What it does mean is that it is extremely uncommon in the party and certainly not "institutional".

It is my strongly held view, borne out by direct observation, that the "crisis" in the Labour Party has been created by an assortment of people with a range of ulterior motives, using antisemitism as a battering ram. Some of these are clearly related to a fundamental antipathy to the party, particularly the allegations from the Jewish Board of Deputies and the Jewish Leadership Council. It is telling that the former Chair of the JLC is now the Chief Executive of the Conservative Party and also worth noting that the antisemitic attacks on Ed Miliband (and his father) came from the political right, not the left.

Other current allegations come from people who are extreme pro-Zionists or are strongly opposed to any leftward movement by the Labour Party. In other words, this issue is about about politics, not antisemitism. It is absolutely crucial that the distinction between criticism of the Israeli government's treatment of the Palestinian people and outright antisemitism is maintained: they are not the same thing, despite the possibility of some overlap. Allegations

of racism of any sort are very powerful and must not be made without supporting evidence or as a means of closing down an important political debate.

I am happy to enlarge on any of these points on request.

5. **Name:** Male

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I would like to say that I am appalled to learn that Jeremy Corbyn has yet again been unfairly accused of antisemitism and my Labour Party of institutionalised antisemitism. I find this ludicrous.

I am Jewish, a 92 year old Labour Party Member, and supporter of Jeremy Corbyn. I was brought up in the East End of London in the 1930's so I know what real antisemitism is, and I learnt to recognise our true friends within the Labour movement.

It is ridiculous to allege that there is now any significant antisemitism in the Labour Party. My 70 years in the Labour movement confirms this and that includes recent meetings with members of Momentum who I found very welcoming.

I believe the problem is rather coming from those anti-Corbyn groups who wish to conflate anti-Zionism with antisemitism, and silence critics of Israeli Government policies. This distortion promotes the false concept that Corbyn and Labour are not in favour of a secure state of Israel. This in turn feeds into the understandable, sometimes subconscious fear of many Jews living here, that their safe refuge in the event of another genocide risk, could be under threat.

My hope is that you will carefully review the evidence for these unfounded claims against Corbyn and Labour, reject these allegations, and reassure Jewish residents on all sides of the political spectrum, that they will be safe with a Labour Government led by Jeremy Corbyn.

Yours sincerely,

6. **Name:** Female

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >29 years

Testimony:

I am giving evidence against the slurs and insults made against my Party and my family with regard to antisemitism.

As regards the Labour Party, internal Labour Party records would show my continuous membership since 1989. I was also a member, with some breaks in the period 1975-1988 too, but the record keeping internally was not as efficient then. I have been a member of the Party in *6 different CLPs*. I have held officer positions at Branch level and have been Chair of a Constituency Labour Party (CLP) and am currently Vice-Chair (Membership) of xxx CLP. This means I have been to a lot of meetings at many levels of the Party. Branches meet once a month, the CLP meets once a month and there are many informal meetings and gatherings.

I can honestly say I have not experienced antisemitism at any of these meetings. The only incidences of antisemitism in the Labour Party I have come across are those reported in the media.

....

As a Jew, I would have noticed if he [Corbyn] had made antisemitic statements, engaged in antisemitic acts or otherwise manifested antisemitism. I can tell you, definitively and emphatically he is not antisemitic. I am enraged and appalled at the accusations made against him. As far as I am concerned, he sets the gold standard for anti-racism of all kinds.

My Jewish credentials, in case there are any doubts, are that both my maternal grandparents were orthodox Jews. My mother married 'out' and gave up her religion.

7. **Name:** Female

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I have been a Labour Party supporter all my adult life (I'm 51 now) and a member since 2015 having joined when the chance to vote for a democratic socialist and anti-austerity leader came about. To this date I have NEVER experienced ANY anti-Semitism from Labour members whatsoever. I have not witnessed any anti-Semitism from Labour members and as a Jewish Labour Party member I have been utterly enraged and disgusted by the behaviour of certain "anti-Corbyn" Labour Party MPs bringing the party into disrepute by abusing the Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn and insulting the membership for the purpose of undermining the Leadership to fulfill their own agendas. I stand by Jeremy Corbyn 100% in the certain knowledge that his historic record of campaigning against all forms of racism and anti-Semitism is consistent and true and that he is in NO WAY an anti-semite. The Labour Party should not adopt the full IHRA definition of anti-Semitism as it is as its vague definitions renders any criticism of Israel potentially anti-Semitic and NO country or state should be above criticism or international law. Shalom

8. **Name:** Male

CLP: East Sussex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 48 years

Testimony:

I am writing to object in the strongest terms to the allegation made by the 'Campaign Against Antisemitism' (CAA) that the Labour Party is guilty of institutional antisemitism.

I am a Jewish working class socialist from an East End of London & Glaswegian family who escaped from the antisemitic pogroms in Russia and Poland and travelled to Britain in the early 20th century to save their lives.

This however did not stop my family having to actively campaign against racism in the UK, which in our experience has always come from right wing forces.

Whether it was battling with Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists in 1936 at the Battle of Cable Street when he tried to march through our East End neighbourhood or rabble rouse post-war in our Hackney locality or from the National Front or BNP when they continued their vile peddling of hatred, our family and friends have always had to campaign, often against the advice of the Jewish establishment to stay indoors and not get involved.

In my youth at school I was called a "fat Jew boy" and attacked.

I know what real antisemitism looks like.

All my immediate family have been members of the Labour Party and my parents and I have also been active in our trade unions, including as representatives/branch officers.

In my case, I am also a retired life member of Unison, having worked for over 30 years in local government and education up to a senior level including as an Assistant Director at a London based university.

Given that the authorities I have worked for have often been in inner city areas with very diverse populations, I am professionally also very well aware of equal opportunity policy, appropriate conduct and what constitutes real discrimination.

Since first joining in 1970 I have been an active member and officer of six Constituency Labour

Parties in various parts of the UK, a National Committee member of the National Organisation of Labour Students and most recently a Labour Councillor. I am also proud to be a member and officer of xx Constituency Labour Party

It is from this background that I am able to contribute this testimonial.

In all these years I have never heard or heard of one antisemitic comment in Party circles that involves insulting Jews because they are Jews by a Labour Party member with appropriate details that would stand up to proper scrutiny by independent knowledgeable minds or a court of law.

In addition, given that the allegation that the LP is 'institutionally antisemitic' is very recent, it presumes that we have suddenly attracted a whole cohort of racist people AND that our Party is not only doing little or nothing about it, but actually encouraging it by inaction.

With well over 500,000 members, the largest political Party in Europe , it is always possible that we may have one or two misguided people who need re-educating, but that does not make us 'institutionally antisemitic'.

I would also hope that the EHRC is aware of the context within which the allegation sits: that of the deliberate conflation of anti-zionism with anti-semitism with regard to the activities of the Israeli government. Their mistreatment of Arab Israelis, Palestinians, Gazans and oppositionist Jews is in my view understandably causing an increasing number of people to become stressed to the point of outrage.

From its inception in the late 19th century many Jews like my immediate family have considered Zionism to be a reactionary nationalist political movement to be challenged. It has often used violence against opponents, done what it can to get us to leave our homes in other countries to live in Israel and since that State's inception, developed institutional discrimination via its Constitution, laws and state organisation's against non-Jews.

In contrast, since its creation in 1900, our Party has often been at the forefront of campaigning for civil and human rights for all people.

In my view, It is that activity, particularly if Labour becomes the next government that the CAA and their friends fear.

I am sure that the Commission is as well aware as other appropriate bodies of the Party's publicly available and well publicised anti-racist and equality policies, rules of conduct and actions.

I consider the allegation and action by the CAA to be a vexatious and dangerous action by a small group of right-wing people, backed by our political opponents, including those in the Jewish establishment such as the Conservative Party supporting leaders of the undemocratic, unrepresentative Board of Deputies, certain Rabbis and the Jewish and mainstream media.

They appear to be doing everything in their power to attack Jeremy Corbyn, dictate how our Party operates, and hamper the democratic election of an alternative Labour government led by him.

I am also aware that the CAA is registered as a charity and that this status is being challenged on the basis that their politically biased activities are forbidden under Charity Commission rules.

May I suggest that your time might be better spent scrutinising, investigating and pursuing the alleged racism and other discriminatory activities by members of ultra-right wing groups, UKIP and the Conservative Party as for example well publicised by people such as Baroness Warsi, when she resigned as a Government Minister.

9. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

Hi,

I have been in the Labour party for approx 3 years. I am of significant Jewish heritage. My father is Eastern European Jewish and grew up in Hungary during the second world war. After the war he went to Israel and was in the Israeli Army. My maternal grandfather was also Eastern European Jewish and emigrated to the US in the 1920s.

I have always regarded my Jewish heritage as something to be proud of with many brave figures and an intellectual honesty and preparedness to fight for what is right. Jewish people have suffered so much through anti-semitism and especially the Holocaust that it is right and expected that as a community issues of racism should be clearly identified and challenged at an early stage. Racism is something which should be taken very seriously and not trivialised for cheap political point scoring. Sadly with racism in general on the rise it is more behoven than ever that people of varying political persuasions can put many issues aside and agree that racism should be challenged. Moreover one would expect in the Labour party that everyone agrees that all racism is wrong and not that one ethno/religious group should have more of a claim to entitlement in this area than others. Prioritising one group over others, and thus one form of racism as more or less important than others, in this way is undoubtedly racist and should be called out as such.

Unfortunately my experience of the Labour party is that this is not always the case. In xx Labour party it is unfortunately the case that in the few Labour party meetings I have been to, and several canvassing sessions, there is a view that challenging racism which may be committed by Jewish people, even if not in the Labour party, is not acceptable and in fact can be shouted down as anti-semitic. To be precise

i. On canvassing sessions if I have suggested that State of Israel has been any less than perfect there have been members of the Labour party who have been aggressively dismissive of this notion to the extent I felt uncomfortable and unwelcome in their presence.

ii. I have witnessed post holding members of the Labour party accuse other members of being anti semitic with no evidence whatsoever, for what in my view was a disagreement regarding other political issues. It appeared to be the case that significant elements in the room felt unable or unwilling to challenge this.

In short I felt there was significant pressure to adhere to a political standpoint or be made to feel unwelcome. This political pressure suggests that all Jews should follow a specific viewpoint. This in my mind is a clear example of stereotyping and racism. For any EHRC analysis to be meaningful it needs to address the issue of Racism as a whole and cannot be limited to one specific dimension. In this case it needs to address not only anti semitism but also pressure put on Jewish members, in many cases by other Jewish members, but not exclusively, to adhere to certain viewpoints because they are Jewish.

Yours Sincerely

10. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

Dear Sir or Madam

I am a Jewish member of the Labour party -

I re-joined the Party after the 2015 general election, though before it became clear that I would have the opportunity to vote for a true democratic socialist as party leader - i.e. Jeremy Corbyn. When that became clear I felt real hope for change for the first time in decades and I have voted twice for Jeremy as Party leader.

After I re-joined the Party in 2015 I started attending my local ward group meetings. I have participated in canvassing with other local activists from my ward group. I have attended social / fundraising events with my ward group and our neighbouring ward group.

I have attended a CLP meeting too. I have experienced NO anti-Semitism at all in the context of these meetings and activities. Unsurprisingly, given the progressive nature of the Labour Party and its long-established credentials as an anti-racist party, I find my fellow party members are extremely respectful of one another. Several other regular attendees at our ward group meetings are also Jewish.

I don't know how many of my fellow local party members know I am Jewish. My Dad isn't Jewish and I have his family name. But I do wear a Star of David quite often. This is my way of keeping in mind the family I never met, and to remember my maternal Grandmother who thankfully escaped to Britain in time from Czechoslovakia.

I do not believe that the Labour Party is an anti-Semitic party. I do not believe our leader, Jeremy Corbyn, is an anti-Semite. I think that nothing could be further from the truth. As has been said many times, in a party with such a large membership, it is probably sadly inevitable that there will be a handful of people who have unacceptable views about the Jewish people. But I believe that Party, under the stewardship of Jennie Formby, is trying hard to address this. What has been extremely painful is what I believe has been the exploitation of the issue of anti-Semitism for political purposes by people within and outside the Party. It is hard to describe the hurt one feels when the memory of those we lost in the most appalling circumstances is invoked for cynical political ends.

To reiterate, I have never experienced anti-Semitism in the Labour party and I am aware of no evidence whatsoever that would cause me even to begin to think that Jeremy Corbyn might hold anti-Semitic views.

Yours sincerely

11. **Name:** Male

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

As a British Jew, I have never experienced prejudice within the Labour party, of which I am a member. Reading the quite literally daily smears against Corbyn has not convinced me for a single moment that either he or the party as a whole has a race problem - but I have now stopped reading the Guardian because of its right-wing bias.

12. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

To the Equality and Human Rights Commission – Antisemitism in the Labour Party

I understand that the EHRC is taking submissions from Jewish Labour Party members about their experiences of antisemitism in the party.

I first joined the party in the 1970s. Both my parents were ardent Labour Party activists in Manchester where they lived, in the Withington constituency, from 1967 until my father died in 2001 and my mother sold up and moved south to live with me in 2014.

Our family background is 100 percent Jewish. My four grandparents were refugees from eastern Europe in the late 19th and very early 20th centuries – from Russia, Ukraine, Poland and eastern Germany.

Growing up in the east end of London, and as young adults in the north of the city, they experienced the antisemitism which was rife at the time. My father and his brother both anglicised their surnames, from xxx to xxx. My mother told me many stories of being abused as a young schoolgirl – “You killed our Christ” – and of being treated in a discriminatory way when evacuated with her brother during the war. We know only too well what antisemitism is.

The Labour Party after the war was, by and large, a haven from any kind of anti-Jewish prejudice. My parents never experienced any form of antisemitic bigotry, and as a member myself in the 1970s, nor did I. I worked abroad during the 1980s and did not resume membership on returning to the UK, until Jeremy Corbyn became leader in 2015. The welcome I received from non-Jewish members – by far the majority in my constituency – showed not a hint of hostility towards me as a Jew.

I have spent decades of my life explaining patiently to people who, on learning that I’m Jewish, presume that I must therefore be a Zionist and a supporter of the state of Israel, that the two things are quite distinct. Most of my large family are not Zionists (though a few are). Our identity is not defined by our political beliefs about Israel. Most of us identify with the Jewish Labour Bund tradition adhered to by the majority of radical Jews in the Russian Empire and Poland before the Holocaust. Bundists had as their watchword “doykayt” or “hereness” – the belief that Jews belong wherever in the world they live, that the fight against antisemitism has to be fought alongside all oppressed people of every race or faith. It is alarming to me that such a position is now condemned by self-declared Jewish community leaders as heretical and treacherous, that “Real Jews” are only permitted to hold one view and that questioning Zionism

and the Israeli state is treated as a form of antisemitism. To me and the many Jews I know who share my view, the suggestion that Jews can be regarded as an undifferentiated mass, as if we were genetically programmed to support a particular nation state in which Jews dominate over the original non-Jewish population, is itself a racist, i.e; antisemitic, suggestion.

The suggestion that the Labour Party is "institutionally antisemitic," can only be supported if opposition to Zionism is equivalent to hating Jews, which it clearly is not. For the party to be institutionally racist, there would need to be evidence that Jews are under-represented compared with their 0.5 percent share of the population, as members, as office holders in branches and constituency parties, as councillors, as regional officers, as electoral candidates and as Members of Parliament. There is no such evidence. In fact Jewish people are generously represented in parliament with nearly four percent of members.

Amidst the mounting wave of accusations about antisemitism being rife in the party, I was puzzled and alarmed and made serious efforts to find members who honestly felt unwelcome simply because they were Jewish, without any reference to arguments about Israeli treatment of Palestinians. My search was almost entirely fruitless. Almost every story turned out to be related to upset because people furious about Israel had expressed their anger very vociferously.

I do acknowledge that some critics of Israel can be insensitive to the feelings of Jewish people who feel an attachment to the state. Some Jews feel offended by strident attacks on what Israel does to Palestinians now and what Zionists have done in the past. It would be better if we could have political debates without offending one another, but there is no such thing as a right not to be offended. We do have a right to express political opinions, even very robustly.

I find it alarming that the charge of institutional antisemitism emanates from an organisation called the Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) which was set up in 2014 explicitly to defend Israel against opprobrium for its deadly assault on Gaza in that year. It deliberately deploys accusations of antisemitism to try and shut down campaigns in support of Palestine. It is, for this reason, the subject of a complaint to the Charities Commission.

Of course there are people with some antisemitic prejudices in the Labour Party. As the Institute for Jewish Policy Research said in its report on a survey of attitudes to Jews last year, 3-5 percent of the British population harbour a range of beliefs about Jews, such as being greedy, rich, conspiratorial, in control of the media, which would qualify them as being antisemitic. About 30 percent hold one or two prejudices, which does not justify labelling them antisemitic but can make Jewish people uncomfortable and create an atmosphere of unease. These proportions are naturally reflected within the Labour Party's considerable membership. Social media has unleashed potential for nasty language to be hurled around unjustifiably, and sometimes people claiming to be supporters of the Left are responsible for this. There are cases of people ignorantly believing Israel's supporters when they insist that the state represents every Jew, leading to unjustified abuse directed at Jews on the assumption that they support what Israel does. Such people need to be corrected and, if they prove recalcitrant, disciplined or expelled.

However, there are too many cases of fake identities and robot accounts being used to discredit pro-Corbyn social media groups for all such allegations to be taken at face value. In two notorious cases, prominent Jewish activists were summarily excluded from the party following baseless allegations. Glyn Secker and Moshe Machover were both hastily reinstated.

It would be a grotesque travesty for the EHRC to pronounce the Labour Party to be institutionally antisemitic. To do so would be to participate in an orchestrated campaign targeting a political party whose leader is probably the most principled anti-racist to serve in parliament. I sincerely hope that the commission will not allow itself to be used in a factional and partisan fashion.

13. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I rejoined the Labour party in 2015 after a long period of not belonging to it. I had however worked for decades and decades before 2015 alongside members of the Labour party and the Labour left in various campaigning activities.

In all that time I did not come across any kind of antisemitism from anyone who could be characterised as being on the Labour left, whether inside or outside the Labour party. That included a period of some years working closely with members of the Campaign Group at the end of the eighties/early nineties where, once again, the issue of antisemitism simply did not arise.

Since rejoining Labour I can report the same thing: I have not personally encountered antisemitism in the party or around it.

14. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 6.5 years (1974-77; 2015-)

Testimony:

I am 62 years of age and am a member of the Labour Party.

My father xxxx, now 92 years of age, was born a German jew and fled from the Holocaust on one of the Kindertransport ships, and his parents both perished in Auschwitz. As a result my family has very strong feelings about the persecution of the jews and the dangers of allowing antisemitism to grow in strength in Britain. My father's sister went to Israel, worked in one of the first Kibbutzim and had a large family there, so I have many relatives in the area of Tel Aviv.

I am a retired solicitor. I have attended numerous Labour Party meetings and rallies. I have attended Momentum meetings. I have also attended meetings that were held in support of Palestinian rights.

I have never witnessed any antisemitic remarks or speeches in any meetings either of the Labour Party or of Palestinian Rights groups. In fact I have noticed that many of my companions in Labour Party meetings are jewish members of the Labour Party. We are most of us Corbyn supporters, and when I ask other jews if they have witnessed antisemitism they have said no.

The only antisemitism that I have ever seen has been in used in discussion groups on the internet (now less popular than they used to be) and in some Facebook groups. The comments are very infrequent. I have no reason to believe that the authors of those remarks are members of the Labour Party though some of these people belong to groups which purport to support Jeremy Corbyn. I think they probably have no party allegiance. There are also some social media posts that I'd regard as just naive - people who have seen a website which questions whether the holocaust exists and ask what other people think of the site.

I am willing to believe that there might be Labour Party meetings where antisemitic remarks are made, but I simply haven't ever met anyone who was present at such a meeting.

I am an administrator (one of several) of a Facebook group called Labour Party Compliance, Suspensions Expulsions Rejections Co-op. It has over 1,000 members. It exists to offer impartial advice and support to those who have been suspended or expelled by the Labour Party. I myself was suspended for a few months, but not for alleged antisemitism. It was at the time when numerous Labour shadow cabinet ministers were resigning from the shadow cabinet to put pressure on Corbyn to resign. Chris Bryant proudly tweeted his resignation letter and it

annoyed me so I tweeted him “@RhonndaBryant” Thanks for the long pompous resignation letter. If only you could shit outside the tent instead of in it! Bye” .

I then received a letter from the Labour Party telling me that I was suspended and that my voting rights in the leadership election had been cancelled. As soon as the leadership election was over, I received a letter telling me that on investigation they had decided that my remark did not break any rules and I was forthwith reinstated without any penalty and without any warning on file. I complained that my suspension was unjustified, but my letters were ignored by the Labour Party. As a result I am sympathetic to other people who have been suspended or expelled because I think the disciplinary process is not fit for purpose. As a solicitor I wanted to offer some legal advice to those who have been suspended or expelled, although it is not my specialist area of expertise - I am by training a personal injuries solicitor.

In the support group mentioned above, I have corresponded with people who were expelled or suspended by the Labour Party for posting messages in support of the Green Party or other parties that have occasionally fielded Parliamentary candidates against the Labour candidate. I have also corresponded with people who were suspended for what appeared to me to be very mild criticisms of Zionism or Zionists, and I do not regard any of them as antisemites but I recognise that someone who made the decision to suspend them regarded them - or at least, their Facebook posts - as arguably antisemitic. Since they never seem to get a hearing before a tribunal and they either remain suspended or they get told that they are being let off with a warning, I do not know how many of them can properly be regarded as antisemites. There aren't many of them anyway. I'd estimate no more than 15 suspended for alleged antisemitic remarks, including those now reinstated. None of them ever posted holocaust denial messages. None of them posted offensive remarks about jews, as distinct from zionists. I do not think that most people conflate jews with zionists. The meaning of “zionist” is not clear and there is no consensus as to its meaning. To some of us it means supporters of Israel who are in favour of further territorial expansion into Palestinian land. To others, it simply means those who are glad that there is an Israel to protect jews and who want to protect Israel from harm. As a lawyer I find it unsatisfactory when meanings are conflated and bad faith is attributed to remarks that are made hastily in social media.

On 28th February 2018 I had an offensive (to me) email from the self-styled Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA), signed by “Political and Government Investigation Unit”. I shall quote part of the text:

The following is an excerpt from an article we intend to publish about injustice in the Labour Party's disciplinary process. The article alleges that a member of Labour's National Executive Committee sought to assist various members accused of antisemitism.

Part of our article, and the material provided by links to it, relates to you.

We allege that:

- You were a member of a private Facebook group for Labour Party members who had (among other things) been suspended over antisemitism allegations;
 - You were suspended by the Labour Party, but although the suspension was lifted, your Labour Party record still recorded a warning/left on file notice
 - You expressed a desire to join the group in order to see if there was some way in which your warning/left on file notice could be expunged from your record;
- Please provide any comments that you have by 6pm on Friday. We may publish any comments that you send us. In other words, they threatened to make an example of me and of other Facebook users. I entered into an email correspondence in which I tried to correct their errors and at the same time assured them that I would sue for defamation if they published an inaccurate article. I am aware that other administrators of the group had similar emails from CAA. The CAA did not publish the proposed article and I submitted a formal complaint to CAA which met with an unsatisfactory response. I wrote to the Charity Commission to submit a formal complaint about the CAA but as yet I have had no response from the Charity Commission. I regard the CAA as unscrupulous, over-zealous bullies. They seem determined to remain anonymous and never divulge the name of any of the authors of their emails. They tell me that they have been granted a special dispensation by the Charity Commission to keep their trustees anonymous. Unfortunately that does mean that they do not have to reveal any past political allegiance or connections. It seems quite wrong to me.

Do let me know if I can assist further.

Kind regards

15. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I left the Labour Party at the time this country was taken into war with Iraq despite the mass demonstrations world wide against it, I rejoined in order to vote for Jeremy Corbyn as Leader and I did this because I knew him to be a person of peace and principle and someone who had devoted his life in aid of the oppressed world wide; someone who had spent years opposing all forms of racism and yes,antisemitism.

My fathers mother was Jewish and so was my mother and had the Nazis taken power here we would surely have perished. The danger for Jews and all minority groups is from the Far Right both in Europe and America. And being in the Labour Party is the safest place to be where there is an historic record of protection.

Under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership this protection is far more likely than at any time before because everything he stands for is for the Many not the Few and the 'many' means solidarity.

I am confident that in all the meetings I have attended there has never been any hint of antisemitism even when we discussed our support for Palestinians.

16. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2 years

Testimony:

I am Jewish and have not encountered ANY antisemitism in the Labour Party so far. None whatsoever.

That is my personal experience.

What I have encountered, however, is a constant and relentless stream of smears against Labour and, in particular, Jeremy Corbyn that I believe are hyperbolic, deranged and often groundless. As a British Jew, I am offended and extremely angered by the unfairness of these accusations for what I feel is political gain and I would like, somehow, for this morally corrupt and despicable accusations to cease.

I have, in the past, been on outings with the Anti-Nazi League and Anti-Fascist Action (I think they were called) and am very attuned to people who are antisemitic. I also do not look Jewish and have heard people speak freely with very bigoted and toxic opinions about Jews. I know what antisemitism is and I have experienced it myself - including violence against me. But I've seen none of this in the Labour Party.

I have seen online comments that I don't feel that comfortable with, sometimes in a debate about the Middle East and I find there are instances of insensitivity in the language used. I don't particularly like 'Zionist' used in a pejorative sense, for example. I have also seen examples of Hard Right advocates trying to smear Corbyn supporters with offensive and antisemitic opinions. I think this is actually quite common.

I do believe that by crying wolf - as Margaret Hodge and others appear to be doing - this is a very dangerous and counterproductive activity. As when antisemitism really does become a much bigger problem (as some fear it might), many will be desensitised and fatigued by the constant barrage of claims that are being levelled at Labour - and people, I fear, will not react to it when it arrives.

Yours Sincerely

17. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 4 years

Testimony:

I have been an active Jewish member of xxx Labour Party for four years, I am also a member of the local GC.

I have not declared my ancestry, and could be described as being "under cover".

In that time I have not encountered any persons, conversations or experiences from any Labour Party member that could be described as Anti-Semitic. I have heard and contributed to conversations regarding this, but they have always been conducted in a most respectful and decent manner.

18. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am a Jew, the son of a Holocaust survivor who lost almost 30 members of her family in Auschwitz and Theresienstadt.. I have written about genocide prevention and lectured on the same topic at Auschwitz for the Auschwitz Institute.

I have never experienced a hint of antisemitism in the Labour Party. In fact under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership I believe the party has become a champion of anti-racism in all its forms, including fighting antisemitism.

I have been deeply angered and saddened by some of the comments made by Labour MP's and the media who conflate legitimate criticism of Israel with antisemitism. Margaret Hodge's comparison of her disciplinary process with the feelings of her family fleeing the Nazis, were deeply repulsive to me as they trivialised the experience of my own family, so many of whom died at the hands of the Nazis.

Such behaviour and comments actually inhibit the struggle to eliminate anti-semitism and all racism.

Please feel free to contact me for any elucidation if the above.

19. **Name:** Female

CLP: Norfolk

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

Re-joined 2015 when Corbyn won election.

Previous experience of antisemitism as a student activist. None.

Current experience of anti-semitism in my local party - none. There are several Jews in my CLP who, like me, are Anti-Zionist. I experience nothing but comradeship and a genuine sense we are all in this together, fighting the Tories and austerity.

I have only experienced genuine anti-semitism at the hands of NF boot boys who used to roam around Golders Green in the 1980s. These are the racists we should be fighting.

20. **Name:** Female

CLP: Merseyside

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 6 years

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party since January 2016, and previously between 1999 and 2003, and a Labour Party supporter throughout my adult life.

My political activities, including non-party political activities in the wider labour movement, have arisen from my concerns about various issues. These have included equal rights for women, nuclear disarmament, promotion of securing peace in those parts of the world suffering armed conflict, extending provision for the under-5's, support for women experiencing domestic abuse, campaigning for retention of community NHS services, welfare rights services for those in receipt of state benefits, opposing Apartheid in South Africa, standing up for human rights with those experiencing oppression in any part of the world, trade union defence of members at home and abroad, and campaigning on behalf of Labour in local and national elections.

Throughout these activities over many years, my experiences with fellow Labour Party activists of any faith, or none, have always been respectful and comradely towards me, taking my Jewish heritage into account. I have been involved in many disagreements with fellow activists, some of them very harsh indeed, but never because those opposed to my viewpoints were anti-Semitic.

It's precisely because I feel secure that members of the Labour Party will respect my heritage, as I do theirs, that I am able to continue my membership, and activities in the Labour Party, with sustained confidence.

21. **Name:** Male

CLP: Kent

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I have not encountered anti-semitism in the labour party and, indeed, believe the party to be committed to anti-racism in all its guises.

As a person of jewish heritage I am heartily sickened by the grandstanding of Hodge et al and Jewish newspapers ignorantly using the cry of antisemitism as a means to shut down criticism of Israel and its racist policies and actions. Indeed at a time of general increase in all forms of racism I am genuinely concerned that this may lead to genuine cases of anti-semitism (vandalism of synagogues for example) not being taken seriously. The smears and insults towards Jeremy Corbyn - and time and effort the media are spending digging up old stories - is clearly a media distraction from other more pressing issues.

22. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party for many years. I am 72 years old and have been an active campaigner against racism for years. I come from a Jewish background and was a volunteer in the 1967 6 Day War.

I have never come across anti-semitism in the Party. It is a lie to say the Party is awash with anti-semitism. What the Party is awash with is attacks by pro Israeli govt. Jews on Jews like me and others who dare criticise the Israeli government's policies towards the Palestinians.

23. **Name:** Male

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2 years

Testimony:

I am a member the Labour Party.. My father was a refugee from Germany who spent time in Buchenwald concentration camp. He lost many members of his family including his grandfather who was murdered in Auschwitz. His grandmother, aunts and several cousins immigrated to Israel. Some before the war as Zionists others after the war as refugees.

After visiting Israel I became concerned about Israel which seemed to me to be an increasingly racist state. I was considerably affected by the difference between the attitude of my father's generation (who came from the Martin Buber tradition of Zionism) to the Palestinians who they saw as co-inhabitants of the land and that of their grandchildren who were not to put a fine a point on it racist. I have also attended several events commemorating the Jewish community in Mainz, Germany my father's hometown where I was profoundly shocked by what some Israelis said about the Palestinians, (assuming that I would share their beliefs) I heard at least two people advocating their genocide.

I have encountered antisemitism in work and in my personal life. Assumptions made about Jews being rich or mean. Sticking together. And so on.

I have Never encountered antisemitism in the Labour Party. I've always felt welcome. - except by defenders of Israel. This takes two forms - either fellow Jews who describe me and others who share my beliefs and background secular jews supporting Labour and critical of Likud Israel as "asajews" helpful jews or even capos.

There is also a disturbing strand from non Jews on the right wing of the Labour party who describe the Labour Party as antisemitic unwelcoming to jews and so on. They seem to be doing this as part of their ongoing campaign against Jeremy Corbyn.

Recent examples include Emily Benn, Tony Robinson, and Joan Ryan MP,

Indeed I made a formal complaint about Tony Robinson who said there be no room for Jews in today's Labour Party. I found that deeply offensive and made an official complaint which appears to have been ignored. I have had no response to my complaint. Despite a follow-up.

Israel today is of concern to many British and US Jews. A member of the Israeli embassy was filmed discussing actions against British MP's and was in discussion with Joan Ryan MP. The

Israeli Ambassador to the UK was a press spokesman when many hundreds were killed in Gaza. And yet the discussion about Where Israel is heading seems to be dominated by a right wing clique in the Jewish community who seem to control discourse very narrowly in the Labour Party and try and find ways to use accusations of antisemitism to control the debate,

It's not so long ago that Ed Miliband when leader of the Labour party faces hostility from the Jewish Community because he was prepared to recognise Palestine. He also faced anti Semitic smears- which many Pro Likud Jews here ignored or forgave.

Lord Montagu, the Jewish member of the Cabinet who opposed the Balfour declaration, warned of a common interest between antisemites and Zionism - both could agree that as Jews have a homeland why don't they all go and live there. "Ab nach Palestina" said the antisemitic floats in the Mainz Carnival in 1936. I believe that Netanyahu's friendship with Viktor Orban is based on similar (lack of) principles.

I wish the media would for example discuss the Conservative alliance in the European Parliament with the Law and Justice Party in Poland and until 2013 with the neoNazi Alternative für Deutschland. That worries me very much

24. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >2 years

Testimony:

I am a Jewish Labour party member aged 64. My mother was an active member of the Labour party and an active member of the Jewish community. I attend every branch meeting, regularly canvass and take an active role. I have been a member of 3 different branches in my life time. I am a member of the party for many reasons one of which is the strong anti racist stance it holds. I believe that has never changed and that includes a strong stand against anti -semitism. I have never felt anything but warmth and friendship from fellow Labour members and have never heard or seen anyone being remotely anti-Semitic. The party described in the media is not one I recognise despite my active involvement in it.

25. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: Many years

Testimony:

Editor's note: This testimony was originally addressed to Labour's NEC. But the author gave us permission to forward it to the EHRC as well.

I would like to submit the following points to the NEC before it takes a decision on its definition of anti-Semitism.

I have some credentials on this question. My grandparents were penniless refugees from pogroms in the Tsarist Russian empire, driven from their homes by riots, slaughter and arson. Soon afterwards, my maternal grandfather was the victim of an anti-Semitic murder in Liverpool.

My father xxxx. At the time of the holocaust, he was a Zionist. In 1940 he was elected chair of the British section of the World Jewish Congress, and in this capacity he was among the first to warn the world about Hitler's "final solution of the Jewish question" and to mount a desperate worldwide campaign to save European Jewry from genocide. Three days after my birth, he visited the newly liberated Buchenwald and Belsen Nazi concentration camps as a member of a parliamentary delegation. He supported the establishment of a Jewish state as a homeland for displaced holocaust survivors, but he was later to fiercely oppose Israeli participation in the Suez war in 1956, and died in 1968 outraged at the Israeli occupation of the West Bank after the 1967 war.

In my early teens, as well as a member of the Young Socialists I was also a member of Hashomer Hatzair, a socialist Zionist youth organization. I joined the Labour Party at the age of 15 and have been a member all my life, with the exception of the long "New Labour" years. I have encountered occasional manifestations of anti-Semitism in my life, but never within the Labour Party.

The charge that the Labour Party and specifically Jeremy Corbyn are soft on anti-Semitism is outrageous. It is the latest and most bizarre of a series of monstrous smears by the right-wing establishment. If we were to believe them, then Corbyn is somehow simultaneously a pacifist, a terrorist, a Stalinist and a Czech spy. Now this lifelong campaigner against racism is branded an anti-Semite too. One wonders when he has the time to tend his allotment.

I wouldn't blame the Israeli diplomatic service for promoting such accusations; it is their job to use every means at their disposal to avoid the election of a British government sympathetic to

the Palestinian cause. In this case the smear campaign has been taken up by the British establishment, and unfortunately endorsed by that wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party opposed to Jeremy Corbyn's leadership, because of the failure of its earlier palpable slanders. This campaign is even dirtier than the "Zinoviev letter" faked by MI5 to damage Labour in the general election of 1923, or than Churchill's lie in 1945 that if Labour won the election, it would establish a Gestapo police state. It is of course the Tory party that is riddled with racism. It was a Tory government which introduced the 1905 Aliens Act that blocked Jewish immigration from the East European pogroms, and it was a Tory MP who founded the Right Club in the 1930s to "expose the activities of organised Jewry". British immigration policy throughout the Nazi period was designed to keep out at least ten times as many Jews as it allowed in. During that period, it was the Daily Express which carried the infamous headline "JEWS DECLARE WAR ON GERMANY" and the Daily Mail which screamed "HURRAH FOR THE BLACKSHIRTS!". Churchill personally made repeated racist comments against Jews.

Only three years ago, it was the Mail which made a thinly veiled anti-Semitic attack on Ed Miliband's father, while the Sun published an unflattering picture of Ed Miliband eating a bacon sandwich - another anti-Semitic jibe.

No party has done more to resist all forms of racism than Labour. It is significant that no other parties have come under any similar pressure to adopt any such charter as the IHRA document.

I believe that the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism is deeply flawed. It is clearly designed to protect the Israeli state from legitimate criticism. It is also inconsistent. For instance, it argues that it's anti-Semitic to "deny the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a state of Israel is a racist endeavour". In that case, how then can it also be anti-Semitic to "accuse Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel than to the interests of their own nations"? Either Israel is a homeland for Jews worldwide, in which case it has a right to expect their loyalty, or Jews have an obligation to give prior loyalty to the country in which they live. The IHRA apparently wants it both ways.

I should add that I reject any comparison of such crimes as the current atrocities in Gaza to those of the Nazis as grossly disproportionate and provocative. By implication it mitigates the crimes of imperialism as a whole. Israel is not engaged in systematic genocide: it is not rounding up Palestinians, cramming them into concentration camps and gassing them by the thousands. It is practising the standard brutal murderous repression of all imperialist powers, regional or global. The hands of American imperialism in Latin America and South-East Asia, or of French imperialism in North Africa, or of Belgian imperialism in the Congo, or of the South African apartheid state at Sharpeville, are also dripping with blood. British imperialism also has on its hands the deaths of hundreds of peaceful demonstrators mown down in the Amritsar massacre, systematic torture and mutilation in Kenya's Hola death camp, and the gunning down of peaceful demonstrators in Northern Ireland on Bloody Sunday. There is no need to invoke the Nazis: it's quite enough to condemn Israel for behaving like the British.

I urge the NEC to stand by its current definition of anti-Semitism and to resist the caterwauling of proven racists to adopt a definition which would brand as anti-Semites legitimate critics of Israeli government policy. It is time to fight back against the establishment's lies.

26. **Name:** Male

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: > 40 years

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party for over 40 years. I am currently the Disability Officer for xxx CLP and also the constituency's Unite Community delegate.

I am also on the Executive of the xxx and a member of the Jewish Voice for Labour and Momentum.

My Jewish grandparents emigrated to the UK from Eastern Europe and Russia at the beginning of the last century.

I have personally faced a range of anti-Semitic comments both during childhood and working life. However, I have never experienced anti-Semitism in the Labour Party, either directed at me personally or in political discussions at meetings. This includes social media, which I use regularly.

I have attended meetings where criticisms of the policies and actions of the state of Israel have been expressed but never have they been conflated with negative or anti-Semitic comments directed at Jews or Jewish organisations in general.

It is important to stress that xxx CLP members have a wide range of views and outlooks consistent within the broad church of the Labour Party.

On one recent occasion a non-Jewish CLP officer in another xxx CLP, sensitive to the heightened concern over anti-Semitism requested me, in confidence, to give advice on whether or not a fellow member had made anti-Semitic comments on Twitter. These included references to the policies and actions of the Israeli Government.

Even after referring to the IHRA code and examples, it was still not clear whether the twitter comments were anti-Semitic. This illustrated the difficulty of using specific examples to categorise human behaviour.

I have found the Labour Party a very tolerant organisation that welcomes diversity of all races, cultures and religions. The tiny percentage (less than 0.001%) of members under investigation for anti-Semitic comments supports this. This also concurs with my own experience and

extensive contacts with other comrades throughout the Labour Party that there is no anti-Semitic nor any other racist crisis in the Labour Party.

I feel we have wasted so much valuable time and energy responding to a series of cynical, concerted and planned attacks, using anti-Semitism as a political weapon, orchestrated by a hostile media and political adversaries.

This is also insulting and disrespectful to all those who have either suffered from or fought against the racism, fascism and anti-Semitism. We should be concentrating on identifying and eliminating the causes of racism (including anti-Semitism society as a whole. Abandoning austerity and addressing scapegoating would be an excellent start.

27. **Name:** Male

CLP: North Yorkshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

My name is. I am agnostic-Jewish by descent. My grandparents were David and Sadie xxx from Whitechapel. My mother was educated at a Jewish school in the East End. I am Political Education Officer for xxx Labour Party. Apart from leaving over Iraq, I have been a Party Member for over 35 years. I have stood for Council, been Chr of xxx LP, a Union official and a Labour School Governor. In all that time, I have never encountered any Anti-Semitic words or sentiments-either towards me or about Jewish people.

Of course there are pockets of racism throughout society and in all Parties....and in ours. NB Boris's insulting (UKIP-loving) outburst on "postboxes" etc-long forgotten by MSM??.Of course its not all 'fake news'-with over 500,000 members to police and discipline it would be surprising if we found no anti-Semitism? It is not an easy task to monitor all contributions from members and 'so-called' supporters-and who knows what people's motives are for joining any Party?? NB. UKIP members instructed to join Tories?

The point we are making here is that the situation is being dealt with 'robustly and democratically' within our own party....and we must reserve the right to criticise Israel's policies towards the Palestinians.

However, unfortunately, the issue is being further amplified and exploited for other agendas? I like to think that a lot of people 'get that'...and are not quite as naive as the MSM imagine. I'm not necessarily talking about a "right wing conspiracy" here....but who knows-these are indeed strange times? without a doubt there are definitely people 'fanning the flames' over a whole host of issues (Europe and Anti-Semitism in particular) They are being amplified and weaponised with the express intention to undermine Team Corbyn. I stand behind Jewish Voice For Labour who extol us to stand up and be counted ...and "Resist the Cynical Attacks on the Labour Party".

I am a Socialist. I understand why many from the Establishment might fear our Manifesto and Leadership. We must stay strong and united behind the Leadership and face down all attempts to silence us. Socialists, trade unions and the Jewish Community must let nothing divide them as we are reminded in the poem by Paster Naimoller. Solidarity with the Jewish community.

28. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I have never faced any antisemitism as a member of the Labour Party or any of my dealings with members or its institutions.

As a descendant from German Jews that escaped the Holocaust it is an issue I take very seriously, I would not be associated with a party gave credence to any kind of racism. I am saddened that the politics of the Campaign Against Antisemitism has superseded their morality.

29. **Name:** Male

CLP: Cambridgeshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I joined the Labour Party in September 2015 in response to Jeremy Corbyn's election as leader. I knew him - as I know him now - to be a principled anti-racist and peace campaigner, and this was an important part of my reason for joining.

During my time in the Labour Party, and especially since 2016, I have attended meetings on a regular basis - including meetings of our CLP's Ethnic Minorities Forum - as well as helping during election campaigns. I have experienced no antisemitism in the Party whatsoever - whether in the form of hostility directed at myself or another Jewish member, or through witnessing the expression of antisemitic comments. On the contrary, I have found the atmosphere in the Party to be consistently welcoming and have made a number of good friends.

30. **Name:** Male

CLP: Wales

Labour membership no.: xxx

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

16 members of my family, the youngest a girl of 8 years, did not survive the Shoah. I'm appalled and outraged that their suffering along with 6 million others is now being weaponised to attack The Labour Party.

As a Labour party member, life long anti racist and peace campaigner I have never witnessed any anti Semitism in The Labour Party. The only anti Semitism I have witnessed has been from far right political groups.

I believe any claims of anti Semitism against the Labour Party and its leader Jeremy Corbyn are spurious, malevolent and designed to undermine him precisely because of the parties and his inclusive, anti war, pro peace politics and should therefore be dismissed.

31. **Name:** Male

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >50 years

Testimony:

In over 50 years in the Labour Party I have not experienced or observed antisemitic speech or incidents in the Party, although I have experienced and suffered it elsewhere.

That is not quite true. Recently those who are accusing the party of antisemitism have been expressing themselves in antisemitic ways.

In her attack on Jeremy Corbyn for attending the Jewdas Seder Angela Smith MP indulged in antisemitic stereotyping and lumping. I raised this with John Mann MP who had broadcast himself as the person who wished to be informed of all antisemitic incidents in the Party. I told him

I am a Jewish member of the Party. I have been saying that, while I have experienced antisemitism occasionally throughout my life, I have not experienced or observed it in 50 years in the Labour Party (this is, of course, not to deny others' experience of it). I can no longer say that having been deeply offended by the comments of Angela Smith and John Woodcock and others on the leader of the party attending the Third Seder held by the observant Jewish group Jewdas. They showed they expect all Jews to conform to their stereotypes of what Jews should be and to assert all 'deviants' to be bad Jews. It is a classic feature of all racism, including antisemitism, to lump all members of an assumed community together and deny their individuality and agency.

Mann not only refused to engage with my complaint he used the correspondence to try to intimidate me by threatening me with a totally unsubstantiated action for libel.

More recently xxx, Labour Leader of xxx Council, wrote to the local shul about what she, without any supporting evidence claimed that antisemitism 'continues to plague parts of our society and our party'

I and other Jewish members of xxx Labour Party wrote to her and said, inter alia:

One form of racism is to assume a homogeneity in a community. This is exactly what you have done you have assumed that all members of Lambeth's Jewish communities conform to your stereotype of what we should be – in so doing you have, albeit unintentionally, acted in an antisemitic manner.

We have received no reply or acknowledgement one week later.

32. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years (partner, referred to in testimony, was a member from 1972-2005)

Testimony:

My father was a Hungarian Jew whose family was directly affected by the Holocaust. I was brought up in North West London, bordering the main refugee area.

In the late 1950s-early 60s I was sent to a boarding school which was authoritarian and somewhat antisemitic. Jewish girls were made to attend Scripture lessons which announced that 'the Jews killed Jesus', but were not allowed to sing in the Choir, although many were very musical.

Since that time I have only experienced antisemitism overseas: in Hungary frequently (from the 1980s onwards), among the emigre Polish community in the 70s (once), and just once in Tunisia (where the people as a whole are very proud of their Jewish community).

I have experienced absolutely no antisemitism in the Labour party which I joined in 2015. As a lifelong feminist who joined the fledgling UK women's liberation movement in 1969, I have also experienced no misogyny. I have however seen manipulation and the use of accusations (of antisemitism, misogyny and more) to eliminate political opponents.

A very striking case in point is XXX constituency Labour party, where officer posts 'belonged' to a certain family; when another candidate was successful in winning a post, he was accused of antisemitism and suspended from all party activity, thus wasting a good activist. I mention this case because I happen to know the individual and he is absolutely not an antisemite. His case still awaits resolution, nearly three years later.

For me personally the most painful aspect of the whole experience is being silenced. In my local branch for instance there are more members in Jewish Voice for Labour than in the Jewish Labour Movement (which incidentally - like the pressure group 'We believe in Israel' - has a large non Jewish membership). But JVL voices are almost never heard. Certainly the NEC has not dared to listen to Jewish Voice for Labour or Jews for Justice for Palestinians, having been endlessly attacked for having anything to do with the more moderate Independent Jewish Voices or Jewdas.

Every day I wake up to hear the Today programme telling me that all Jews love Israel and are hurt by criticisms of its apartheid system or its racism. This at a time when the apartheid analogy has been absolutely standard inside Israel for decades (see any Haaretz article — very different from the present day Guardian); and when the Israeli government has passed an explicitly racist constitutional law which cannot be undone. In my local borough of xxx there are many pro-Palestinian groups which have been under fierce attack and finding their longstanding venues closed to them because of the fearful accusations aimed at local councils and universities. Holocaust survivors have been attacked or banned for speaking out against Israel and making comparisons from their own experience. At least two events which I personally attended have been physically broken up by thugs from the extremist Zionist Federation.

When I attended the Labour party conference last year, I saw the formidable Israeli ambassador and spinmeister Mark Regev walking the Lanes with his bodyguards. Sure enough, next day the newspapers were full of a story that Holocaust denial was rife in the Labour party. I personally was in the audience when an Israeli former war hero spoke and I can personally vouch for what he said. As so often, when critical voices are Jewish and Israeli the fact is not acknowledged.

My partner is Jewish from a more typical North London practising family. He worked on a kibbutz at 16 in 1961 and was so shocked by the racism towards Arab workers that he never returned. He joined the UK Labour party in 1972 and left in 2005. He refuses to return because he is so disappointed by Corbyn's constant apologies to self-appointed and self-important 'community leaders'. These people do not represent the majority of Jews in the UK, nor the realities of their lives. The Pew survey showed that.

I have a great deal more to say and would be happy to add to my testimony at any time.

33. **Name:** Male

CLP: Durham

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am a visibly Orthodox Jew who joined the Labour Party in 2015 to support Jeremy Corbyn's left-wing leadership. I have attended many meetings and encountered no antisemitism of any kind.

34. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: Since 1962 (not continuous)

Testimony:

Background

I joined the Labour Party in 1962 in xxx.

I subsequently joined xx CLP in 1963; xx CLP in about 1980; xxx in 2015. My membership was not continuous.

In xxx I held a number of posts, and was the Parliamentary candidate in 1966.

Currently I am the chair of xx branch.

I was brought up in Jewish family and have always identified as Jewish. My maternal grandparents were passionate Zionists, and my parents were also committed. My mother held senior offices in the (Liverpool) Huldah Zionist Circle, including President more than once. I was an ardent supporter of Israel myself till 1968, after which events forced a slow and difficult re-appraisal.

Foreground

During my membership I have spent hundreds, probably thousands of hours in Labour Party meetings. I cannot recall a single incident in which my Jewishness, or that of anyone else present, was referenced by any member. Nor can I recall any single occasion in which a remark or statement made generalisations, either positive or negative, about Jews.

As indicated by the official positions that I have held and hold, I do not feel that I have been discriminated against personally in any way.

I have heard passionate statements made by fellow members at meetings criticising Israel for its treatment of the Palestinians, its illegal occupation, etc. I have never heard these statements attribute responsibility to 'Jews', but always to the State of Israel. Some members, as often non-Jewish as Jewish, have taken exception to such remarks. But the right to free expression (within the law) is crucial. There is a right not to experience hate speech, but there is no right not to be offended.

35. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 1 year

Testimony:

The Labour party is responding actively to what statistics show to be a very small anti-semitic presence in its membership. It and its leader were and remain fierce opponents of all kinds of racism, in contrast to other parties.

36. **Name:** Female

CLP: Kent

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2 years

Testimony:

The Labour Party is not intrinsically or institutionally anti-Semitic.

I wish to state that I've been a Jew all my life (the first 14 years I didn't actually know), and an activist for half of that on all sorts of issues regarding disability, human rights, animal rights, anti-racism and employment rights. As a young student, I campaigned alongside the Anti-Nazi League in the East End of London against the British National Party.

In all my years as a Leftie Socialist activist and the short time as a member of the Labour Party and Momentum (since 2016), I have NEVER experienced any form of anti-Semitism, despite being openly Jewish. If anything, I have been approached by members who genuinely want to know what is and what isn't anti-Semitic, because they are terrified of offending or insulting in some unknown or sub-conscious way. Yes: Labour members are aware that anti-Semitism is insidious in the way it has crept into people's minds as subtly as it has in some corners of society... and they are determined to uncover their own unconscious biases!

In truth, the vast number of members in the UK Labour Party have very limited dealings with the Jewish community because we represent a true minority. Most Labour members now know of the huge role Jews have played in the Labour Party and the struggle of the Left in general, and they feel an alliance and love for the Jewish community that is palpable when discussed. But the fact is the vast majority of UK citizens have little to no dealings with Jews of any kind, unless they happen to be living in an area that is highly populated by Jews. What I am saying here is that most people give no mind to Jews, Judaism, anti-Semitism or indeed Israel, unless they are drawn to any of these things personally. That is not to say that anti-Semitism does not exist in the Labour Party; given that there are around 500K members, there MUST be a few racists who hate Jews. And they must be dealt with extremely harshly. There should be no place to hide in the Labour Party or in any Socialist organisation for racists of any kind.

To be entirely honest; I have experienced more anti-Semitic abuse WITHIN the Jewish community in the UK than anywhere else. This is because I am not identifiably anything other than a white woman with dark brown hair and hazel eyes. I dress like a typical western British woman. Simply; you can't tell that I'm Jewish! However, I have experienced racism from other Jews who consider themselves to be "pure-blooded"; this has universally been experienced at the hands of the Orthodox community who do not consider Progressive Jews to be "the right kind of Jew". Indeed, despite going through a rigorous conversion process to become an

Orthodox Jew, many Orthodox converts experience prejudice and discrimination by their communities as they are still not really considered to be “properly” Jewish – in contravention of the ruling of the Torah and the history of all Jews being related to Ruth – who was herself, a convert.

If you have anything other than white skin, you are FAR more likely to experience racism than any other group – perhaps with the exception of visually identifiable religious peoples (high-Orthodox Jews, Muslims, Sikhs etc), who can be picked out more easily than most other minority groups. It is a disgusting fact that the more melanin you have in your skin, the more likely you are to experience racism. Given that most Jews living in the UK are white-skinned and not identifiably Jewish unless they wear a black hat or a kippah, and most of those people are not Labour members but tend to vote / belong to the Conservative Party, I find the allegations of anti-Semitism in the Labour Party to be largely without foundation.

I wish to express my opposition to the adoption of the IHRA WD as a legally or morally enforceable code that outlines the definition of anti-Semitism. It is utterly vexatious to condone the conflation of anti-semitism towards Jews and the criticism of Israel’s treatment of its minorities and its foreign policy of interference in UK politics. This IHRA working document is designed to allow a right-wing mission-creep that shuts down freedom of speech on ANYONE wishing to call out racism. The Labour Party’s NEC Code of Conduct deals with all the examples set out in the IHRA code, but leaves room for legitimate criticism of Israel – and any other country by precedent – without critics risking accusations of racism against the citizens of those countries, except where it can be proved there is a racist intent.

As for Israel being compared with Nazi Germany; it pains me to say this... I would very much like Israel to be the haven to Jews that I believe it should always have been. There is a rose-tinted and naïve comfort for me that should I need or want to, I am entitled to live there and feel free to be Jewish and protected. But, if the price is the displacement and oppression of other peoples, then that price is too high for me to pay as a Socialist and as a Jew. For the time being, with family killed in the holocaust, and family living through apartheid South Africa: I can see parallels between emerging policy in Israel towards minorities and the policies in early Nazi Germany and Apartheid South Africa towards Jews and black Africans. I should be free to call this out as I see it – although I find the comparison between what happened in Nazi Germany in its entirety to be a stretch too far for the moment, and it hurts me as a Jew to hear fellow Jews being lumped in with the architects of that horror.

I hope this serves as adequate testimony, and I say again: **the Labour Party is not intrinsically or institutionally anti-Semitic.**

37. **Name:** Female

CLP: East Sussex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

Where I have seen reprehensible treatment of myself as a Jew, is from those who claim to speak for all Jews and see me and those who agree with me, as somehow not counting - so, being called 'Corbyn Jews' 'Asajews' and sometimes accused of being self hating and even a kapo; a more painful insult is hard to imagine for any Jewish person.

The Jewish community is not monolithic any more than any other community is or should be expected to - I consider it to be antisemitic to suggest that we should be and that somehow I am less of a Jew and that my opinion matters less than that of those who support Israel without question and who oppose and vilify Jeremy Corbyn.

Antisemitism, like all forms of racism is pernicious and has no place in our society, let alone in the Labour Party that has led much antiracist legislation in this country. At a time when the far right is on the rise in this country and many others, it is crucial that we work together direct our energies to that struggle.

38. **Name:** Female

CLP: Cambridgeshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

My personal experience within the Labour Party is that I have always been openly Jewish, and have always been welcome and accepted within the Labour Party (during 3 years plus of active participation). When I have, on one occasion, encountered a comment that I think inadvertently had anti-Semitic overtones in a discussion online, I was supported by other party members to challenge it, and felt confident I could have reported it if I'd chosen to.

It is important to me that concern for Palestinian rights is not conflated with anti-semitism, and I think Labour has been doing an important job of resisting efforts to make that seem mutually exclusive with taking anti-semitism seriously and fighting it. There is no conflict.

I have been impressed that, while the instances of anti-semitism from party members are clearly few, the Party has prioritised ensuring that they are dealt with swiftly. I know that Rhea Wolfson and Jon Lansman are working hard to represent Jewish members on the NEC. I am confident that there is no institutional problem with anti-semitism, the participation of Jews within the Party at all levels is welcomed, and a sensitive job is being done of ensuring that discussion of Israel-Palestine is neither shut down nor at risk of straying into or attracting anti-semitism.

39. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 13 years

Testimony:

I have spent 13 years as a member of the Labour Party being active in the party for about half of that time. Since Jeremy Corbyn's election as leader in 2015, I have been a regular at local meetings and socials, an active campaigner and have also attended a range of regional and national events including the 2017 National Conference. I am in my second term as Secretary of xxx CLP and in my third term on my CLP and branch executives.

I have not experienced antisemitism at any of the Labour Party meetings that I have attended. I have never heard anyone say anything at an event (formal or informal) that I consider antisemitic and I do not feel it has impacted on how I am treated within the party. In contrast, I have found a huge concern among members to be part of the fight against antisemitism and the wider struggles against all forms of racism and against fascism. I will cite just three of many examples. First, we unanimously passed a motion to mobilise against the neo-Nazi Free Tommy movement and many members joined the counter demo on 13th August. Second, I have seen local Labour members challenge antisemitic content posted online (the content was posted by non members). Third, we have discussed both the IHRA definition/examples of antisemitism and the code of conduct at our all-member meetings and these discussions have been oriented towards a concern to tackle antisemitism with many Jewish members speaking and expressing a range of views.

I am choosing to speak out at this time because I am concerned that the CAA submission to the EHRC is not grounded in the experiences of active Jewish Labour Party members like me but is based on rumour and misrepresentation.

40. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 8 years

Testimony:

I am a 64 year old Jewish woman. I have voted Labour all my life and have been a member of the Labour Party since 2010. I know many members of the Labour party.

I have never in all my years around Labour party members and voters ever experienced any antisemitism in the words or behaviours of Labour party members or voters.

Not one single incident of it. As far as my experience goes it has never been an issue and is not currently an issue.

On the other hand I feel deeply offended by those people and organisations who are using this issue for political reasons and who I fear, have already started to cause some Jewish people to feel intimidated and afraid when there is no reason whatsoever for them to feel under threat from antisemitism in the Labour party or from the political left in this country.

The genuine threat to Jewish people and ethnic minorities is from the rise of the far right in this country, backed up by the unwillingness of the centre right to tackle elements of it within their ranks. This is the real and persistent danger and it is a travesty that this is not getting the attention it urgently deserves before we sleep walk into a truly dangerous situation.

41. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I would like to record this email as a testimony of my experiences as a long-serving Jewish member of the Labour Party.

I have only ever had positive and welcoming experiences as a Jewish Labour member. I emphatically reject the notion that Labour is 'institutionally antisemitic' and I have been dismayed by the trivialisation and instrumentalisation of antisemitism in recent months as a tactic to undermine the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn.

I believe the cynical attempts by the so-called Campaign Against Antisemitism to attack the Labour leadership and smear its members by launching this complaint is shameful and completely empties the term antisemitism of any meaning.

42. **Name:** Female

CLP: East Sussex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

My family had come from north-east Europe, then settled in the English north west. Two grandparents were native Russian speakers. We ate kosher, observed the Sabbath, fasted at Yom Kippur. And when I was four (in 1947) the whole family upped and moved to Palestine. Some are still there.

My young childhood was aware of the Holocaust. Three uncles by marriage had "got out" in time. Hebrew stories I read were suffused by it.

Though secular by conviction, I feel especially relaxed and comfortable around other Jews and have a strong pull towards the culture and traditions of Judaism, the sound of Yiddish, the paintings of Chagall. As a socialist I am proud that my people pioneered the universalism that marked the founding declaration of the United Nations.

I feel a little bashful in the Labour Party about saying I am Jewish. Far from meeting with hostility, people treat me as special. It helps that I am very strongly for free speech on Israel, as is also my local party. But notably, one of our members who does advocate for Israel was adopted as a Council candidate and supported to win the seat.

I can say that in my own hearing and experience, while Jews as such are never held to be responsible for Israel, Labour members (Jews and non-Jews) who do advocate for Israel might get treated with some caution and this will no doubt grow as a result of the "antisemitism" campaign against Corbyn. Such people also treat me as the lowest form of human life.

I have yet to meet anyone, Jewish or not, Labour or not, who believes a single word of the press outcry or has seen anything remotely resembling the antisemitism it alleges. Not a single one of the high profile cases and expulsions have been other than a planned and rehearsed theatrical performance intended to create the illusion of a crisis.

I have, however, encountered some online comments (mostly from abroad, so not Labour members) that show ignorance or prejudice, or credulity around conspiracy theories and dark warnings about Mossad, Jewish lobbies and Rothschild money.

I do not feel in the least threatened or outraged, but I do always make a point of calling it out and explaining why this is wrong and unhelpful and asking them to stop. I believe that any

Labour members who stray into this kind of speech should not be punished, suspended or expelled but dealt with in a thoughtful manner as outlined in the NEC Code and the Chakrabarti report.

I do feel threatened by the sudden rise of the ultra right and neo-Nazis since June this year, and astonished that instead of focusing on that, the Jewish press has decided that the "existential threat" is from Jeremy Corbyn. Not only is that absurd and slanderous, it is dangerous.

Non-abusive free speech is not just a right, it is an absolute necessity. It is the antidote to the ignorance that fosters antisemitism and other, far more prevalent, forms of racism.

The attack on free speech by the IHRA (a pseudo-legal set of codes that is neither holy writ nor the world-agreed "definition" it is claimed to be) is deeply damaging to our national and academic discourse and political life. It has been casually adopted, often on the nod as "virtue signalling" by universities, local authorities and police forces in opposition to our democratically enacted human rights law, and is being used in a blatant attempt to remove the elected leader of the Labour Party.

One of its notorious "examples" has even been used to sack someone from his local government job for a conversation overheard and recorded in the street, referring to a historical matter from Nazi Germany. And this is the document that Labour is being ordered to "adopt" verbatim on pain of being excoriated as antisemitic.

43. **Name:** Male

CLP: Kent

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 31 years

Testimony:

I understand that the EHRC is accepting, though not to my knowledge having called for, testimony as to whether the Labour Party is or is not an antisemitic party. I joined the Labour Party in late 1977 and have not experienced nor witnessed any antisemitic incident, language or behaviour within the Labour Party or at informal gatherings of party members. It may be relevant that I am of (assimilated) Jewish descent, and my physical appearance - nose, curly hair - is stereotypically Jewish enough to attract the hostile or simply casually observational attention of any person with antisemitic tendencies.

44. **Name:** Female

CLP: East Sussex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 1 year

Testimony:

I am Jewish by heritage. My mother's maiden name is xxx. She came from a freethinking background, so was never religious and we were not brought up with any religious faith. But I have relatives who died at Auschwitz and that is a part of my heritage that I hold close to my heart. I have been mindful of racism of all kinds throughout my life. I know my mother's tales of anti-semitism when she was growing up, and I am sensitive to any form of bullying.

I joined the Labour Party on 6 May 2017. I have never been a member of a political party before.

I joined for various reasons, one of which was the very clear demonising of Jeremy Corbyn in the national media. I got fed up of listening to Radio 4, which I expect to give a balanced view, but prior to the General Election, so much of its coverage was not news, but ridiculous reportage about Jeremy Corbyn's car driver running over the foot of a BBC photographer, a Labour MP falling down stairs at a public meeting, endless repeats of Diane Abbot's unfortunate interview about policing policy.

Almost as soon as I joined the Labour Party, one of my cousins began to send me endless Facebook messages about Anti-Semitism in the Labour Party; his fear of anti-semitism, and if Jeremy Corbyn ever came to power he would leave the UK. This cousin is from part of my family that is more 'culturally Jewish' than my immediate family, and I was surprised, but concerned about his fears. I spoke to other Jews in my Labour Party, I talked to my family and friends and I read online, I responded to my cousins long and frequent emails. I heard his fears, but in my heart, I do not see them as rational fears. He is also a Conservative voter, and I feel our different political standpoints also colours our different reactions to Jeremy Corbyn as a politician. I don't think his fear of anti-Semitism is totally groundless, but I think it has been amplified through the media and political campaigning.

Unfortunately, politics is a dirty business, and people will use any tools within their power to discredit the opposition. I see it as a form of bullying, and it comes from all sides of political debate. Social Media fuels the hateful discourse, and certainly there are members of the Labour Party who have said some foolish and hateful things, and some have never apologised. But I don't think Jeremy Corbyn is one of them, despite a misplaced remark about a very ugly mural.

To me, this debate hangs on the policies and actions of the government of the State of Israel towards its Palestinian neighbours. Obviously it is a sensitive subject, but it has been used to demonise an award winning peace campaigner with a life long record of anti-war campaigning and humanitarian behaviour.

Is the above paragraph anti-Semitic?

I don't believe it is, but I have been accused of being anti-Semitic in an on-line debate (about another sensitive subject – transphobia – I have actively supported a trans-woman within the party) by 3 angry people who I believe had already been suspended from the Labour Party. Accusations of anti-Semitism are being used by some people both within and outside the Labour Party as a tool to attack Jeremy Corbyn – and anyone else who is perceived to have different beliefs to their own).

It is now beginning to fill me with fear that saying "I do not support Zionism" is an anti-Semitic act.

45. **Name:** Female

CLP: Norfolk

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 30 years (approx)

Testimony:

I understand that the CAA have referred the Labour Party to you for antisemitism and are asking for Jewish people to send them examples of discrimination and antisemitism in the party.

I would like to describe my experience.

I joined the Labour Party in the late 1970s. I am Jewish (family name xxx). I was a councillor for 20 years and the leader of my council. I never experienced antisemitism in any meeting or event of the party in that time or since.

I am a moderator on a very large labour supporting facebook group. The CAA have lied about me and other administrators on the forum, but me in particular because I am Jewish. They accused us of removing Jewish members because we were antisemitic. This was a complete lie. I have been threatened by the CAA to such an extent I had to report them to the police. This followed a series of increasingly intimidating emails where they threatened to 'go public'. They didn't do so as what they had said were lies and libellous. The police took up the case as a hate crime because I am Jewish and they targeted me because of that. I have the evidence to back this up.

Of course I have seen antisemitic comments on social media. Some are from members of the labour party. Any proven antisemitism is dealt with by the party's disciplinary procedures and in relation to my forum, members of the group who make antisemitic comments are removed immediately. But isolated examples (and some of these are contentious anyway - as they are often relating to Israel and zionism) do not make the labour party institutionally antisemitic. As a Jew I am getting increasingly distressed by the outrageous comments of certain Labour MPs that Jeremy Corbyn is somehow threatening Jews in this country and is antisemitic himself. The CAA have been launching these kinds of attacks on Corbyn since he was elected leader.

46. **Name:** Male

CLP: Bristol

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I write as a Jewish member of the Labour party.

I read recently that the Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) has referred my party to you to investigate "institutional antisemitism".

This is a strong allegation. Antisemitism is present in all walks of life, sometimes more prevalent than others. This is true across the political spectrum, albeit with its manifestation sometimes differing. However i am immensely proud of the Labour party and its leader Jeremy Corbyn in combating antisemitism. This is demonstrated by YouGov polling which shows antisemitic attitudes among Labour voters falling between 2015 and 2017, coinciding with Corbyn's leadership. This is noticeably lower than the same results for Conservative Party voters.

My own experience has been of being in a party where i have overwhelmingly been made to feel welcome, and where both the leadership and the rank-and-file "have my back". There is the exception of some parts of the party which have tried to assert that i am the "wrong" kind of Jew for supporting Corbyn, which is hurtful and stressful. Seeing the party refuse to take action against Margaret Hodge despite her antisemitic comparison of an investigation into her abusive behaviour with what Jews experienced in the 1930s is also galling. However this trend is far from limited to people within the party establishment itself, and extends to people from other groups outside the party, including the Conservative Party and the CAA itself. It is also highly alienating reading the media more broadly, and seeing antisemitic attitudes pervade with regards to the voice of certain Jewish community figures being seen to represent all of us Jewish people; further denigration of Jews who don't share the "permitted" opinion that Labour has an endemic antisemitism problem; and deeply offensive and inflammatory antisemitic remarks comparing the Labour party to violent and hostile European fascist movements.

Overwhelmingly, the party is a welcoming and friendly environment for me as a Jewish person and i would and do strongly encourage other Jewish people to join.

Many thanks for your consideration.

47. **Name:** Male

CLP: Warwickshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >40 years

Testimony:

I am a 69 year old Jew living in the Midlands. My mother was a Kindertransport refugee, most of whose family, including her parents, were murdered by the Nazis. My father was the grandson of refugees from Czarist pogroms. Both my parents were active members of the Labour Party continually from the time they left the Communist Party in the 1950s until their deaths in 2013 and 2017. I have been an active member of the Labour Party since the mid-1970s. Neither of my parents ever mentioned to me any anti-Semitic experiences in the Labour Party. In my 40 years in the Party I have never experienced or witnessed any anti-Semitism beyond the very occasional bad taste remark and that's not happened for at least 20 years. I can see no justification whatsoever for the current wave of false accusations against Jeremy Corbyn and the left in the Labour Party. This is not to deny that there is revolting abuse on social media, some of it anti-semitic and some of it from self-styled supporters of Jeremy Corbyn (but most of it from avowedly right-wing people). Rarely is there any evidence that any of these people are Labour Party members. If there is, and they are, then I am confident that they can and will be disciplined by the Party, especially now that it has finally set up effective procedures under its new general secretary appointed under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership. All accusations against the

Labour Party allegations of anti-semitism are driven, in my opinion, by a burning desire to topple Jeremy Corbyn from the leadership and/or to damage the Labour Party in order to perpetuate Conservative rule.

48. **Name:** Male

CLP: Warwickshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years (1985-86; 2016-)

Testimony:

I am 68 years old, and a professor of xxx.

I live in a small town in the West Midlands. I am Jewish, and a member of the Labour Party. I have never had any experience of anti-semitism in my contacts with the party. The Secretary of the xxx CLP is a Jew. I strongly believe that there is no antisemitism in our CLP.

I have met a lot of people who are angry with Israel for its disgraceful and racist treatment of the Palestinians, as am I. But this is very different from anti-semitism.

On the other hand, I do have experience of false allegations of anti-semitism.

1. After I and another manned a stall at a public event in XXX, we were accused in a letter to the local press of "trying to revive an ancient prejudice". This gave rise to an exchange of letters, with the allegations rebutted by several Jewish members of our pro-Palestinian group, and then repeated by an Israeli. In the end, we were defended by letters from several members of the public who had visited our stall and were able to say that there had been not the slightest evidence of antisemitism.

2. After a recent academic seminar on Palestine at xxx University which I attended, the organisers were told by the university that they had received complaints that participants in the seminar had voiced anti-semitic opinions.

I can testify that there was not the faintest whiff of anti-semitism at the seminar.

3. The Press Complaints Commission upheld a complaint I made about an editorial in the Jewish Chronicle which asserted that "Jew-hatred lives on in the Royal Institute of British Architects". This was in response to a motion passed by RIBA calling for the exclusion of the Association of Israeli Architects from the international Architects' Association, on the grounds that Israeli architects were enthusiastic participants in the construction of illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The person who had lobbied for this motion to be passed was himself a Jewish architect, who was outraged by the participation of Israeli architects in what he believed was ethnic cleansing. Editorials like this are designed to encourage the belief in the Jewish community that they are under attack and to bind them to legitimate criticisms of Israeli policy. It seems that this kind of fear-mongering

is all too effective and has had a terrible effect in UK political life. My complaint was upheld and the Jewish Chronicle was obliged to print my letter pointing out the falsity of the earlier allegations. For those Jews who write or organise in defence of the Palestinians, the Israel lobby has invented the category of "Self-Hating Jews". I am not a self-hating Jew.

I am a proud secular Jew. I count many Jews among my friends and colleagues, I listen to the music of Jewish composers and musicians, among others, and, as a mathematician, I read and appreciate the work of other Jewish mathematicians. I resent being called a self-hating Jew, and I deeply resent the false accusation of anti-semitism.

I attended a meeting in a synagogue in North London at which Jonathan Freedland interviewed the former speaker of the Israeli Knesset, Avram Burg, who had recently published a book called "The Holocaust is over, we must rise from its ashes". Burg criticised Israeli policy towards the Palestinians. At the meeting, a man called Jonathan Hoffman was present. After the meeting, I heard him reproaching the rabbi for allowing his synagogue to be used by "an enemy of Israel" - i.e. Avram Burg. Hoffman is well known for his deplorable behaviour at meetings which aim to help the Palestinian cause.

Everyone who is in any way active in support of the Palestinian people is familiar with the routine false accusations of anti-semitism, of the kind I have described. We have learned to put up with them, but perhaps should have been less tolerant.

It is now clear that there is a systematic attempt to distort the UK political landscape by smearing supporters of Palestinian rights as anti-semites. I am extremely distressed by this, and feel outraged that the so-called Campaign Against Anti-Semitism has reported the Labour Party to the EHRC.

I find the hounding of Jeremy Corbyn, and of the Labour Party in general, on these bogus grounds, deeply disturbing and offensive. The people who do it hide behind the protection afforded them through their being members of an ethnic minority, and have no regard for the truth. I believe that their intention is to prevent the election of a government that will recognise the rights of the Palestinians. In their support for the apartheid state of Israel, it is they who are the racists.

49. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party for most of the past 40 years.

I have **never** encountered antisemitism in the Labour Party. I presume you are aware that Momentum, the group set up to support Jeremy as Leader, is headed by a Jew, Jon Lansman, and that several UK and Israeli Jews have been suspended/expelled by the Labour Party for supposed antisemitism.

The insane accusations against Jeremy and Labour are purely politically motivated, because he's a Socialist and thus a threat to the status quo, and because he supports Palestinian rights. Read 'A Very British Coup' and you will find there chapter and verse on what happens when a Socialist leader emerges in the UK. Jeremy has been called unelectable, a Soviet spy, responsible single-handedly for Brexit [even though it's in fact David Cameron who's the one single-handedly responsible], and now an antisemite. What next I wonder?

The EHRC should turn its attention to the Conservative Party, where it will find the sort of people that I **have** encountered antisemitism from.

In case you are not aware of the fact, the IHRA definition of antisemitism only appeared **after** Jeremy was elected Leader of the Labour Party: I do not believe that this was a coincidence. The IHRA is a tiny organization based in Germany, with a staff of 5. Before this furore was whipped up, nobody had ever heard of it - I certainly hadn't. It is being cynically and wickedly used because it has the word 'Holocaust' in its title. Shame on those who are prepared to do this, with absolutely no concern for the consequences.

Kenneth Stern, the Jewish Zionist who drafted the original definition in 2005, for the EU [where it was not adopted], has recently voiced his concerns that his text is being used in a '**chilling McCarthy-like**' fashion in the UK.

For the first time since I was a child, when I knew people with numbers tattooed on their arms, I **do** now feel fearful as a Jew in this country. This is partly because of the rise of the far right under Tommy Robinson, [encouraged by Conservative policies, and ignored by those intent on unseating the twice democratically-elected Labour Leader], but mostly because of this relentless focus on Jews, and on blatantly fabricated antisemitism. People who call themselves Jews are now threatening my position in this country: I am 70 years old - shame on them.

50. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >8 years

Testimony:

I am a practising Jew and attend synagogue services 3-4 times a week on average. I keep kosher.

I am a member of the Labour party and have been for years.

I believe that allegations of anti-Semitism within the Labour party have been massively exaggerated.

I am aware of anti-Israel sentiment with the Labour party, some of it vitriolic. In my view hardly any, if any at all, could legitimately be described as anti-Semitism. I do not think I have come across any criticism based on anti-Semitic tropes. If there is any at all, I believe that any anti-Semitic sentiment would be secondary to anti-Israel sentiment. I do not have any sense that any criticism is anti-Israel secondary to any antagonism to Jews per se.

I think that complaints about the Labour party from within various sections of the "Jewish community" (which is in fact very heterogeneous) are essentially unfounded. Here I include the statements from the Board of Deputies, the Community Security Trust, the Jewish newspapers and the letter signed by seventy odd rabbis. As a result of these, I cancelled my subscription to the Board of Deputies and withdrew from participation with my synagogue's security rota because of ties with the CST.

I had never heard of the Campaign Against Antisemitism. Having viewed there website I believe they are an extremely partisan pressure group. So far as I can see they do not represent any significant faction within the Jewish community.

I am broadly, though critically, supportive of Israel and I am somewhat sympathetic to the Palestinian cause. I do not, for example, buy into the narrative that Israeli soldiers "massacred" Gazan civilians.

It is extremely difficult to fully disentangle anti-Israel from anti-Semitic sentiment for a number of reasons that are hard to discuss fully and rationally in public without them being seized on and misinterpreted for the following reasons among others:

The vast majority of Jews are broadly and instinctively supportive of Israel and it has an existential significance for them.

Jews do tend to identify with other Jews. To an extent, in general Jews begin from the position of supporting other Jews. Jews probably do have a disproportionate influence over the media relative to their numbers.

It is the case that British Jews do regard Israel to some extent as at least their potential homeland. If things became unpleasant in Britain, for example, if the economy crashed with Brexit, every Jew knows that they have the option to relocate to Israel.

Israel is not "like any other country". People can claim citizenship based on their religion or heritage. This is not exactly race but I can see that it is difficult to argue that this is not some form of racism, though that is not the term I would use. (Though I do not accept that Israel is an "apartheid state" – I remember what that word means.)

It is practically impossible to refer to any of these facts in any discussion without being accused of being anti-Semitic.

I have repeatedly gone back to the source material of deeds and utterances which have been provided as evidence of antisemitism by people prominent within the Labour party and invariably I found material that I did not judge myself to be anti-Semitic.

It is possibly that some supporters of Corbyn and Labour, inside or outside of the party, may have said things which are anti-Semitic. My view is that the party has responded to these promptly and appropriately, and has probably deemed some things to be anti-Semitic which I think are not.

I believe it is true that accusations of antisemitism within Labour have been exaggerated, at least in part for political purposes. I believe that these essentially false allegations actually encourage real antisemitism, but that it is deemed anti-Semitic to say so.

I think that the party's reluctance to accept the IHRA definition with examples was appropriate.

I think that the accusation that Labour is guilty of "institutional antisemitism" is frankly absurd.

Nor is there a severe and widespread problem. At most there may be isolated examples. There is understandable frustration and rage against people who make false or exaggerated claims of antisemitism but I do not call this response antisemitic. It is not motivated by hatred of Jews and it does not seek to attack characteristics which are perceived of as "Jewish". For example, it is not anti-Semitic to call somebody a Blairite.

I hope I have made my views clear. I would be willing to enlarge upon them if desired, or provide personal testimony

51. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am a Labour Party member, but these days it seems I have to preface any comments on anti-semitism with my credentials as a Jew. Yes, I'm Jewish, my mother was Israeli, and I attended Socialist Zionist summer camps, at a time that this was not an oxymoron.

After the Yom Kippur War, I wrote a letter to the Times begging Israel to recognize that if it didn't return the occupied territories, it would either stop being a Jewish state if all inhabitants could vote, or it would stop being a moral democratic state, because it would have second class citizens.

The letter was not published. Today, the State of Israel's racist policies shame me, indeed break my heart. But Zionist Jews who support these racist agendas in Israel are accusing the Labour party of anti-semitism, i.e. racism, for not supporting such policies. In so doing, they disable the fight against the Tories, who have more anti-semitism and racism but are more pro-Israel.

Speaking as a Jew, I was raised to fight anti-semitism wherever I see it. But I have seen no evidence at all of anti-semitism in the Labour party, and I know that Jeremy Corbyn has been anti-racist always, and so have his supporters. The fact that they may be against racist policies in Israel is the source of this bad press.

So I feel sick when the serious accusation of anti-semitism is taken out of context, conflated with criticism of the Israeli government, and used in an attempt to destroy the Labour party. Anti-semitism has been a matter of life and death for us, not to be used as a political football.

52. **Name:** Female

CLP: Shropshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am a British-born Jew, the granddaughter of immigrants from Poland. I am not a Zionist and have been opposed to the Israeli government's policies towards and treatment of the Palestinians, both within Israel and in the Occupied Territories since 1967.

I have been a Labour Party supporter all my adult life, but joined it only after the 2015 election.

This was in response to Ed Miliband's resignation and the prospect that the next leader might continue the neoliberal economic policies of the Blair-Brown governments and dangerous foreign interventions such as the British involvement in the Iraq invasion.

As a member of the party (and previously as a supporter) I can state unequivocally that I have never encountered any antisemitism at meetings or social gatherings. I do not consider criticism of Israel to be antisemitic unless it contains abusive language or violence towards Jews. I also do not consider it necessary to adopt the IHRA 'working definition', as existing laws against racial and religious hatred should already cover antisemitism. It is also very clear from observing political life in this country at the present time that where antisemitism exists it is overwhelmingly on the far-right of the spectrum.

It has been clear also that the pressure to adopt the IHRA formula, with all its 'illustrative examples', has been part of a campaign to discredit the existing party leadership and has been coordinated by organisations that are no friends of the Labour Party, such as the Board of Deputies of British Jews, most of whose members would not support the party under any circumstances, or newspapers such as the Jewish Chronicle. It also appears that undue influence is being exerted by the Israeli embassy, which is absolutely unacceptable.

What concerns me above all is that members of the Labour Party, among them Jews who know from personal experience what antisemitism is, are being labelled as antisemites because of their opposition to the Israeli government's treatment of the Palestinians. If criticism of Israel is to be regarded as antisemitic, then it will be impossible to register disagreement with its government, simply because someone somewhere may decide that this disagreement is antisemitic, or containing 'antisemitic tropes' (a nebulous term that should be abandoned).

Because of the horrors of the Holocaust no one is free to speak their mind on Israeli actions towards the Palestinians without fearing that their words will be taken as antisemitic and even

as an example of Holocaust denial. The situation that has been allowed to develop is verging on the insane. No rational dialogue is possible in this climate; the media trawl the internet for examples of 'antisemitism' on the part of the Labour leadership and dissident voices find it difficult to get a fair hearing.

In this hysterical environment, it has become impossible to cite verified historical facts without being accused of antisemitism. Thus, pointing out that Hitler was willing to make an accommodation with German Zionists in the 1930s, in order to 'rid' Germany of its Jews, has been ruled unacceptable. Similarly, providing evidence of the extreme violence inflicted on the Palestinian population in the months before and during the foundation of Israel is shouted down as an example of antisemitism, as though no Jew at any time or under any circumstance could possibly use violence towards non-Jews.

It is possible that in some constituencies there are Labour Party activists and supporters whose commitment to the Palestinian cause leads them to assume that all Jews are Zionists and all Zionists are supporters of the Israeli government. I have not experienced this in my constituency, but where it exists there is obviously a need to inform and educate members of the party who voice sentiments that are genuinely antisemitic. But this is not what this scandal is about. It is to silence any Labour politician or member who expresses opposition to Israel (now or historically).

I only hope that the CEO of the EHRC is able to judge the CAA's application with due impartiality.

53. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2 years

Testimony:

I am a Jewish member of the Labour Party. In the current context in which the tragedy of the Holocaust has been 'weaponised' to justify the oppressive policies of the Israeli occupation, it is perhaps pertinent for me to mention that my grandparents and many members of my extended family perished in the Latvian holocaust.

I grew up in a small South African mining town under apartheid and therefore have a clear understanding of the horrendous consequences of racist policies , thinking and insults.

I would like to state clearly and firmly that I have never experienced antisemitism in the Labour Party. I have no doubt about the existence of antisemitism which is probably endemic to most Western cultures, I do not believe that it is a problem specific to the Labour Party. Indeed I feel there may be a greater level of consciousness of its malign effects within the Labour Party than in the wider community. There is also a greater consciousness of the suffering of the Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation. I feel the current allegations are based on the conflation of antiZionism with antisemitism.

However I feel it is vital for the Labour Party to support the Palestinian people and to criticise their oppressors.. While much is made of this alleged 'antisemitism' in the media it is striking how restrained is the focus on the daily killings of innocent civilians in the occupied territories.

I feel that a smear campaign is being waged against Jeremy Corbyn. particularly because the current support of the Boycott and Divestment campaign against Israel is gaining greater momentum. A number of commentators have astutely pointed out that the daily attacks on Corbyn bear all the hallmarks of a centrally directed operation.

54. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I understand that the "Campaign against anti-semitism" (whoever they are) has referred the Labour Party to the EHRC because of its so-called 'anti-semitism'. I find this an absurd and reprehensible act for reasons that I explain below.

a) My mother was a Jewish child refugee from Germany who came to Britain on the Kindertransport. She was a teacher and a long-standing member of the Labour Party in Hackney. She became a local activist, helping to establish the Finsbury Park Action Group, and worked very closely with Jeremy Corbyn and Diane Abbott on many different north London campaigns through the 1980s and 1990s. She and Jeremy became close friends and he gave a eulogy at a public ceremony to celebrate her life. He is not an anti-semite. There was never any inkling, any mention, of anti-semitism in the party in all her years of involvement.

b) I, a Jew, joined the Labour party when Corbyn was elected leader. I was delighted that the party was moving away from Blairite neo-liberalism and had chosen a man of integrity and vision who would maintain social democratic values and policies, especially against the despicable austerity path that the Tories had chosen. His approach resonates that of Harold Wilson in the 1960s and is not "hard" left - as the mainstream media insist of describing him - but democratic socialist. I valued his positions on foreign policy issues and that he has always been active in combatting injustice and racism wherever they exist. That includes Israel and the vexed question of rights and justice for the Palestinians, which he has always vocally supported.

c) I have never come across any anti-semitism within the party. Necessary criticism of actions by the rightwing government in Israel is not in itself anti-semitic; rather, it is necessary that all people of conscience, Jews and non-Jews, speak out against an injustice that needs to be remedied.

d) I consider the recent incessant noise about 'anti-semitism in the Labour party' to be a cynical and deliberate attempt to remove a progressive, decent man from office since this seems to be the only charge against him that can be made to stick through false accusation and repetition. There is evidence that the Hasbara of the Israeli government have been actively fomenting these lies. The right-wing of the Labour party are worried about his popularity. The Tories, far more deeply anti-semitic and Islamophobic than Labour but NOT investigated by the media, are delighted by this campaign.

e) Almost NO evidence has been produced about this story. The media report outrageous comments by individuals as fact, with no evidence produced by the individuals concerned and none produced by the media. Margaret Hodge's comment that the situation is as bad as in nazi Germany was reported as if true, rather than a traduction of the experiences of my family and so many others who did not live to speak. Stories from years ago are dredged up and circulate

across the internet, as if they have not already been dealt with, explained, even sometimes apologised for. There is NO new evidence of anti-semitism, let alone the extreme crisis that some comments would have an ignorant population believe exists.

f) Israel is now a powerful state in the Middle East with a very right-wing government. That government does not act in a way that all Israelis approve of, nor in a manner that all Jews around the world support. It does NOT speak in my name, as British jew. It deserves to be criticised for its violent actions against innocent Palestinians, its destruction of Palestinian infrastructure, its continued policy of land incursions and settlement building and its crass indifference to the suffering it causes. The use of the anti-semitism accusation against Corbyn and the progressive elements in the Labour party is also a play to protect Israel from criticism. The IHRA with its crude examples also plays to the stifling of debate about Israeli government policies and Palestinian rights.

In short, I have not heard of or experienced anti-semitism within the Labour party. Anti-semitism is not to be equated with criticism of Israel. Such criticism and support for Palestinian rights is not anti-semitic unless it manifests a hatred of Jews as Jews. This is a baseless witch-hunt and I urge the EHRC to throw the complaint out.

55. **Name:** Female

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I wish it to be recorded that as a British National and person with a Jewish heritage and I am NOT a Zionist. I accept that Israeli citizens have a state, but I do not support the Zionist policies of colonialism and extension of the illegal boundaries into Palestine.

I am a Labour Party member and have not experienced any anti-Semitism, though it is possible that there is the same proportion of discrimination as in the rest of the population.

56. **Name:** Female

CLP: Oxfordshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am a Jewish member of the Labour Party. My mother was a refugee from Germany in the last war. My great grandmother was one of the disappeared in The Holocaust, having herself been a refugee from Lithuania as a child. We grew up, afraid of ever telling anyone we were Jews, lest we be persecuted for it.

However, I must speak out now, because I deplore the way in which the term anti-Semitism is being degraded by the Campaign Against Antisemitism, the Board of Deputies and others, in order to score political points and vilify Corbyn. I have never experienced antisemitism in the Labour Party, nor is Corbyn anti-Semitic. Ironically, the greatest threat to Jews, in my opinion, comes from those who insist that we must all agree with their perverted definition of antisemitism, the IHRA definition with all its examples, which seeks to deny Palestinians their rights to dignity and self determination.

In truth, the term antisemitism means a hatred of Jews. It has nothing to do with Israel and even the author of the IHRA definition believes it unfit for the purpose for which it is currently being invoked. Rabbi Sachs and his ilk do not speak for me. I deplore what they are saying and I disagree with them in the strongest possible terms.

We should not adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism with all its examples, for a number of reasons. Not least is that to do so undermines the principle of free speech, which is a cornerstone of democracy and must surely be an overriding principle of the Labour Party. We must be free to criticise Israel and its repugnant system of apartheid and to defend the rights of the Palestinians as we defend those of anybody, including Jews. If we do adopt this definition with all its examples, we will lose that right and it will set a really dangerous precedent: what else will we not be allowed to say in the future?

Also, there is evidence that the accusations of antisemitism against Corbyn are part of an organised campaign by the State of Israel, to discredit him. ('Is Israel's Hand Behind The Attacks on Jeremy Corbyn' The Middle East Eye; the Al Jazeera investigative report; reporting by Asa Winstanley in the Electronic Intifada, etc). We cannot and should not allow this kind of interference to influence Labour Party policy.

Finally, it is a misconception to speak about 'the Jewish community', as if all Jews think the same. We do not, and the Labour Party should give as much weight to the views of groups like

Jewish Voice for Labour, as they do to Labour Friends of Israel, which are no friends to Corbyn, at least, and arguably not the Labour Party either.

Please do not succumb to the pressure to adopt the full IHRA definition with all its examples, but have the courage of your convictions to do what is right.

57. **Name:** Female

CLP: Gloucestershire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

My father was a lifelong member of the party and was a councillor on Bristol City Council some years ago and a member of the Bristol Hebrew congregation.

Despite moving to an area with no synagogue in the 1980s, he continued to practice Judaism until his passing in 2014 when he was buried in accordance with Jewish law.

My father was one of the earliest signatories to the IJV declaration.

My mother Jewish by birth but never practiced (grew up in area where Jews blamed for war...) I am secular.

That is our 'credentials'!

My father briefly met Jeremy Corbyn via Tony Benn and I am very sad he did not get to see Corbyn become leader as I know this would have pleased him.

Since the whole sorry, shameful affair was instigated, I have received verbal abuse from *non-Jews* that I am antisemitic - I have only ever criticised the Israeli Govt, never the country as a whole.

I do not feel there is institutional antisemitism in the party but that those who would try to bring Corbyn down may be doing us more damage in this area.

When I have tried to hold discussions about the history of Zionism with some in the party, I have been accused of all sorts!

The whole thing has actually encouraged antisemites from *outside* of the party (full on right wingers and 'casual' racists) out of the woodwork now and I feel more concerned about their rise because of the selfish actions of the more right wing factions of Labour that have led to this.

But also, because we are cut down for trying to oppose anti-Palestine actions and policies, we remain silent. And my daughter, 2 years ago at the age of 15, faced a a barrage of vile antisemitism at school from people who saw what Israel was doing and had conflated the actions of a govt with the views of Jews in general.

If we cannot criticise Israel, we will have to take flack for all of its actions

I should say that I have not heard any antisemitism in my union (Unite) at any functions or courses I have attended (and I am a branch secretary and was previously a branch equalities officer) so have had ample opportunity to be exposed to problem dialogue.

The people I associate with in the union are, in the main, very very long-term party members and activists

58. **Name:** Female

CLP: West Yorkshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am writing as a Jew and a member of the Labour Party.

I'm afraid this may not be as coherent and well argued as I would have wished as time is short for me to submit this.

My experience in the Labour Party is not at all of institutionalised anti-semitism. I feel at home in the Labour Party, as do my Jewish friends, especially because in my view Jeremy Corbyn has the best record of any party leader in the fight against racism in any and all of its manifestations. I see informally expressed anti semitism in all parties and all walks of life, particularly on the right, sometimes malicious but more often based on unthought-out lazy thinking which is only added to by this kind of complaint. This requires clear education and a clear statement of the difference between a racist stance (conscious or unconscious) which must be tackled, and a political criticism. Many non-Jews are becoming so frightened by the bullying of the pro-Israeli government lobby that they are often silenced by a fear of being accused of anti semitism. I know because Party members tell me this. This hurts me deeply as a Jew, a democrat and a member of the Labour Party.

I make a very clear distinction between a racist stance of hating or stereotyping Jews as Jews, and a legitimate criticism of the policies of the State of Israel. Perhaps because I am Jewish I do not want these policies of occupation, and apartheid-like laws, to be enacted in my name. This is not a weird or extreme position to take. Much of the world thinks the same way. I object to being accused by supporters of the policies of the State of Israel, including members of my own family, of being a self-hating Jew. This means that in their view, as in the minds of many of the supporters of this complaint by the CAA, there can be no legitimate criticism of Israeli policies vis a vis Palestine. This is a fundamental breach of democratic rights. Hence my support for the refusal to include the whole IHRA definition is precisely because the one example that is left out is the one that would preclude legitimate political debate (and is NOT based as alleged on anti semitism).

I believe that attacks like this one by the CAA are politically motivated, in a concerted attempt to unseat Corbyn for purely political reasons. This kind of attack is supported and promulgated by much of the mainstream press, including the Daily Mail who themselves supported fascism in the 1930s. Even President Netanyahu, hardly an unbiased observer, has been allowed to interfere in our domestic policies with little or no objection from the mainstream media.

Lastly when the media refers to "the Jewish community" being offended/scared/upset by the Labour Party as an institution, I would be very interested to know who this apparently unified Jewish community comprises. What about people like myself (probably very many thousands of us - but who has ever counted?), proud of my Jewish roots and wanting therefore to dissociate myself from what I see as the cruelty of the current policies of the Israeli State (not the cruelty of Jews as Jews). What about pro-Palestinians Rabbis?

59. **Name:** Male

CLP: South Yorkshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 4 years

Testimony:

As a Jewish member of the British Labour Party and speaking from my personal experience, I totally refute the charges of widespread anti-Semitism in the party. I have never experienced any comments or statements by members of the party or by its elected representatives that could in any way be construed as anti-Semitic. Moreover I understand that the Labour Party historically, and its current leader Jeremy Corbyn have always been in the forefront of challenging anti-Semitism in Britain.

I do believe that there is a sustained campaign by many in the mainstream media and by right wing supporters of the Israeli state to undermine the Labour Party and its leader Jeremy Corbyn through false accusations of anti-Semitism in order to prevent the coming to power of a Labour Government under Corbyn which would speak out against the inhuman treatment of the Palestinian people.

60. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am writing this email, as I understand that the Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) has referred the Labour Party to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) alleging institutional antisemitism.

I have been a member of the xx branch of the xxx Labour Party for some three years and am of Jewish origin. I have to say that I have NEVER experienced any form of anti-Semitism or Racism during the time that I have been a member of the Labour Party. It is my firm impression that the Labour Party accepts people of all religions, nationalities and ethnicities on an equal basis.

61. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 38 years

Testimony:

I am a practising Jew and have been a member of the Labour Party since 1980. I have come across views contrary to Zionism (from Jews and non-Jews), and criticism of Israeli governments, but have never come across any instance of anti-semitism in the Labour Party or from its members throughout this period.

62. **Name:** Male

CLP: Warwickshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

EHRC seems to be a naive body. Does it realize that bots can create overnight tens of thousands of emails purporting to come from Corbyn supporters, with fictitious complaints and complainants?

I have been a member of the Labour Party since Jeremy Corbyn was elected as Leader of the Labour Party in 2015. I regularly attend meetings of my Constituency Labour Party. I have never observed the slightest trace of antisemitism, either in person or in social media, from anyone I know to be a member of the Labour Party. I have seen reports in the Press of antisemitic statements made by a very few members of the Labour Party whom I did not know. As far as I am aware, all such cases have been dealt with by suspension or expulsion from the Party.

63. **Name:** Male

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

To Avoid Criticism, Do Nothing, BE NOTHING?

Not Jeremy Corbyn! As Mr Jeremy Corbyn is being raked over the coals I can only admire him more. He's doing what a leader does ... guiding us through the irresolvable toward the attainable. As a signatory of Jews for Justice for Palestinians, a British Subject, and a Jew, I salute Mr Jeremy Corbyn.

But what he has said has offended many who persist in wearing their myth-inspired blinkers. They are the self-identified social outcasts in our global community. And they dare accuse Mr Corbyn of anti-Semitism when all he does is calling the beast by its name.

It is a no-win game for the ultra-nationalists. They label themselves Zionists. They have forgotten. The Prophetic Ideals in the Sacred Texts define Zionism as becoming the light among nations, to create a heaven on earth. Israel has become a hell on earth. It has become a danger to itself. Judaism teaches us to look into the mirror of our own realities, to become better people. The Israeli brand of Zionism has taught us to ignore our collective virtues and, in fact, to make a vice a virtue. How many olive groves have we not destroyed?

As it turns out, the most potent wall the Zionists have built is that which holds up the myth. To the religious-nationalists and the ultra-nationalists, the wall aims to fence the non-Jews out. However, until the world shouts, "Mr. Netanyahu, tear down that wall," the barrier continues to lock in the Jews inside their own egocentric fortress. (*Kindle locations 1820-1824)

Many of us have fooled some of the people some of the time, especially ourselves. We now realise we cannot fool all of the people all of the time, including ourselves. We've been taught we cannot get away getting something for nothing and that no one can get away with murder. And sooner than later, we must pay the Piper. These are fundamental convictions in our Judaic conscience.

And yet ... many of us are still beguiled by ultra-nationalism. Some Jews feel Israel must become a supra-national theocracy for Jews-only when most Jews reject their Jewishness. They have become atheists. The Sacred Texts clearly asserts, in a democracy, we must humbly dignify the other. How can you dignify God if you don't dignify the other? They are also created in His image. Nonetheless, in Israel, the Chosen are more equal than those who are not. And so,

Israel's 'democracy' is more of an ethnocracy, which is not a democracy. It is apartheid, in Dutch "to be separated."

Mr Corbyn is merely trying to free Jews from bondage. Most Israelis and most Palestinians, tired and stressed out, seek a future without war. Both do not support indiscriminate brutality against the other. They desperately want security and peace.

The vast majority of the Israeli Jews (73.8%), Israeli Palestinians living inside Israel with Israeli citizenships (97%) and the Palestinians (under enemy control in Gaza and the West Bank) (85.7%) want peace, heretofore, either not realized or denied by all sides of the Divide. This is breaking news affirmed by the Jerusalem-based Israel Democracy Institute and the Ramallah-based Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research. (*Kindle locations 512-521)
Impotence among leaders? What are they waiting for?

When will they serve the main entre, the most tasteful that the best of the best chefs can offer? The sweet aroma of peace is in the air, all around us.

A clear majority on all sides of the Divide wants peace. Are the politicians just stumbling over their own hurdles? Is a movement toward peace solely about real estate, jobs, position, or status; power and money? Or, should it be about humanity, community, and the public interest. When Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. talks about the mountaintop, he is talking about a higher level of consciousness, a movement that harmonizes the "I" with the "we" and the "we" with the "I." (Kindle Locations 534-539)

In the past, those in command of the peace talks dare not take off at full throttle. The results: one deadlock after the other. Oslo, Ottawa, Shepherdstown, The Wye Plantation, Annapolis, Geneva, Madrid, Nicosia, Washington, D.C., London, Bonn, Vienna, and Paris have succeeded in producing stalemates often ending in standoffs with one foot in the stirrup, the other in the sand. (*Kindle Locations 543-545)

It is clear that the leadership should concoct more palatable recipes. And, if any one of the leaders can't stand up to the heat, tell them to get out of the kitchen. A leader who cannot hammer out an acceptable peace resolution is not worth his or her salt and should be democratically replaced. The leaders of the region must creatively combine the many regional contradictions to produce a well-balanced yet spicy feast. (*Kindle Locations 558-562)

The leadership on ALL sides of the Divide has yet to strike an acceptable peace package. To date, the majority on both sides, reject the proposed resolutions ostensibly designed to fail from the start. "Only 39 percent of Palestinians and 46 percent of Israelis support a peace agreement package, riddled with obstacles. (Kindle Locations 546-558)

It takes a leader with leadership to accomplish the almost impossible. Mr Jeremy Corbyn is endowed with such qualities. He is worthy of becoming Prime Minister. He can and will effectuate positive results at home and around the world.

64. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years (1980s, since 2015)

Testimony:

I am a member of the Labour Party, and the (65 year old) son of a jewish refugee from Nazi Austria. Most of my father's older family members (his parents, Aunt's/uncle's' etc) died in the holocaust, with several of the younger members fleeing abroad, predominantly to Israel, the UK, and USA. I have one close cousin in the Czech republic who is an Auschwitz survivor.

I would like to state my concern about the apparent current 'campaign' asserting a problem with anti-semitism in the Labour Party.

I have not myself experienced or seen any evidence of such alleged behaviour. The On the contrary, I see the party as anti-racist in every way.

Unlike many current Jewish critics on this topic, I do not have the arrogance to claim to speak on behalf of the jewish community (whatever that is), but I will say that ALL of the jewish friends I have in London are appalled at the way seemingly right-wing jews and right-wing non-jewish members of the Labour Party are, with the help of a right-wing media are orchestrating a campaign on the back of a so-called anti-semitism problem in the party to stop it's movement to the left of the political spectrum.

The effect of this campaign is unfortunately to exacerbate the likelihood of anti-semitism in the mainstream community, and to also make many jewish critics of Israeli government policy, like myself, feel unable to express free speech on matters of such policy.

I have quoted statements from my Israeli relatives several times over the years, without fear of being censured, but the current climate makes this position unhealthily unclear. When I quoted one Israeli relative's description of modern Israeli government policy (forced movement of people from their homes) as something he had experienced at the time of his flight from the nazis, I was told by a local jewish councillor that I was being racist and anti-semitic quoting this. He then referred to the discussion in an article in the Jewish Chronicle as an example of anti-semitism. He kindly wrote to me telling me though he did not think I was an anti-semite !! I think that shows where this scenario is taking us.

I see is (these false claims and attempts to silence people, including a large number of left wing and ant-zionist jews, on Israeli policy) as in itself anti-democratic and residually ant-semetic.

Please talk to the large number of Jews within the Labour party on this topic, rather than so-called representatives and right of centre MPs.

65. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I rejoined the LP after 30 years out following JC's election as leader. Throughout my life I have been an antiracist campaigner, member of CND, feminist activist, lgbtq campaigner - an activist for equal civil and human rights. I marched against the Iraq war and against Trident, among other issues.

On the issues of Middle East politics I have worked for Palestinian rights. In short - a supporter of Corbyn and the democratic socialist wing of the party.

I am a secular (atheist) Jew; joined Jews for Justice for Palestinians, Jews against Zionism, and, last year, Jewish Voice for Labour.

I have occasionally come across antisemitism as an individual via various professional contexts over the years. Never in the Labour Party - not once.

I would like the party to embrace pluralism and inclusiveness. A small criticism of my favourite bit of the party was that they organised a meeting the other day at Conway Hall to gain support for Palestinian rights and to support Jeremy Corbyn - and held it on Eid. This meant that Muslim comrades were celebrating and only a few secular Muslims came, including two of the speakers. I don't think this was malign; absolutely not, but when the press can pillory Jeremy for publishing a statement as the Jewish sabbath is coming in, we need to be more diversity aware so as not to appear to exclude minority communities.

We are a state of all our citizens. I love being active in the left of the party and would like the party machine to stop grovelling to the witchfinders general from the unelected Jewish so-called community leaders and the Labour Party right, and get on with the current labour policies. They must not succeed in dragging the party back to neoliberalism and institutional inequality.

66. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >40 years

Testimony:

I am Jewish and have been a member of the Labour Party for over 40 years. I have never in all that time met with or even had a hint of antisemitism. I have always felt safe in this Party. What disturbs me is the shouting that Labour is riddled with antisemitism, despite the clear evidence of two recent polls that there is not more antisemitism in the Labour Party than in any other organisation, and indeed less than in some parts of our society. I refuse to be emotionally blackmailed into believing that criticism of the State of Israel is antisemitic.

67. **Name:** Female

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 35 years

Testimony:

I have been a member of xxx CLP for 35 years and never once, in all that time, have I experienced antisemitism. I am Jewish and have antennae out very powerfully for antisemitism. I would be aware of it if it were 'classical' antisemitism and also if it were concerned with Israel-Palestine issues.

I do know what I am talking about as I experienced a lot of antisemitism as a child in the thirties. I am now 91 years old.

I know that there probably are antisemites somewhere in the Labour Party as it is endemic in European society. But I have never met it.

68. **Name:** Female

CLP: Northumberland

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2 years

Testimony:

I have never ever experienced or witnessed anti Semitic comments or actions from anyone at all in the Labour Party. I am 64 years old, the daughter of a Holocaust survivor from Vienna, and Jewish. I have always found Labour to be welcoming and anti-racist. If Jews were under threat in this country it would be Labour that I would look to for protection. My fears are of the far Right, not in the least from Labour. Please be clear about this!

69. **Name:** Female

CLP: Nottinghamshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I thought I would write to give my testimony of anti-semitism in the Labour Party. If I may, I will put in in context. I am 59.

My much beloved father, Ludwig was the only remaining survivor of the xxx family who lived in Vienna. [He died just under 10 years ago else I would ask him to write something too.]. He was sent to England by his Hungarian [Jewish] mother and Czech father on one of the Kindertransport trains. The rest of our family were wiped out by the Nazis for the crime of being socialist and Jewish. Dad was let in because an amazing White Russian emigre in England, Dr Bielenki, was kind enough to act as sponsor to this boy he knew nothing about and whose parents espoused views he absolutely condemned. I can never be grateful enough for that act of humanity. Dad was later old enough to be enlisted and be part of the aftermath of the war in Germany and actually acted as one of the many language interpreters at Nuremberg seconded over to the American army. Dad went on to become national lay Treasurer of the First Division as a senior civil servant in what was the Inland Revenue and I am proud that this victim of antisemitism went on to show the Nazis that they will never get the upper hand here.

My mother was not Jewish, did not attempt to convert and my brother and I were not brought up as Jews. Nevertheless I was always encouraged to be cognisant of the horrors of the holocaust and the need to oppose all attacks on people because of their religion or culture.. At 18 I went to Israel, working on Kibbutz Mefalsim on the outskirts of Gaza for 8 months. to find out more. This was to prove the setting of the first of many bewildering & upsetting discussions with Israeli Kibbutznikim who lectured me about the British iniquities (of which I had no doubt there were many) against the Jewish "Freedom fighters" in Palestine but who were quite content to describe the then Palestinian activists as "terrorists", getting incredibly angry if anyone suggested a parallel image there. I understood a little, from dad's experiences, the need to ensure that Shoah could never happen again but found the blind intolerance of any other race, religion or culture's rights to be incredibly distressing.

I rejoined the Labour Party, after many years out of it due to my dislike of the prevailing New Labour ethos, when Jeremy Corbyn was encouraged to stand as Leader and was proud to vote for him. I work for a trade union and have been aware of the positive activities and policies he, and the team around him, are developing. In all this time I have not seen or experienced any evidence of anti-semitism in Labour Party meetings or activities. I am, nevertheless also firmly

of the view that anti-semitism, as with other forms of pernicious and disgusting racism, in the Labour Party as in society as a whole is very likely to take place. I am particularly conscious that, where there are long social media threads around the issue of Palestine and the actions of

70. **Name:** Male

CLP: Devon

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I am , and have been a member of the Labour Party for many years and have served as branch chair for a considerable period in the 1950s and 60s. I am an 89 year old Jew, refugee from Nazi Germany in April 1939 and as such very sensitive to real antisemitism. I lost a number of relatives in the holocaust and other members of my family are scattered throughout the world, including Israel.

Like many of my fellow refugees I am critical of some aspects of Israel's conduct vis a vis Palestinians and Israel's own Arab minority. That does not make me an anti-Semite or what defenders of all Israel's actions term "a self-hating Jew.

I can say with total confidence that the Labour Party does not harbour institutional antisemitism or that its leader Jeremy Corbyn is an anti-Semite. There is no widespread antisemitism in the Labour Party or any evidence of such, though, of course, as with any population there are pockets of antisemitism which when individuals are identified they are suspended from the party. As a Jew who has lived through and witnessed real antisemitism I bitterly resent the attempt to conflate a critique of specific Israeli policies and actions with antisemitism.

the Israeli state, it is perfectly possible that individuals are posting who are either seeking deliberately to to provoke or who are simply unable to understand that to call out Jews rather than the actual instigators of the murders & land occupations is at the very least unhelpful and actually morally repugnant.

I won't repeat any of the facts about why the current NEC decision about the IHRA example [but not definition] are not actually supported by their author let alone many Jews, academics and legal experts - I am sure you will have plenty of learned contributions on that score. I want to say that I am deeply suspicious of this current series of charges without it seems to me any proper examples of a lack of action on anti-semitism other than on why complaints by a small number of MPs who have had quite disgraceful & unacceptable social media abuse - tho not as massive and longstanding abuse as for instance has Diane Abbott - have either not been lodged until now or not been explored for better ways to support the victims of such abuse. I am however very very angry that the stories that are being whipped up currently around Corbyn and his, alleged but frankly risible examples of ,antisemitism for the different reasons of a small number of people within and outwith the Labour Party are actually detracting from a proper look at how the Party deals with the unacceptable reality of any anti semitic attacks & abuse

going forward whilst retaining the right of its members to challenge the Israeli State, as every other State taking unacceptable & undemocratic actions, on behalf of the Palestinians who are enduring terror & everyday horrors the like of which I cannot imagine .

I hope you will take my testimony into consideration when you look into the matter

71. **Name:** Male

CLP: Cambridgeshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I have been in the Labour Party on and off since 1962 and I have been a Jew since birth at the end of 1944. Discussions of antisemitism were formative of my identity growing up with the understanding that only the channel had separated me from the holocaust. I have every reason to know about the deep roots of antisemitism on the right wing of politics in this country through my own experience and the experience of my family before WWII. My father was part of the resistance in the battle of Cable Street where my mother lived. Understanding and combatting discrimination has been a strong part of my working life in education so I am well placed to judge these matters.

I have met very little antisemitism in the Labour Party and the evidence from studies of attitudes amongst voters and members of political parties, which you will have examined, supports the conclusion that the Labour Party does not have more antisemitism than other parties and generally fewer people expressing discriminatory attitudes than other parties. It is dreadful that some Jewish Labour politicians have received antisemitic tweets though to send an antisemitic tweet while being a genuine supporter of Jeremy Corbyn is a considerable contradiction. The origin of such tweets has to be carefully checked for this reason amongst others. Anybody committing a hate crime should be dealt with under the law.

I have never felt myself singled out for negative treatment because I am a Jew. I met a very crass example of ignorance from a Labour Party member who attributed a disliked event to a Zionist conspiracy, using the word 'zio' which I thoroughly dislike. I intervened immediately and insisted that he entered into dialogue with me about it and acknowledge the antisemitism in what he said. I met some more widespread ignorance about disability discrimination from those on the right of the Party in my constituency and a lack of understanding of why disability access to meeting rooms is important. This has now been corrected. I have found that the left of the Party is stronger on anti-discrimination generally - about ethnicity, gender and sexual identity as well as disability.

It is wrong to suggest that the Labour Party is unsafe for Jews and that Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour leadership are antisemitic or that the Labour Party is institutionally antisemitic. I do know that quite a number of Jews and some Jewish organisations, a large majority of whose members vote Conservative, are alleging this and that they are being backed by some non-Jewish Labour MPs and those in other Parties. I think this is bound up with concerns about the politics of Israel and Palestine as well as right left politics in the Party and the country. The way

this influences peoples' thinking is complex but one would need to be wilfully ignorant about politics not to recognise the connections. In this process these people often suggest that Jews

speak with one voice, thus deliberately ignoring differences of view amongst Jews, which is itself highly discriminatory. Most people now understand that it is sexist to claim that all women want to stay at home to care for their children and racist to say all Black people have rhythm. Yet it seems that it is fine now to claim that all Jews love the IHRA working definition on anti-Semitism by ignoring the many in the UK and across the world who do not. This is apartheid of the intellect whereby Jews who do not conform to the stereotype in their thinking are deemed to hold second-class views, to be not real Jews, not real people. It is as discriminatory as the suggestion that all Jews love money. It is an assault on our identity. It is anti-Semitic on any reasonable definition of the term. The media and other organisations should reflect very carefully on their role in fostering such attitudes.

72. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >30 years

Testimony:

I am the child of refugees from Hitler (from Austria and the Netherlands) and was born shortly after my parents' arrival in this country (in 1939). I have been in the Labour Party since 1980 (with the exception of a few years after the invasion of Iraq) and have never encountered any antisemitism. The issue has only emerged in the last two or so years and is in my view related to Jeremy Corbyn's support of human rights for Palestinians which I wholly support. I am a member of Jewish Voice for Labour and have been a signatory of Jews for Justice for Palestinians since 2003.

73. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >25 years

Testimony:

I understand you are taking statements from Jewish members of the Labour Party which I first joined in the 1980s and of which I am an active member. I attend monthly branch meetings and often attend GC meetings. I join members of my branch campaigning and take part in social and other events. I also know a number of councillors both in and outside my ward. A number of fellow members have become good friends of mine.

I can confirm that since joining, happily I have never once experienced anti-Semitism and feel very established within the local group and constituency.

74. **Name:** Male

CLP: Essex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

Would like to make my own position clear.

As a Jew of 62 years a labour supporter all my life and admin on other "left" Facebook pages I feel a duty to clarify things.

I was born a Jew and I will die a Jew, I learned of my forefathers who escaped the pogroms and sought out refuge in a land where they might feel free to practice their religion without fear prejudice or judgements by others.

Israel was born out of that dream and after centuries of persecution many believed finally they could have their hard won "freedom". One cannot look at the world from a blinkered perspective and it's vital that we are realistic and humane.

There are unquestionably people who live within the land of Israel who have different rights than others, but sadly they don't have the equality and respect that those fleeing to Israel sought.

I love my religion I love my family but I DO NOT love the inhumanity perpetrated upon some of the many by others. We are the party of the many NOT the few.

I believe it's everyone's duty to look at others with humanity not the destructive biblical eye for an eye ethos that can only result in escalation.

Like many others, not least the younger generation, I seek the peace that so many thought they would get by the emigration to Israel. Can we not get rid of this vicious campaign of accusations of "anti semitism"? I love my religion, I do not support state inhumanity I am not an anti Semite, otherwise I would be a self loather, I simply cannot support inhumanity and intolerance.

Our party must call out intolerance wherever it hides. The stance of the party is not anti-Semitic whereas the board of deputies and their right wing Friends have no love for our party so who in their right minds would expect them to have a considered view on our party?

The BoD's represent the old guard minority not modern Judaism. Time that the public understand that. JVL are far more representative than those promoted by the media (who so support labour!!) as being the voice of Judaism.

BoD's NOT IN MY NAME.

Fanatics and fundamentalists will not endorse my opinions as they see the absolutism of their position and deny others the right to an opinion contrary to theirs.

My brand of Judaism is based upon tolerance understanding and the old ethos.....

You have two ears and one mouth use them in that percentage!

My mother taught me intolerance was the refuge of those who had no rational case to put. I won't sit here saying I am right and others are wrong but I will keep an open mind.

Irrespective of race or religion we are all human beings

I will not sacrifice my humanity on the altar of intolerance.

I fully support and endorse Labour and specifically Jeremy Corbyn's stance that is NOT anti Semitic but about the separation of Judaism from the regime in Israel

75. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 39 years

Testimony:

I have been a (Jewish) member of the Labour Party since 1979 and have never heard any anti-semitic remarks. In fact I have never encountered anti-semitism. However, I have heard racist and Islamophobic remarks.

76. **Name:** Female

CLP: Derbyshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2 years

Testimony:

I understand that the CAA has referred the Labour Party to the Equality and Human Rights Commission alleging 'institutional antisemitism'. As a Jewish member of the Labour Party I would like to disagree with this assertion in the strongest terms.

The Labour Party has always fought for equality for all regardless of race, gender, sexuality or religion. The Labour Party has carried out a thorough review of claims of anti-semitism through the Chakrabarti report which found little evidence except by a small minority and has implemented a clear procedure by which all allegations can be promptly examined.

I have no personal experience of anti-semitism within the party and no fear of anti-semitism. Instead I find myself as a proud Jew being intimidated by the fear of being labelled anti-semitic by groups or individuals who do not agree with my views on the human rights of Palestinians. My understanding of 'institutional anti-semitism' is based upon the William McPherson definition of institutional racism:

'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping.'

I have seen no evidence of this type of behaviour within the party. However, there is a concerted attempt to prevent legitimate criticism of the policies of the State of Israel, and deny Palestinians and their supporters freedom of speech by baseless claims of anti-semitism.

Jewish groups such as the CAA who claim to represent the Jewish community, only represent the conservative Jewish establishment, primarily the conservative synagogues, and are not elected representatives of the Jewish community. Many international Jewish organisations disagree with their views and the IHRA definition.

I call upon you to examine the evidence for these claims and not be swayed by the overheated rhetoric being used by organisations such as the CAA.

77. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: Approx. 60 years

Testimony:

At the end of this year I will be eighty. When I was eighteen I joined the Labour Party and with a short gap over Iraq, have been a member ever since. I can honestly say that I have never experienced anti-Semitism in that time and I am very sensitive to it. Of course, I have heard increasingly strident criticism of Israel, but I accept that that is a valid view point. Israel makes claims to be superior to its Arab neighbours and to be the "only democracy in the Middle East" and this invites people to judge Israel to a different standard and they do.

For many years I have been involved in "Jews for Justice for Palestinians", "Independent Jewish Voices" and more recently "Jewish Voice for Labour". This current situation is incredibly painful for me, I am appalled at the behaviour of the leaders of the Jewish Community and the Jewish Press and I feel, a very dangerous appeal to Jewish fears has been cynically exploited, in order to protect Israel from criticism. When I read the headlines in THE JEWISH CHRONICLE, I think they are writing about a place I have never lived in - it seems to me to be a whipped up hysteria to prevent a decent man with sympathy for the Palestinian people, from leading a major Western political party.

It is quite appalling that the Israeli Embassy, the Jewish Chronicle, the right wing of the Labour Party and the right wing press of this country, have conspired to misrepresent Jeremy Corbyn. Personally, I find him a weak leader and would prefer someone more mainstream to be in charge but I feel mortified by this thoroughly ruthless attempt to cast a slur on an honest man. In addition, the sight of another nation, interfering so blatantly in our politics is an outrage. Talk about stirring up anti-Semitism, they're doing a great job.

From what I read there is very little statistical evidence of massive anti-Semitism in the Labour Party, it is mainly petty and anecdotal. Of course there is anti-Semitism in Labour Circles, as there is everywhere but rather less than in other places. An Australian friend asked me if this was "a right wing beat up" and I had to give an emphatic "yes!".

With so many problems facing this country, particularly with Brexit looming, for so much energy to go into an imagined racial scandal in the Labour Party, is terrible - there are very real and immediate crises looming. This non-crisis needs to be put to bed NOW.

78. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am writing as a Jewish member of the Labour party to say that in the 3 years that I have been a member I have never experienced antisemitism in any shape or form, nor have I witnessed antisemitism being used against any of my Jewish fellow members. On the contrary, I have found the Party to be welcoming and inclusive in every respect.

79. **Name:** Male

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am a Jew and member of the Labour party I am vice-chair of my local ward in South-east London.

I have never experienced, nor have I ever witnessed anti-Semitism by Labour Party members. I have complete confidence in the Party's current leader Jeremy Corbyn, not only for his integrity, decency and loyalty to the Labour cause, but also for his commitment to eradicate all forms of racism including anti-Semitism from our party - and for that matter, anywhere else..

I have 40 years political experience and the current furore around anti-Semitism in our party is a planned attack to undermine Mr Corbyn and a transparent attempt to end his tenure as our leader.

80. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am writing to express my deep concern about the latest CAA submission to your organisation.

As a Jewish member (my mother's maiden name was xxx), who has been a member of the Labour Party for the last three years, I have had no personal experiences of anti-semitism, whether amongst rank and file members, or the leadership. Unfortunately, the meaning of the term 'anti-semitism' has itself been made into an extremely ambiguous term, so that for some it means criticising Israel as a racist endeavour, or singling out Israel for special criticism, or causing offence by suggesting parallels between Israeli practices and the Nazis, is deemed anti-semitic. Yet, all these criticisms are criticisms of a state and not a race. In practice, it is very difficult to prove that such criticisms of a state are racially motivated, just as it is difficult to prove that a critique of US foreign policy is *ipso facto* 'anti-American'. If such criticisms of Israel are deemed anti-semitic, this can only mean a denial of freedom expression even for Jews, such as myself, who are truly horrified by the actions of a state that claims to do

such things in my name, whether it is land and water theft, the killing of innocent people, cultural destruction, as well as many crimes against humanity.

I hope that you will reject such ill-founded claims by the CAA, which are unfortunately based upon this rather expanded and illogical definition of anti-semitism.

81. **Name:** Female

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am a person of Jewish heritage whose father fled Germany prior to WW2 and whose Great Grandmother died in the Warsaw Ghetto. I am also a member of the Labour Party.

I have not witnessed any examples of antisemitism in the Labour Party nor do I believe the party is institutionally racist or antisemitic. Jewish people appear to be well represented in positions of power - in fact I would imagine that if an analysis were available there would be more MPs, members of the NEC or other bodies (as a percentage) that are Jewish than in the membership as a whole. Would this have happened if the organisation were institutionally racist? I don't think so.

I have tried to keep abreast of the national situation and I am worried that the issues have arisen because of a belief by some that criticism of Israel is antisemitic and that Zionism is the same as being Jewish - not all Jews are Zionists and not all Zionists are Jews.

I do not know who in the local party are Jewish and this seems totally appropriate to me.

82. **Name:** Male

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 5 years

Testimony:

I am a Labour Party member with Jewish heritage. My father is Jewish and all my English family are Jews, some of them practising. I wanted to write to convey my experience of antisemitism in the Labour Party.

In my experience of being a Labour Party member over the last five years, I have not experienced or witnessed a single act of antisemitism, at any event.

I have seen online people who are supposedly Labour members saying antisemitic things, but I don't believe this to be unique to the Labour Party. Sadly racism and prejudice exists across our society, and that is reflected in Labour. It's something that needs to change, but in my experience it's still beneath society levels.

What Labour does have are thousands of passionate members, many of them Jews, who firmly believe that Palestinian people have the right to not live under occupation. It seems very clear to me that Zionism and Judaism are being conflated in order to undermine the pro-Palestinian movement in this country.

This is dangerous. Not all Jews are Zionists. To believe such a thing verges, in my opinion, on antisemitism. Any opinion which bases itself on the belief that Jewish people are a homogenous unthinking mass is antisemitic. We are different and varied. I hope this conflation is one you focus on. It's something I find deeply offensive.

Do I think Labour could be doing more to train people to be more sensitive and educated about antisemitism? Yes. Is Labour an antisemitic party? Categorically, 100% no.

83. **Name:** Male

CLP: East Sussex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am a member of the xx Constituency Labour Party and have Jewish heritage. I have never experienced anti-semitism and believe that Jeremy Corbyn is the most anti-racist leader Labour has ever had and over his career has consistently stood against anti-semitism. I strongly believe that as elected Leader he should continue in that post.

I reject the notion that Labour is 'institutionally antisemitic' or 'institutionally racist'. Processes have been refined under the Jenny Formby to effectively deal with any incidences of antisemitism in the party which I believe to be an improvement on what went before.

84. **Name:** Female

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am Jewish, a member of the Labour Party and a supporter of Jeremy Corbyn. I am also a signatory for Jews for Justice for Palestinians and have been so since the inception of jffjp many years ago. I am appalled by the assault on Corbyn's integrity by the Press, the Tories and the 'Establishment'. In my view, as in the views of many other Jewish people, this is totally misguided and is part of a conspiracy to discredit anyone who stands up for the rights of a very oppressed and tormented people, the Palestinians.

It is no coincidence that many of us who campaigned vigorously against apartheid in South Africa when we were much younger are now campaigning against apartheid in the first country that should be upholding the true values of Judaism, which are deeply humanitarian. I have visited the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Palestinian communities on the West Bank. I have seen the suffering caused by the Israeli government, the IDF and settlers, many of whom run rampant, committing ghastly crimes against the indigenous Palestinian population. It is unbearable. As someone who spent much time in Israel in my younger years, remaining ignorant of the dreadful history of the terrorising of Palestinian villagers and the seizing of their land, the massacres and the forcing of millions into exile, it came as a guilty shock to understand just how brutal the early Zionists were. My own family believed in the future of the Jewish diaspora and did not initially support Zionism - they were 'non-Zionist'. I have listened to Zionists in Jerusalem today asking 'what occupation? The Lord gave us all the land between the Tigris and the Euphrates', which shows the mindset of modern Zionism. They will take as much as they are able to satisfy their own needs, with no compassion or thought for the inhabitants they are abusing and displacing.

My statement is, then, that this is a political issue of great importance to the state of Israel and they will do anything to keep out a spokesperson for the Palestinians, ie Jeremy Corbyn, using any tactics they dream of to do so. Jeremy Corbyn is categorically NOT an anti-semite. He, as all Socialists and Jews should be, is a man who fights for justice, and where he sees the gross injustice against the Palestinians, in the occupied territories and in Israel itself, he has the integrity and courage to stand up and say so. If there is anti-semitism among the members of the Labour Party, that must of course be confronted - and perhaps the anti-semitism in the Conservative Party too? I think you will find a lot more.

85. **Name:** Female

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage:

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

There is a reason why Mr. Corbyn was not prepared to accept the definition of anti-Semitism.

It is because the definition was protecting Israel against criticism of its treatment of Palestinians.
It limits free speech: Mr. Corbyn is NOT an anti-Semite: he is a fair-minded Socialist.

I agree with his stance & hope the Labour Party will agree.

86. **Name:** Male

CLP:

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am writing to express my support for Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party in relation to the largely false charge of antisemitism.

My own background is that I am the son of Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria respectively. I am also a member of the Labour Party. Corbyn would not be my choice of party leader, and I have many concerns about his leadership in relation to the EU and other issues.

However, I consider the charge of antisemitism in the Labour Party to be largely false. A small number of members have made antisemitic statements and need to be dealt with through a speeded up disciplinary procedure. However, I have seen no evidence whatsoever that the top levels of the Party, including Corbyn himself, are in any way antisemitic. There is a real problem when any criticism of the Israeli Government, Israeli society, or the treatment of Palestinians is deemed to be antisemitic.

87. **Name:** Female

CLP: Wales

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

As a child of a Holocaust survivor (the only member of his family to survive this and one who was incarcerated in Sachsenhausen concentration camp) and a member of the Labour party for the last three years I wish to confirm that I have never been subjected to anti-semitism nor have I witnessed this within the party. I should point out that my name on social media is XXX, which clearly identifies my Jewish origins.

I confirm that this is my true and honest testimony.

88. **Name:** Male

CLP: Leicestershire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 40 years

Testimony:

I am very worried by the Campaign against Antisemitism's referral of the Labour Party alleging institutional antisemitism. As an 80 year old Jew and an active Labour Party member for some 40 years I can honestly say that I have never experienced overt or institutional antisemitism in the party. I have campaigned against racism for many years and was founder chair of the old xxx Community Relations Council, so I know a thing or two about racism in all its forms. Survey after survey has shown fewer Labour Party members hold antisemitic views than those in other main parties. I have not seen any objective evidence of antisemitism in our party. For understandable reasons a lot of people find it difficult to distinguish antisemitism from non-zionism, criticism of the Israeli government and support for Palestinians. Others may find this confusion convenient for their own political ends.

89. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am a Jewish 71-year-old. I am a Labour party member and have held a party card for most of my adult life. I can say categorically that I have never encountered antisemitism in the party and would not expect ever to do so. I have had more conversations than I can recall with other party members, Jewish and not Jewish, in which one of us has asked the other: "Have you ever come across antisemitism in the party?" The other has replied: "No, have you?", to which the answer is "No.". At that point we both shrugged shoulders in speechless bemusement.

That said, I am someone who knows what antisemitism is. I remember a number of painful personal experiences in my younger years. I vividly recall what my father and grandfather told me about the antisemitism they suffered. I lost family in the Holocaust. I am also reasonably well read in Jewish history. I think I am therefore qualified to insist that, far from antisemitism, what pervades the Labour party is a strong and conscious anti-racist ethos — never more so than at the present time. I feel valued and totally comfortable and welcome within the Party.

My immediate reference point whenever the issue of antisemitism arises is my father's experience as a young man in the East End of London in the 1930s and in particular something he never forgot — the two letters, P J . These were daubed on walls all over the East End by members of the British Union of Fascists; they stood for *Perish Judah* . They were a channel for expressing direct violent hostility towards every Jewish individual who chanced to see them. And the fascists made sure to target streets which Jewish people could not avoid. For the rest of his life, my father carried with him the sense of existential threat these letters induced. When compared to the real experience of antisemitism, such as this, the allegations of 'antisemitism' within the Labour party over which such a furore has been generated are to me frankly ridiculous, even we take them at face value. More than that, they are an insult to the memory of the countless victims of real antisemitism through the centuries.

Equally, I judge claims that the Party is overrun by antisemites by reference to the real thing: John Tyndall first leader of the BNP, for example, or Colin Jordan, come to mind. But there is simply no one in the Party who remotely resembles either of them. Nor are there any wannabe David Irvings in Party circles with a mission to 'prove' the Holocaust never happened. In fact, it would be difficult to think of less fertile terrain than the Labour Party for anyone with serious ambitions to foment antisemitism in British society.

What we do have in the Party is a large number of people (including many Jews) whose humanity makes them passionate about the continuing oppression of the Palestinian people and angry at the aggressive variant of Zionism which loudly denies that there is any such thing. On the other hand, we have a significant number of Jews who do not separate their Jewish identity from their Zionist outlook and feel real personal hurt when the case for Palestinian rights is robustly made. There is no easy reconciliation here, no more than there is in the case of other long-running political conflicts. However, what is not acceptable are manoeuvres to disqualify as racist those who stand on one side of the argument and the political case that they make. The present complaint to the EHRC is in my view one such manoeuvre.

90. **Name:** Female

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am a GC delegate in xx ward, xx CLP and a member since November 2015. Having lived in London only since 2014, I have met many like-minded Jewish people in and through the Labour Party, both locally and at national level. This has strengthened my sense of Jewish heritage and belonging and has created new friendships. It has been inspiring to learn about and participate in a social movement that stands with other communities and stands against all forms of oppression, e.g. in Jews for Justice for Palestinians and Jewish Voice for Labour. I have encountered nothing but understanding and solidarity from non-Jews in the Labour Party and there is no basis to the allegation that the party is institutionally antisemitic.

91. **Name:** Female

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage:

Time in Labour Party: >1 year

Testimony:

I understand that you are collecting facts/evidence regarding the complaint by the Campaign Against Antisemitism allegation of antisemitism in the Labour Party.

I am writing as a paid-up member of the Labour Party. I am Jewish, do not hide that fact, and have never experienced or observed any expression of antisemitism within my local CLP. (I belonged to the Labour Party for some years a very long time ago, when Tony Blair was Leader, and re-joined last year on the strength of the Manifesto produced during the General Election. I have a lot of faith in Jeremy Corbyn who has a very long record of opposing racism of all sorts in many different countries, and I am certain he takes antisemitism allegations extremely seriously.)

I have attended ward branch meetings and General Council meetings, and have helped out at election times. I have not come across racism, or antisemitism, and I very strongly suspect a great deal of these allegations is fabricated by people who wish the Labour Party and Jeremy Corbyn no good whatsoever.

I regret that some Jewish MPs may have experienced antisemitism, and sympathise with them whole-heartedly. I absolutely do not believe that the Labour Party contains institutional antisemitism – and would suggest that this is more likely to be the case in UKIP, the Conservative Party and all right wing parties. The current political climate is very unfriendly towards people who are not white British and antisemitism is present in our Western culture and will probably always be there. But the Labour Party is not a host to these ideas.

I hope my views may be taken in to account. (I am about to celebrate my 75th birthday.)

92. **Name:** Male

CLP: Hertfordshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2 years

Testimony:

As a Jewish member of the Labour party, I have never heard any antisemitic remarks.

93. **Name:** Female

CLP: Wales

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years (joined 24.7.15)

Testimony:

I am Jewish. I am 72 years old. I have been a Labour Party member for three years. I joined because I have always respected Jeremy Corbyn's politics, above all his socialist-inspired advocacy of religious, racial, ethnic and every other type of equality in our country and in the wider world. I cannot understand how a party led by one of the least racist politicians in the world could be called racist and accused of 'institutional anti-Semitism'! It would be laughable if it were not so serious and dangerous.

I and my Jewish Labour friends would have been among the first to notice if there really was antisemitism in the Party. We can only assume that these smears are a cover for something else. We are sad and angry that our voices are drowned out in the media by those who want to destroy Mr Corbyn. Whoever they are they have demonstrated that they don't care if in the process they destroy one of the great historical parties of this country.

It is dangerous and disgusting that the CAA are using the weapon of antisemitism to get rid of one of the most decent politicians in the country. It risks a backlash of real antisemitism because more and more people are realising that this is nothing but a political witch-hunt pretending to be about protecting Jewish people. It is time to bring sanity back to this country.

94. **Name:** Male

CLP: Hertfordshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I am Jewish and a member of the Labour Party. My grandparents were refugees from Russia in 1905 who established their family in Birmingham. My father escaped the Nazis in Austria and came to Birmingham where he found safe refuge in their house and then married my mother. All of my immediate family are practising Jews, some are regular synagogue attendees, very few have 'married out' and some have exercised their right to go to Israel where they have established themselves and their families. I establish this context to make the point that although I am not a person of faith, a significant part of my life is occupied by those I love for whom it is, in some cases, the most important part of their identity. My choosing to take a political position that criticises Israel and its actions is not, therefore, the action of someone whose beliefs exist in some kind of vacuum. In terms of my Jewishness, it's worth repeating an old maxim: when the Nazis knocked on your door in the middle of the night, they didn't ask you if you'd been to shul last week.

I have been a Labour Party member since June, 2015 following the election of Jeremy Corbyn as leader, but that does not tell the story of my political life. I have been an active trade unionist all my working life, being branch secretary of two education trade unions – NUT and UCU. I am the secretary of my local Trades Council. I have been an active campaigner – and organiser – for anti-fascist organisations, such as the Anti Nazi League and Unite Against Fascism. I have been involved in campaigns to defend the NHS and local services as well as well as innumerable similar causes. Such campaigning and activity has been central to what I do and how I define myself. It has brought me into contact with a range of individuals and groups that are too numerous to list. I am steeped in what some choose to call the far left.

Which brings me to the central point. **In over forty years of such campaigning with, and being closely involved with, left groups, I have never heard any anti-Semitic sentiment expressed by those with whom I was politically involved. Ever.**

Have I heard expressions of anger over the actions of the Israeli government? Plenty. Have I heard arguments challenging the notion of Zionism? In abundance. Have I heard fury over the treatment of the Palestinian people? Too often to count. And have I ever heard careless expression and language by some of those expressing such sentiments? Rarely but occasionally. And when this has happened, such people have been immediately upbraided and the inappropriateness of their choice of language – and, possibly the sentiment behind it – explained.

We need to be clear. There is no place on the left or in the Labour Party for anti-Semitism. The notion that full investigations would result in thousands of expulsions is risible. Anyone found guilty of expounding such a view should, indeed, be expelled and I have never heard any dissenting view from anyone in the party as far as this is concerned. The notion that anti-Semitism is rife in the Labour Party and that Corbyn is an existential threat to Jews in Britain is patently absurd. The motives behind those who express such a view require some thoughtful and careful analysis.

I'll add a brief observation or two. In Austria, the government has considered issuing licenses for the purchase of kosher meat. In Hungary, vile descriptions of opponents of the government borrow from the worst excesses of anti-Semitic language. In England, a potential candidate for Prime Minister openly consorts with the backers of far-right street-fighting groups. And yet those who purport to represent the views of Jewish people in Britain see the threat as coming from a lifelong campaigner against prejudice and racism? I'd use an expression beloved of my Bubba except that it doesn't transcribe well and is vulgar in the extreme.

I am a grandfather and have been a teacher for 42 years. I do charitable work in my local community and contribute to any number of good causes. I am, if you like, as respectable a householder citizen as you can find. I am not a teenage ingénue who has been duped by Jeremy Corbyn and neither am I blind to his faults. However, for anyone to claim that a lifelong fighter against injustice and prejudice is an anti-Semite or racist is either delusional or malicious. I fear it is the latter in many cases.

I fully understand the sensitivity of Jewish people who feel affronted by criticism of Israel, even though I do not share their distaste for it. I can see how it could be conflated with anti-Semitism at a time when racism has become more evident in society – sometimes encouraged by those in the public eye who value self-promotion over propriety.. Nevertheless, like many on the left – in and out of the Labour Party – I reserve the right to criticise the actions of that state or, indeed, any other. Such opposition is grounded in an anti-imperialist, anti-military tradition which informs proper debate in an open democracy. To take cheap shots at such a tradition and to weaponise anti-Semitism as a way of doing so demeans us all.

95. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I'm originally from the USA and emigrated to be a curator at the British Library. I soon became a British subject and renounced my American citizenship. I'm retired now but haven't observed antisemitism in the UK. Once every seven years, a bigot may make a comment about me, but I don't lose any sleep over it. At the British Library, 20th century British publications were my responsibility and I compiled the most complete bibliography of British Fascism. It seems obvious to me that real Jew-hatred vanished many decades ago. Actual, routine discrimination in society works in any or all of three ways :

- 1) You can't live here.
- 2) You can't work here.
- 3) You can't walk down this road without fear for your own safety.

None of this applies to Jews anymore. I don't know of any Jew who'd be routinely stopped-and-searched by the Met on one hand, or get chased by hooligan gangs on the other. Those victims are people of colour, Muslims, and Hindus, whether immigrants or not.

I run xxxx, the most complete bibliography of English-language books on the subject and can provide a lengthy list of Israeli academics who've researched their country's mistreatment of the Palestinians. Like me, they cannot be Jew-haters.

No amount of conciliatory gestures to the Jewish Zionist bloc will abate their attacks. Appeasement isn't possible with them, for they want the Party leader removed before the next election. They don't and cannot represent all of Britain's Jews. All for solidarity towards a Labour victory!

96. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 14 years

Testimony:

As a Jewish member of the Labour Party for, in total, some fourteen years, I believe the Labour Party in general and Jeremy Corbyn in particular has been mis-represented in the media and by some Labour Party members.

It is my belief that there is no "institutional anti-semitism" in the Labour Party. For me, the Labour Party is, and always has been, an anti-racist party. Jeremy Corbyn is certainly not an anti-semite. This does not mean that I don't think there are pockets of anti-semitism in the Labour Party. But in all my years in the Labour Party, I can honestly say I have never heard anything that I would interpret as anti-semitism. I have, of course, heard, plenty of criticism of Israel's policies. This I do not consider to be anti-semitism, but legitimate political criticism of a regime whose political complexion is, at present, antithetical to the politics and policies of the Labour Party.

I believe there are elements within the Labour Party and, of course, the media, who would like to see Jeremy Corbyn deposed as leader, and are using the issue of anti-semitism to eat away at his leadership. Where were their cries of anti-semitism, for instance, when the press pictured Ed Miliband eating a bacon sandwich- surely a case of dog whistle reporting. Clearly there is an element in the press and amongst Labour Party members- particularly those who demonstrate an unconditional and uncritical support for Israel- who would attack any political leader or high-ranking member of the Labour Party who might voice the slightest empathy, for the plight of Palestinians, or support for their cause.

While I am convinced that Jeremy Corbyn is not anti-semitic, I do think he made a tactical error in not tackling this issue when it first arose. But this hardly constitutes being anti-semitic. So while I am not dismissing the possibility of anti-semitism in the Labour Party, I would have thought there was as much, if not more, anti-semitism in the Conservative Party.

In summary, for me, as a Jewish member of long standing, the Labour Party has always been an anti-racist party, and has never been institutionally anti-semitic. Nor has it ever, in my experience, condoned anti-semitism. Jeremy Corbyn, as far as I am concerned, is an anti-racist and anything but anti-semitic. Based on my experience, there is no institutionalised anti-semitism in the Labour Party.

97. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx.. 3 years

Testimony:

I joined the Labour Party (number xxx) because I admired Jeremy Corbyn and I wanted to see him head a party that would take responsibility for running the country properly instead of privatising it. His policies are no more socialist than those of France and Germany.

He is critical of Israel and supportive of the plight of the Palestinians because he shows a humane concern for all people as we would expect of any politician and which does not always obtain. His humanitarian concern includes Jews as much as any other race.

The international definition of antisemitism includes as antisemitic criticism of Israel. This is a draft document and many do not agree to this inclusion. The Palestinians are abused by Israelis not Jews. The Jews are a people who consider themselves chosen by God and they observe laws which oblige them to act with humanity and not to kill.

The Israeli treatment of the Palestinians is no more a Jewish process than the actions of Daesh are a Muslim process. The Prophet, may peace be upon him, told them to protect themselves. He did not tell them to attack others in his name.

A close friend of mine is the Jewish daughter of a Jewish mother who worked closely with Jeremy Corbyn in local matters in his constituency in North London. His association with her and her children was not the conduct of an antisemite.

No evidence of antisemitism by the Labour Party has been published. We have seen only people referred to as Jews and criticised. They have been criticised for their lack of support of the Palestinians, not for anything to do with being Jews.

To play the antisemitic card against Corbyn's Labour Party protects Israel from criticism and undermines the prospect of a Labour government. This is obviously to the advantage of the Tory party. It is easy to see the ridiculous accusations against the Labour Party as a cynical political ploy taking advantage of the gullible, ignorant and selfish such as we saw taken in the referendum on European membership.

98. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: nearly 30 years

Testimony:

As an (active) Jewish Labour Party member for nearly 30 years, I can genuinely say I've never come across any anti-semitism in that time.

On the other hand, I've met with hostility from Conservatives, some of whom have tried to 'explain' to me that the world is run by Jews, and have been open about their own racism.

99. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am writing because of the charge made by the Campaign Against Antisemitism of 'institutional antisemitism' in the Labour Party. I am a Jewish member of the Party who considers this to be a deeply flawed and dangerous charge.

I have been a Labour Party member on and off since the 1980s, admittedly mainly off. I have been a member of two different North London constituency parties: I cannot recall a single instance of antisemitism either in my own local/constituency experience or that of the national organisation. I can also imagine that had there surfaced anything even approximating to some kind of antisemitism (whether implied or more forcefully) it would have been challenged and dealt with by the membership and officers. The idea of institutional antisemitism is a serious charge. But on what basis has this been advanced? What is the evidence for this?

Antisemitic thought, language and values continue to exist across society. I don't imagine the Labour Party is immune from this any more than other political parties. But one of the reasons I joined Labour was to fight any kind of racism and antisemitism. And, frankly, Islamophobia, anti-Asian and anti-black discrimination have been an overwhelmingly more dangerous threat over the last 30 years than any other form of racism in the UK. The Party has played a good role in supporting anti-racist actions and defending the right of all minorities to express their culture and religion. Again I stress that I have not personally experienced nor have I been aware of any antisemitic trend within the Party. I'm more dismayed that the very real threat against Asian minorities is being allowed to flourish while this debate about antisemitism in the LP continues to occupy the media. I'm equally concerned that the real danger of antisemitism, surfacing so powerfully across central Europe, has been insufficiently identified and challenged in the UK. The debate about the Labour Party is wildly out of all proportion to the real threats facing us. Those who have conducted this attack on the Labour Party leadership must accept responsibility for misleading and misdirecting us from antisemitism where it has taken hold. Why, for example, has the Conservative Party, whose alliance with many of the brazenly antisemitic right wing European leaders in Poland, Austria and Hungary, been given a free pass?

The attempt to besmirch Corbyn is to my mind the really shocking thing that has happened. After over thirty years of campaigning, protesting and actively resisting racism in all its forms, Corbyn has achieved more than most politicians to defend all ethnic minorities in the UK. The sanctimony and ferocity of his opponents in the Party and the media suggests that their real

opposition is to his principled refusal to give way on his support for Palestinians in their fight for equality and human rights. Isn't it interesting that when ethnic communities become endangered or threatened by racism the only party that has consistently come to their defence is the Labour Party. For all the mud that has been slung at Corbyn, the one thing that is certain is that he will continue to actively follow the Party's morally and politically principled line without hesitation. Would that his opponents followed his example.

Has antisemitism become conflated with a critique of Israel's repression of the Palestinians? Both Zionists and anti-Zionists have, for different reasons, a tendency to smudge the difference between Jewish and Israeli identity. This has made the discourse about Israel, both within and without the Party, problematic. The Labour Party leadership has willingly agreed to incorporate the IHRA in full and the majority of its examples. The IHRA is so overwhelmingly and patently against the principle and practice of antisemitism that the disagreement over one clause suggests that something other than antisemitism is going on. Is the idea of antisemitism being used to cloak disquiet about criticism of Israeli policy? It's hard to come to any other conclusion

100. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I joined the Labour Party in 2015. I have been an active member of my ward including attending ward and constituency meetings, social events and canvassing. I am Jewish. I have an obviously Jewish surname. I have talked with other Jewish members of this and other wards. I have never encountered anything I could remotely interpret as anti-Semitism. It simply hasn't happened. As I am a scholar of totalitarianism I think I am hyper-alert to this and would have noticed it had it happened.

However, I do feel that my Jewish heritage is currently being used and exploited by the current campaign claiming this is going on. This seems to me to be an clearly politically motivated campaign to get rid of Corbyn and his left support. I have no problem with this goal, if that is what people would honestly say. But I find it utterly disgusting that Jews are being used as a weapon in this campaign which is clearly about something else (and is, in a way, itself anti-semitic, and certainly exploitative, in that it is using Jews for other purposes).

101. **Name:** Male

CLP: Berkshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I'm a Jewish member of the Labour Party. I joined in 2015 to support Jeremy Corbyn. I've never joined a political party before. He inspired me to become involved in politics. I've been to many Labour meetings and canvassing sessions and have never encountered any anti-semitism.

What I have seen, however, is the weaponisation of anti-semitism by members of the PLP who have never accepted Jeremy Corbyn's leadership. There was the group of MPs who hounded Marc Wadsworth out of the party. Then there was the time that Angela Smith criticised Corbyn on Twitter for going to the "Jewdas Seber". But nothing could rival Margaret Hodge's Sky interview where she said that there was a thin line between being pro-Palestinian and being anti-semitic.

102. **Name:** Female

CLP: West Sussex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >50 years

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party since I joined the LP Young Socialists as a teenager. I am now 72. I am Jewish.

Over the years I have been a member of CLPs in xxxx

I am also a member of the Cooperative Party.

I have never experienced antisemitism in the Labour Party.

When I joined the party, homosexuality was illegal and homophobia was rife. Sexist attitudes were also common (I am a woman). There were very few black or minority ethnic party members and attitudes were often patronising. I am thankful to say the situation now is very different though no doubt some newer members may need political education in these areas. And any political education on racism should include recognising and eradicating antisemitism.

The only antisemitism I see is on social media where some people get the language wrong when discussing Israel or Zionism. What is not clear of course is whether the people doing this are Party members or supporters or even in this country.

I am very angry about the campaign of smears against the party which in my opinion is not aimed at the real evil of racism but at preventing legitimate criticism of the Israeli Government.

103. **Name:** Female

CLP: Nottinghamshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am writing to contribute to your consideration of allegations of anti semitism in the Labour Party of which I am a member.

I am a secular Jew and active in the xxx Labour Party. While my active engagement with the local Labour Party is relatively recent (post Jeremy Corbyn) , I have always voted Labour and have been a trade union member since 1979 . I do not recognise descriptions of the Labour Party as institutionally antisemitic , nor do I believe that Jeremy Corbyn represents an " existentialist threat " to me as a jew. I have only once been present when an anti Semitic comment was made at a Labour Party (women's) meeting but I believe this was made from a position of ignorance , involving as it did a conflation of Zionism / Israeli government policy and all Jews .

Despite seemingly being assumed by sections of the media to speak for all Jews , the Board of deputies do not reflect my views and I believe their comments are motivated by hostility towards the Labour Party per se rather than by any well founded concerns about anti semitism in the party .

I also believe that hostility towards legitimate ,measured criticism of the Israeli governments treatment of the Palestinians is motivating some of the other more vocal critics .

I have been affected far more and felt threatened by anti semitism from right leaning groups / organisations and am concerned that the current focus on the Labour Party is allowing other manifestations of racism (in all forms including that within the Conservative party) to go unchallenged , to the detriment of all minorities .

104. **Name:** Female

CLP: East Sussex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

The Campaign Against Antisemitism's (CAA) has referred the Labour Party to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) alleging 'institutional antisemitism'. If the Labour Party was institutionally racist, or 'rife' with antisemitism, then I should have experienced it as such. I am a secretary of my local branch, which has a large number of members (well over 600) and on the Executive Committee of the sizeable Constituency Labour Party, and amongst those large fora **I have never witnessed an antisemitic incident nor felt that the Labour Party acted institutionally in antisemitic ways**. This is not to say that there are no antisemitic attitudes among Labour Party members (whether they hold office or not), but they are not prevalent or institutionalised. Indeed, all the evidence shows that antisemitism is more prevalent on the right of the political spectrum.

I am Jewish. I have a finely tuned ear for antisemitism, as hatred of Jews and promulgation of anti-Jewish tropes, honed from early childhood. I know antisemitism when I meet it. The only way that the Labour Party can be considered institutionally antisemitic or rife with antisemitism is if any criticism of Israel whatsoever is considered antisemitic, and Israel is considered the homeland of all Jews. That is a nonsensical position. First, I have the democratic right to criticise Israeli government policies in the same way that I can criticise my own government's policies without being 'anti-British'. Second, and relatedly, I do not accept being told where my homeland lies by others; I am British and Britain is my homeland.

I am not unusual amongst Jewish people in my experiences and understandings. I urge the EHRC to take my and like-minded experiences into account, and to bear in mind the political motivations and affiliations of the CAA. If, as the objective evidence clearly shows, antisemitism is stronger on the right of the political spectrum, why is this organisation not also referring other political parties and organisations to you.

105. **Name:** Female

CLP: Bristol

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 3 years

Testimony:

I watch with dismay the never ending accusations of anti-semitism against the Labour Party and in particular against Jeremy Corbyn.

I am a non-practicing Jew but I feel affiliation with Jewish concerns and have relatives who live in Israel. I have been a member of the Labour Party for about 3 years now and have never experienced any anti-semitism ever in local meetings or out campaigning.

However I am aware of strong feelings against the state of Israel and its policies, most of which I share. Israel is a special case, broke precedent in its conception and now in its territorial ambitions and creeping apartheid. I share a sense of helpless anger with many other critics of Israel some of who are in the Labour Party.

The trouble is some Jews I know, although not strong supporters of Israel, get very uneasy when criticism of Israel gets too out spoken. You could say they are over sensitised and for historical reasons this can be understood.

But I do think the international definition of anti-semitism should be accepted by the Labour Party in full.

106. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I know that the CAA has referred the Labour Party to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) alleging 'institutional antisemitism'. I would like you to be aware of my experience. I am Jewish, 50 years old, and was brought up within the Reform synagogue in Bournemouth. I have been a member of xx CLP for many years, and my deceased mother was an active member of xxx labour party. I have taken part in local campaigning, and have been to a variety of left wing educational events, talks, etc, as well as occasionally socialising at the pub with other labour party members. When I was a child I was taught to support Israel uncritically. Over the years, I have come to change my views radically, whilst still being Jewish.

I strongly refute any suggestion that the labour party is institutionally racist, and I am pleased with the approach taken by Jeremy Corbyn, who has always been deeply committed to antiracist causes. I was frankly horrified to find the 3 main jewish newspapers making an unprecedented unified statement, and they do not speak for me. History tells us that similar 'representatives' of the 'community' advised British Jews to sit tight & appease Hitler. Questions such as 'What makes a Jew a Jew' have been debated for years, and despite the febrile political atmosphere I have always been able to debate issues around Israel, Palestine, Judaism & racism with labour party colleagues. I have encountered fierce debates, which is to be expected, but never anything antisemitic. As a Jew I do not feel remotely reassured by the sudden 'most solicitous' concern by Tories and others in power, to 'protect' me from alleged anti-semitism, when in fact they want to use the issue for their own ends.

When I found that Jewish Voice for Labour existed, I was deeply gratified to find that there was a group representing a different set of views that breaks the strangling unhealthy monopoly of the pre-existing Jewish group within the labour party. I attended the Jewdas seder and, by chance, was seated at Jeremy Corbyn's table. He had remarkably good grasp of the diversity & complexities of Jewish culture, and different political & historical narratives. I went on the demonstration at parliament square and was sneered at, verbally abused, and shouted down by Jews belonging to various factions. I am more concerned about the pro-Israel/ pro-zionist lobby and the (often American) money spent on manipulating the press and british politics, than I ever will be about alleged antisemitism in the labour party.

107. **Name:** Female

CLP: Oxfordshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 35 years

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party in xxx Constituency for the best part of 35 years. As a Jew I have always felt welcome. I have never experienced or witnessed any anti-semitism at all. On the contrary the Party has always been inclusive and strongly anti-racist.

I do not recall a lot of discussion of Israel in the first years of my membership and I expect there were always various views in the Party had it been an issue. Following the second intifada in the early 2000s I believe people both inside and outside the Party became more aware of the atrocities Israel was committing against the Palestinians and has been right to speak out on them, as they would on such atrocities wherever they were committed, and essentially relevant to the Labour Party because of UK political, military and economic involvement with Israel. These atrocities have included breaches of international law, breaches of human rights, growth of settlements on occupied territory, the building of the apartheid wall, much of it on land stolen from Palestinians and often placing a barrier between Palestinians and their livelihoods and splitting families, restrictions on freedom of movement, imprisonment of children, bombardment and economic blockade of Gaza, collective punishments, stealing water resources, dumping sewage, racist housing and employment policies the list goes on and on. For a socialist party to be silent on this would be immoral.

Like many people in xxx, including a number of Jews I know, I am active both in the Labour Party (currently chair of my local branch and delegate to the constituency executive committee) and in solidarity movements with Palestine (including a local twinning arrangement, a local PSC group and the campaign for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions which is as relevant to apartheid Israel as it was to apartheid South Africa). I feel no incongruity whatsoever between my identity as a Jew, my membership of the Labour Party and my involvement in the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. Indeed, as a Jew, I feel even more of a responsibility to speak out about Israeli atrocities because I feel they are being committed in my name. The behaviour of the current Israeli government is not behaviour I as a Jew can condone. I want to be free to speak out about this and to join with others, Jews and non-Jews in the Labour Party, to do so. That is consistent. It is not anti-semitism.

The reality is that people are well able to distinguish between anti-semitism and anti-zionism and the two are not synonymous. I am happy to hear others criticise Israel's because of the Israeli government's actions. It is only when people turn that into a blaming of Jews (e.g. if they were to say Israel behaves that way because it is run by Jews and that is what you can expect

of Jews) that it is anti-semitism and that is not what the Labour Party does. I have never heard it.

This country urgently needs a Labour government. The endless accusations of anti-semitism are a distraction from the issues on which we need to campaign: housing, health, education, poverty etc. I can't help feeling it is a deliberate distraction by those who feel they can use it either to damage Labour's election chances or to damage the reputation of the Party leader in particular. It does not represent reality.

108. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 39 years

Testimony

I have been a member of the Labour Party for 39 years and of a trade union (Unite) for 30 years. I have been active in my party constituencies. In the recent local elections, I stood as a candidate in my ward.

In discussing the issue of antisemitism and the party, it helps that I am Jewish. More important, it 'helps' that my grandfather died in Neuengamme concentration camp during the war and that my father did the grand tour of Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Flossenburg before being rescued *in extremis* by the advancing Allies. That they were betrayed by informers and imprisoned for Resistance activities rather than for being Jewish, does not detract from the fact that they shared the fate of Jewish victims. My English grandmother had to hide out in France, given that she chose not to return to the UK at the outbreak of hostilities. She was part of an early Resistance network ('Gloria') set up by my grandfather in Marseille, when it was still a fairly open city at the beginning of the Occupation.

I mention this because I want to set the scene for further remarks. Jewish members of xxx CLP will have lost family in the Holocaust, one way or another. No one of our generation is free from this haunting knowledge. I have had a handful of antisemitic comments directed against me at work and in some social contexts, very few and usually oblique. Most important, never, ever in the Labour Party. We recognize antisemitism when we see it, just as BAME and LGBT members recognise racism, Islamophobia and homophobia when they are targeted. But, and this is all important I, as well as thousands of other Jewish Labour members, remain in the Party **precisely** because it is not antisemitic. **Precisely** because it is not an antisemitic party.

I have been and remain a life-long socialist. I watched my party drift first to social democracy and then to a hybrid in which the 'social' gave diminishing returns. Jeremy Corbyn's election electrified me, as it galvanised other class-conscious members of the party. Labour has not become 'more' antisemitic under Corbyn, because it was never antisemitic in the first place.

The huge influx of new members has brought in people not yet versed in political discourse and activity, but their naïvety on this score, coupled with a number of frankly bizarre world viewpoints, is a matter which is being rectified through political education. In xxx, we went from around a static 300 party members to 1,200 and counting. The CLP took the decision to invite Professor Moshé Machover to give us a talk on antisemitism. The name will be familiar to you. Machover was expelled for antisemitism, until the absurdity of expelling an Israeli Jew and lifelong socialist, proved to be an embarrassment too far and he was grudgingly readmitted.

109. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 40 years

Testimony:

I am a child survivor of the Holocaust. I was seven years old in Hungary, in 1944 briefly in a camp in Budapest, had to wear the yellow star, and later in hiding on false papers.

I have been an active member of the Labour Party for the last some 40 years.

I have never experienced or witnessed antisemitism within the Labour Party.

I think that the antisemitism charges against Labour are false and are weaponized by the right against the policies and leadership of the Party.

The Party should stick to its version

110. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 52 years

Testimony:

My Background:

My maternal grandparents were Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. Three of my great aunts and other more distant relatives perished in the Holocaust.

Also the in-laws of an Israeli cousin were themselves Holocaust survivors.

My Testimony

Growing up in the post war period in South Bucks, whenever I visited my aunt in London, I remember seeing landlords' advertisements in their windows for rooms to let with a combination of some or all of the following exemptions:

"No Blacks". "No Irish". "No Jews". "No Dogs" and sometimes "No Children".

Since then I joined the Labour Party and have now been a member for fifty two years. In all that time I have not once experienced any form of antisemitism. In fact I have always felt very welcome in the Labour Party and all my Labour Jewish friends and colleagues say they have not experienced any antisemitism either. In my local Labour Party members respect people's diverse beliefs and customs and we avoid holding meetings on significant festive days in both the Jewish and the Muslim calendar, such as on Yom Kippur for example. Jewish members play a full and active part in my local Party with some holding positions of considerable responsibility at both Branch and constituency level.

I am now becoming increasingly alarmed at what is happening in the country (and indeed across Europe and beyond) outside of the Labour Party. Since the referendum in 2016 the rapid rise of the Far Right and Alt Right has become a great menace, preaching hatred and racism of all kinds including antisemitism. A few months ago we discovered a bus shelter daubed with swastikas - quite horrific and clearly the work of an extreme right group. It was **Labour** members and supporters who erased the offensive symbols and held a vigil in protest.

More recently still we have seen the well funded supporters of Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, aka Tommy Robinson, parade through the streets of London in large numbers with their fascist chants and Nazi salutes. There, is the very real existential threat to all minorities including Jews. I

along with my local Labour Party members - Jews and non Jews alike - are determined to resist and defeat this resurgence of the fascist right.

111. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am an ex Jewish refugee from Germany where I experienced anti-semitism. Subsequently I experienced anti-semitism in the UK in my work place. I have been a member of the Labour Party for many years. I have never experienced any anti-semitism in the Labour Party. I have followed Jeremy Corbyn's career for many years and know him to be anti-racist and supporting the disadvantaged.

In brief I know what anti-semitism means and how to recognise it. I affirm that neither Corbyn nor the Labour Party is anti-semitic.

112. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I understand that the Committee Against Antisemitism is collecting testimonies from Jewish members of the Labour Party following a complaint about "institutional antisemitism" in the party.

I have to say that I am extremely disturbed by such allegations. I have been a Labour supporter and voter since moving to the UK from Israel in 1998 and a member of the Labour Party since 2015. In all this time, during which I have played an active role in the party, attending local meetings in my constituency, campaigning for candidates at local and national elections, and joining national campaigns, I have never personally experienced any antisemitism from Labour activists or members.

I joined Labour when Jeremy Corbyn stood for the party leadership as I believed, and still believe, that the Labour party under his leadership offers the best possibility for addressing the serious problems of socio-economic injustice currently facing Britain, and the only coherent alternative to the damaging neo-liberal ideology of the Conservative party that has served as an excuse for 10 years of austerity politics, with the resulting catastrophic cuts to public services and attacks on the weakest and most marginal members of society. I have met Jeremy Corbyn and heard him speak on several occasions, and the values and principles that he articulates and that he has defended for decades reflect my own and those of many of my Jewish and non-Jewish friends who grew up with a strong commitment to fighting prejudice and standing in solidarity with oppressed people everywhere.

Before moving to England, I spent many years as an activist in the Israel-Palestinian peace movement, and the critical position expressed by Corbyn and many of his supporters in the Labour party is one which echoes the position that I and my Israeli friends and colleagues in this movement have fought for for many years. This is a position that faces up to the racist and discriminatory policies of successive Israeli governments, the human rights abuses faced by Palestinians living under occupation, and the morally corrupting effect of this occupation on Israeli society. As such, it is a position that is not afraid to confront the troubling narratives and tensions involved in Zionism as a complex tradition that has evolved from a 19th Century movement for national determination, to the ideological position it represents in current-day Israel. It would thus not be inaccurate to say that some of the opinions expressed by Labour party politicians are anti-Zionist. However, historically many Jews were and are anti-Zionist, and I personally do not have a problem with anti-Zionist positions that reject the kind of ethno-

nationalism that I have always found abhorrent and that has nothing to do with my own Jewish heritage.

I do, however, have a problem with positions that question the right of Israel and Israelis to exist and to live in peace and security. My children and husband are Israeli; I have strong attachments to Israel and to people there, and I would not for a moment remain in a party that I felt was threatening the legitimacy of Israel or the rights and safety of Jews either in Israel or in England. I have never felt this in the Labour party, nor have I ever felt unwelcome when attending Labour party events, where I have always been open about my Jewish identity. I am a member of my local synagogue; I observe all Jewish festivals and my children attended a Jewish school. My Jewish identity is an important part of who I am, and I am proud to be able to live in a country where I am able to preserve this aspect of my identity alongside other important values, such as my socialism and my commitment to anti-racism. I find the Labour party a more conducive environment in which to express these different aspects of my identity than several official "Jewish community" events and organizations, which do not seem as tolerant of different viewpoints and commitments, and from members of which I have often received nasty abuse on account of my opinions on current Israeli politics.

113. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am an ordinary member of xxx CLP. I was Treasurer of this CLP until May 2018 and I was a Branch Secretary of xxx Branch in 2017. I have been a member of the Labour Party since October 2015. I attended Branch meetings regularly until 2018 and I attend CLP meetings regularly. In 2017 and 2018 I was a member of the Selection Panel for the Parliamentary Candidate and I take part in campaigning regularly.

As a Jewish Labour Party member I have not witnessed or experienced antisemitism at any of these Labour Party meetings or events.

114. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

As a Labour Party voter for many years and a member since Jeremy Corbyn was a candidate for leader, I take great exception to the totally unjustified and outrageous accusation that the Labour Party is "institutionally anti-semitic."

Long-standing members I have spoken to have said that that they have never come across any antisemitism in the Party, neither have I, as a Jewish member, come across any such trumped-up accusation which seems to have led the Chief Executive of the EHRC to state in 2017 that Labour 'must do more to establish that it is not a racist party'. It appears to have been stated on the basis of hearsay that had not been investigated and in fact was false.

It is a pre-assumption of guilt, where anyone can make the most untenable accusations, creating mayhem, to divert Labour from pursuing its manifesto and bringing it to the public in an election. Jeremy Corbyn's manifesto of Labour's democratic-socialist ideals, that will transform society 'for the many not the few' is also feared by the right-wing parties and media.

There has been a McCarthyite orchestrated campaign, unprecedented in its sustained attack, and no less than a persistent hounding of Jeremy Corbyn before and ever since he became party leader with spurious and concocted items dredged up from years ago, lifted out of context, and totally distorted, hyped up, and sensationalised, to denounce Corbyn, and many others in the party, to accuse them of antisemitism. Each one of them when analysed and put into context have been shown to be false or misrepresented. In fact Labour has said it will never tolerate antisemitism or racism of any kind, and has already suspended members who exhibit such actions in speech or on social media. It was Labour that brought in the Race Relations Act.

Yet many of those who have been targeted by Labour's previous NEC or the Compliance Unit, are devoted anti-racists, and have spent their whole careers fighting racism and injustice and upholding human rights and international law. Many are Jewish and anti- or non Zionists – for whom, when no real evidence of antisemitism could be found were suspended or expelled for 'bringing the party into disrepute.' These expulsions and suspensions are still being challenged.

It is abundantly clear that Corbyn is being targeted due to his consistent activism for justice and freedom and civil rights for beleaguered people, notably in the anti-apartheid movement, against Pinochet's Chile, and since 1967, against the occupation of Palestine. While the US and

our Conservative government, and the previous Labour governments did nothing to stop Israel's impunity to international law and halt the war crimes being committed against the Palestinian people, while continuing to sell arms to Israel, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States to be used against Palestinians, Yemen and opposition groups, Corbyn has been consistent in his search for justice, and opposed to wars –and is now under attack from the right wing press, the Jewish media and the Israel lobby.

The Campaign Against Antisemitism which has made the complaint to the EHRC is a British propaganda organization on behalf of Israel, and a registered charity that specializes in defaming Palestine solidarity campaigners or anyone in Labour who has supported Palestinian rights for justice and an end to Israel's illegal occupation of the West Bank since 1967 and the siege of Gaza since 2007. <https://electronicintifada.net/content/campaign-against-antisemitism-campaign-against-palestinians/19916>

The mischievous complaint by the CAA even though it is not in the Labour Party, but an unelected body, has a political agenda to bring down the party leader Jeremy Corbyn, and create hysteria among the Jewish community claiming the Labour Party is 'institutionally antisemitic'. There is no real evidence for such a claim, which is patently absurd when the facts are examined. Much of it is 'guilt by association' or not fitting the CAA's Israel-centric view of the world. This is a world that ignores Israel's daily war crimes and oppression of the Palestinian people, and Israel's own association with the most right wing and anti-semitic countries in eastern Europe – like Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland- the Visegrad group, who are in the process of lauding resurgent groups that were complicit with Nazis in aiding and abetting the Holocaust. It also ignores the violent racism of Israel's settler movements and the extreme right-wing coalition government of Benjamin Netanyahu which has entrenched apartheid into Israel's constitution with its Nation State law in the Knesset, and its inhuman siege of Gaza, its break-neck speed of settlement expansion, and its murderous brutality against any sort of resistance and protest with killings, terrible woundings, terrifying aerial bombardment and mass arrests of Palestinians, many of them children.

In addition, as we hear daily in arrogant proclamations by the CAA and by individuals and groups who are not members of the Labour Party in articles on line and reported in the Jewish media, the most defamatory and slanderous statements and demands for a popularly elected Labour leader, calling him an anti-Semite and a liar, and to resign 'as he is unfit to be a leader.'

These disgusting statements, which emanate from Gideon Falter, the head of the CAA, and should be condemned outright, are made to suit the CAA's own twisted interpretations of facts and events that occurred years ago, that are being raked up to blacken Jeremy Corbyn's name, and create communal hysteria. This is harassment and a threat to public order and democracy. No other party is being subject to this form of scrutiny, even though polls have shown that Labour is the least antisemitic of the parties, and that the Conservatives and UKIP are more anti-Semitic and Islamophobic. This is certainly not indicative of respect for equality and human rights, making their complaint to the EHRC the height of 'chutzpah'.

The IHRA definition of antisemitism, a key bone of contention, is actually a 'working definition' that was ultimately rejected by the EUMC as being a threat to free speech and unworkable, but

adopted by political parties (even Visograd countries) and by the police and local authorities without realising the detailed implications of its examples which go well beyond the common understanding of it as being 'hostility and prejudice towards Jews as Jews'. It has been taken apart in analyses and legal opinions by eminent QCs like Sir Hugh Tomlinson, Sir Stephen Sedley and by Kenneth Stern its author, who are Jewish, as breaching Article 10 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights on free speech, creating a 'chilling effect' and in fact is already being used to cancel and censor speakers and open discussion in academia and universities. It is claimed that it poses a risk to the EU's international obligations and commitments in connection with Israel and the Palestinian people. Many of the examples conflate the criticism of Israel and anti-Zionism with antisemitism and are geared to silence such criticism, and are so wide ranging as to make such discussion impossible, and in the words of the Jewish Chronicle editor, result in hundreds if not thousands of Labour members. This would destabilise the Labour Party, result in a witch-hunt, and looks like a threat to democratic discourse. Yet when Labour quite rightly decided to amend some of these controversial and paradoxical examples, it was accused of being institutionally anti-semitic, drawing abuse even from Dame Margaret Hodge, which has since been condemned.

In the light of the above, I hope the EHRC will see that the CAA's complaint a spiteful attempt to defame Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party and that it will be dismissed as is a frivolous attack that is unjustified and must be withdrawn, with a warning that further accusations like this will result in its questionable charitable status being challenged and withdrawn.

115. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I am a British Jew and member of the Labour Party. I am writing to support Jeremy Corbyn, whom I have worked with in the past and who I know not to be antisemitic. I am writing to support him in relation to the complaint that has been logged with the EHRC.

I am deeply concerned about the continuing attempt to label him antisemitic and believe there is a far more important need to better understand who and what is behind this. I imagine a team of people exploring his every word spoken and deed done in the past many years in their hunt for evidence. Problematically, this has already been proven to be out of context.

As a Jew I do not in any way see his support of Palestine and his opposition to Israeli policies as antisemitic. I agree entirely with him.

116. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party for several years and I find that the party is both inclusive and supportive of all religions and ethnicities.

I have never experienced anti semitism. My local ward is supportive of all members in a very diverse community.

My experience of the Labour Party is that it embraces all religions and ethnicities equally and listens to all members.

117. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 48 years

Testimony:

I am Jewish and have been a Labour Party member since 1970. I am writing to protest in the strongest possible terms about the above referral and to ask the EHRC to reject this.

All independent research suggests that there is an element of anti-semitism across British society as a whole and in all political parties (see, for example, the report by L.Daniel Staetsky, 'Antisemitism in Contemporary Britain,' Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2017). The Labour Party must deal effectively with any anti-semitism amongst its members, as should other parties. However, the idea that there is institutional racism in the Labour Party is absurd and the charge is obviously being made for partisan and propagandist purposes, deliberately conflating anti-semitism and justified criticism of Israel for its flagrant suppression of the human rights of the Palestinian people. As the Sub-Report commissioned to assist the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism (Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism, 2015) argued, it is imperative to separate these two issues and never allow charges of anti-semitism to prevent the expression of condemnation of Israeli policies and campaigns against them. The CAA is clearly attempting to do this and I trust that the EHRC will give no credence to this.

118. **Name:** Female

CLP: Leicestershire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 1.5 years

Testimony:

I am deeply shocked and dismayed at the fact that the Campaign against Anti-Semitism is referring the Labour Party to your organization because of alleged anti-semitism which is so much (wrongly, in my opinion) in the news currently.

I am Jewish (secular) and a Labour Party member, ant-Zionist, very active in support of Palestine, a signatory of Jews for justice for Palestinians.

Everything connected to alleged anti-semitism in the Labour Party in general and in connection with Jeremy Corbyn in particular has been blown out of all proportion in all aspects of the media, especially at a time when there are so many political and social issues which surely should be seen as more important: the rise of the far -right, knife crime, the dire state of the NHS, education, to name but a few, the great mess the cabinet is in.

I hope your organization, which exists to make Britain fairer, will recognize and confirm that Jeremy Corbyn should be accused of nothing, that freedom of speech should be paramount and that criticising the policies and barbarous acts of any country, including Israel, should be completely acceptable.

No more media time or public money should be wasted on this issue.

119. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 5 years

Testimony:

As a jew and a member of the party I will categorically state that I have never come across anything in any way resembling anti-semitism in the party. And I don't know anyone else who has.

My CLP is inner-city and with a large Muslim membership.

These accusations seem to me to be made up by people with their own agenda. Certainly not the protection of jews in England whatever it is.

120. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am a Jewish member of the Labour Party. My parents were Holocaust survivors. I never knew many members of my family, including my aunt, uncle and cousins because they died in a concentration camp.

I joined the Labour Party in 2015. I am a very involved and active member - I am on the executive committee of xx branch and until recently Assistant Secretary of xxx CLP. I have not come across any antisemitism in any meetings I've attended or conversations I've had with members.

I have occasionally come across comments on our WhatsApp group from non Jews, that didn't understand that Peter Willsman's comment about Judas & 30 pieces of silver, or Jim Richardson's recent comments about losing respect for all Jews were antisemitic comments. But these kind of remarks are a matter for education and understanding the issues.

121. **Name:** Female

CLP: Manchester

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years (approx.)

Testimony:

I am shocked that Jewish members of the Labour Party prefer to attack Jeremy Corbyn on a series of trivia rather than recognizing where the battle lines are really drawn: against this disgusting Tory government and against the blatantly racist, shameful policies and legislation of the present Israeli government - the most right-wing in Israel's history. I am a Jew and a Zionist (liberal, socialist), as well as being a member of the Labour Party. If Jewish citizenship rights in the UK were threatened the way Palestinian rights are currently threatened by the Israeli government you, the British Jewish community, would certainly have reason to fear. So speak out against racism in Israel!

122. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I am writing to describe my experiences as a Jew in the Labour Party and to express my concerns about the nature of the debates on anti-semitism and Zionism and the attacks on the Labour Party as institutionally anti-Semitic.

I write as a member of the Labour Party, and a life long supporter of Labour and as a Jew. I am the daughter of German Jews who escaped the Holocaust, arriving in this country in 1938.

My biggest concern in relation to the current debates is the failure to make clear distinctions between being a Zionist (i.e. supporting a Jewish Homeland), supporting or defending the actions of the Israeli government in relation to the Palestinians, and being a Jew. These important distinctions are blurred by both sides in the debate.

My parents were secular Jews, as am I. My parents were also never Zionists, expressing concerns about the nature of the State of Israel and increasingly criticisms of Israeli government treatment of actions against the Palestinians. It is possible to be a Jew and not a Zionist, or even to be anti-Zionist.

Because the Israeli government claims to speak on behalf of all Jews, it is very easy for all criticism of Israel to be seen as anti-semitism when it is not, and it is not surprising that some criticism of Israel is then expressed in an anti-Semitic way, often by addressing it at Jews, rather than at Israelis or more correctly at the actions of the Israeli Government. This of course needs to be explained and challenged. It is only in this context that I have personally experienced anti-Semitic ideas being expressed in the Labour Party, but not personally at me and no more in the Labour Party than in the rest of society.

The Israeli government does not speak on my behalf. As a British Jew, I do not feel any identification with the State of Israel and I want to be free myself, and for others to be free, to express strong criticism of its actions and of many of its policies, including the latest recent, in my view racist, law, without being accused of being anti-Semitic or self-hating. As a Jew I am frequently ashamed of the way the actions of the Israeli government are justified or defended through references to the historic persecution of Jews and the Holocaust.

I am also very concerned that that the 'Jewish Community' in the UK is spoken of as if it is homogeneous. It is not. The British Board of Deputies does not speak for me or on my behalf.

Nor do any of the other 'mainstream' Jewish organisations at the forefront of the attacks on the Labour Party. Organisations such as Jewish Voice for Labour and Jewish Socialists have as much right to speak for the Jews whose views and ideas they represent.

It should also not be assumed that because someone is Jewish, criticism of their views is automatically an expression of anti-Semitism and I fear this is what has been happening. To be made to feel uncomfortable because someone disagrees with you is not the same as that person being anti-Semitic. To suggest that it is, is to trivialise anti-semitism, which does not help in the struggles against real anti-semitism. I believe that many of the attacks on the Labour Party as anti-Semitic are trivialisations, being used as a way of disallowing criticism of the Israeli Government and as a way of undermining and attacking the current Labour leadership.

123. **Name:** Female

CLP: Norfolk

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >8 years

Testimony:

I have been an active Labour Party member and supporter since 1964,

I am Jewish and have never witnessed or experienced antisemitism in the Labour Party.

From 1964 to the mid seventies I lived in South London, attended Synagogue in xxx and Labour Party meetings in xxx. I actively campaigned for Labour Councillors in xxx. I experienced antisemitism at school and as a member of the Jewish community, but not within the Labour Party.

Since 1978 I have lived in xxx. I have been a Labour Councillor, held various offices within the Labour Party at constituency and branch level. I am currently treasurer of my CLP. I have actively campaigned with other members of the Labour Party and attend party meetings. I have never had any cause to be concerned about anti semitism or made to feel uncomfortable within the Labour Party.

I know how anti semitism feels - my maternal family in Holland were wiped out in the holocaust and I grew up being taught to be alert to anti semitic sentiments, words and behaviours.

124. **Name:** Female

CLP: Cumbria

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

I can only say that I have never experienced antisemitism in the Labour Party, neither in my own CLP nor at Conference. I very occasionally have experienced hints of antisemitism in other contexts.

125. **Name:** Male

CLP: West Sussex

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2.5 years (May 2016)

Testimony:

I understand that the Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) has referred the Labour Party to the Equality and Human Rights Commission alleging 'institutional antisemitism'. I am a Jewish member of the Labour Party and reject the accusation completely.

Last year your Chief Executive stated that Labour "must do more to establish that it is not a racist party". Jewish Voice for Labour has stated that she made this statement on the basis of hearsay that had not been investigated and was in fact false. In fact, the available evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the opposite is true. The Home Affairs Select Committee Report *Anti-Semitism in the UK* stated that "there exists no reliable, empirical evidence to support the notion that there is a higher prevalence of antisemitic attitudes within the Labour Party than in any other political party" (2016). The wide-ranging *Shami Chakrabarti Inquiry* categorically stated in its opening sentence that "The Labour Party is not overrun by antisemitism" (June 2016). The study *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain* by Daniel Staetsky, described as the largest survey of attitudes to Jews ever conducted in Great Britain, stated that "Levels of anti-Semitism among those on the left-wing of the political spectrum...are indistinguishable from those found in the general population" (2017). And a YouGov survey of antisemitic views held by Labour voters showed that they had declined under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party (2017).

In other words, antisemitism is found across the political spectrum. Obviously this will sometimes include the Labour Party because it is a part of political life, but there is no evidence to suggest that antisemitism is systemic in the Labour Party. My own personal experience in the Labour Party confirms this. I can state categorically that I have always been openly Jewish in my local CLP and that I have been warmly welcomed from the start as a comrade and have made firm friendships with other members. I can state that whenever the issue of antisemitism is discussed, it is handled sensitively and respectfully and that different perspectives are listened to. I would especially like you to note that when the issue of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is discussed, it is handled carefully and sensitively and with the main aim of securing a peaceful solution. My experience is common to Jews I know throughout the Labour Party including my cousins. I don't recognise my Labour Party as the same one described by the CAA and would ask them to produce specific evidence that there is a systemic problem rather than isolated incidents that can occur in other political parties or in any walk of life.

What seems clear to me is that a small number of organisations, for example the CAA, Board of Deputies and Jewish Labour Movement are attempting to speak for all Jews as if we all think alike and that there is one rather than several Jewish communities. You need to be aware that

many Jews now live completely secular lives and have an emotional identity rather than a religious one. Many of us don't belong to a synagogue or indeed, to a Jewish organisation of any kind. Many of us are confident enough in our Jewish identity to enable us to relate to and have friendships with gentiles and some of us have gentile partners and spouses. You will also find that uncritical support of Israel or Zionism decreases among younger Jews and that there is sometimes a divergence in views between generations. Many of us are supporters of Labour and believe that Jeremy Corbyn is a decent and honest man committed to fighting antisemitism, and are distressed by the attempt to present him as otherwise.

None of this is to suggest that all accusations of antisemitism in the Labour Party are invented. There is clearly a problem with antisemitism on social media, as indeed there is with misogyny, homophobia and transphobia. Online antisemitic statements and harassment have been well documented but it is impossible to determine their source because of the specific anonymous nature of online discourse in places such as Twitter. It is also correct that there are Labour councillors who have made unambiguous statements of antisemitism, such as Damien Enticott and been subsequently suspended. But there is no evidence whatsoever that such incidents are endemic or institutional or systemic in the Labour Party.

I urge you to look at the available evidence, start listening to all Jewish voices including organisations such as Jewish Voice for Labour, listen to personal testimonies such as my own, and immediately reject the referral by the CAA that the Labour Party is institutionally antisemitic. I call upon you also to publicly question the motives of anyone making these accusations as the available evidence clearly suggests that they are baseless.

126. **Name:** Male

CLP: Gloucestershire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

As a Jewish member of the Labour Party I would like to add my own testimony, the aim of which will be to add to the argument that the Labour Party is NOT anti-Semitic in any of its stances; has no provable record of antisemitism and that the charges brought against it by the CAA are based on a spurious definition of anti-semitism that is so illogical in its conflation of Judaism with Zionism that many Orthodox Jews would have to face the same accusation. I would also add that the specific charges against Jeremy Corbyn are equally unfounded, mischievous, illogical and disinformative in the extreme, effectively belittling the whole concept of antisemitism.

The History of the Issue

It will be recalled that this whole saga achieved its initial impetus with some unearthed online comment by Jeremy Corbyn regarding a mural about which he seems to have made implicitly positive remarks. The mural was adjudged to be anti-Semitic by the media BEFORE any debate could have been had to decide whether it was or not. The artists voice was barely heard even though he insisted it was not anti-Semitic. Indeed, the only symbols to be found on the mural were purely masonic connected with the U.S. dollar and its central bank. We need to factor in that well prior to this point, the media, as has been shown by an [extensive LSE report](#), had been daily producing anti-Corbyn material that was often misinformation and disinformation and highly inaccurate.

Because of this, it would be reasonable to treat claims which have been uncritically supported by most of the media as not acceptable on face value.

Since the mural incident there has been claim after claim that Corbyn and other Labour Party members (such as Mark Wadsworth) made anti-Semitic statements leading to grossly inaccurate exclamations from politicians such as Theresa May who had the temerity, in parliament, to exclaim that 'Labour is rife with anti-semitism' when no such evidence existed. This should be shocking enough, that a Prime Minister should come out with utterly libellous accusations whilst fuelling a media 'witch hunt' in effect. The Wadsworth case was particularly egregious in its doubtfulness because there was no anti-semitic content at all, the antisemitism being artificially induced on the basis a critical remark was addressed to an M.P who HAPPENED to be Jewish and who later deleted her tweet on the issue!

Let's be clear: in terms of online anti-semitic abuse IT HAS NEVER BEEN SHOWN THAT THE PERPETRATORS ARE MEMBERS OF THE LABOUR PARTY IN ANY SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS. As a Labour Party member over the last three years and having an archetypical Jewish surname, I have never encountered it. The film director Ken Loach, after many, many years as a Labour Party member said the same whilst being dragged into accusations of anti-semitism by the CAA as a holocaust denier based on a poorly conducted interview where he was manifestly misunderstood. It is also significant that a leading expert on Jewish matters, [Norman Finkelstein](#), considers that there is next to NO evidence of the Labour Party having any institutionalised or embedded anti-semitism. This is also supported by Jewish academic [Jamie Wiener](#). Both these people are serious academics whose words should be taken seriously. In this light it is disturbing to read that the Chief Executive of the EHCR has pre-judgementally said that Labour 'should do more to establish it is not a racist Party.' On what evidence was this based ? There is zero incontrovertible evidence of antisemitism in the Labour party UNLESS YOU CONFLATE ANTISEMITISM WITH CRITICISM OF ZIONISM.

The conflation of Anti-semitism with Zionism

All the cases involving Corbyn implicated in antisemitism are, without exception, where he has been critical of Zionism as a political movement and/or directly critical of Israel. I should be pointed out here loud and clearly that many orthodox Jewish groups are even more vocally and harshly critical of Zionism than many of those connected with the Labour Party who evince anti-Zionist stances. Are we to conclude that these Jews are anti-semitic. Surely this would be an absurdity.

In the case brought by the CAA, we must be very careful to disentangle this dangerous conflation lest we implicate many observant Jews in the accusations. Even before the establishment of the State of Israel, there were many Jews opposing the Zionist movement and often physical clashes between these groups. This tension still exists in Israel today and is fast becoming a sort of cultural 'civil war.' It is, therefore, of prime importance to unravel these nuances lest the whole concept of anti-semitism be dangerously dumbed down. I would advise the judges of this case to watch an interview with [Rabbi Dovid Weiss](#), a fully orthodox Rabbi, talk about how Israel as a secular Zionist state is based on fundamental injustices to the Palestinian people. If Labour is to be adjudged as institutionally anti-Semitic, this man must also be so judged. Please let us get this cleared up. As a Jew, I implore you to look at this area with a high degree of perspicacity.

Those statements that are clearly anti-Semitic (that is, insulting and demeaning Jews QUA Jews involving generalised vilification) and have been connected with the Labour Party should draw a BURDEN OF PROOF that eliminates on line trolling by anti-Corbyn elements and similar mischievous intentions. It must be conclusive that a Labour Member is behind the statement. So far, there have been very few such clear cut cases, indicating THAT THE PROBLEM IS NO MORE PREVALENT IN LABOUR THAN ANY OTHER POLITICAL PARTY.

Thanking you for your time,

127. **Name:** Male

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 40 years

Testimony:

I've been a Labour Party member for about 40 years. I have Jewish heritage. I believe that antisemitism exists in all walks of life and that it must be confronted wherever it exists. Jewish people must feel safe and, indeed valued, wherever they are.

However, all the evidence demonstrates that the Labour Party has less antisemitism than other parties and that antisemitism is decreasing in the Labour Party. Personally, I have never witnessed antisemitism in the Labour Party. I am not saying there is no antisemitism in the Labour Party but the relentless accusations of antisemitism in Labour are out of all proportion to the size of the problem. The accusations emanate from individuals and organisations that are hostile to the Labour leader and his policies and are being weaponised to undermine him. The accusations are being taken up and often exaggerated by media interests which independent research has proven to be overwhelmingly hostile to our new Labour leader.

Finally, in the interests of free speech and indeed justice, it is vital that criticisms of Israeli brutality are NOT conflated with antisemitism.

128. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London.

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 30 years

Testimony:

I'd just like to add my voice to those saying most emphatically that the antisemitism in the Labour Party is no more than it is in the UK in general, and probably a lot less.

My own personal experience of it in the last 30 years has been none at all. And I speak as a seventy year old Jew, who bitterly well remembers the racism of the fifties and sixties experienced by my parents' families.

In fact, the only open antisemitism I have encountered was in circa 1982 when a xxx Labour councillor - and a right wing one at that - called somebody a "Jew-boy".

Apart from that I am proud of the record of my colleagues in the Labour Party on all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism.

I have never heard Holocaust denial. I have never heard stuff about Jewish Bankers and Financiers or about Jewish conspiracies from people I know in the Labour Party or from people on Social media who I can prove to be in the Labour Party.

Indeed, many of my closest comrades in the LP are also Jewish and are doing a wonderful job of promoting the current manifesto and platform.

I have stood for Council in xxx as a Labour Candidate. I am currently a member of xxx Constituency LP in the xxxx Branch. I am on the steering committee of xxx Momentum and a member of Jewish Voice for Labour.

I have worked both in this country and abroad with refugees, asylum seekers, trafficked women, the displaced and dispossessed, returned child soldiers in Uganda, and victims of wars and aerial bombings in many parts of the globe, making theatre and on music projects.

I hope this testimony makes my position clear.

129. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >2 years

Testimony:

I am a Holocaust child survivor and a member of the Labour Party as well as Momentum. I am also a Holocaust researcher.

At no stage/point have I experienced or even noticed antisemitism in the Labour Party.

I am deeply saddened by the weaponising of such an important issue, possibly for hidden political agendas.

130. **Name:** Female

CLP: Nottinghamshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >2.5 years

Testimony:

I welcome this opportunity to give my testimony as a Jewish member of the Labour Party. My grandparents came to the UK in the early 1900s escaping the pogroms in Lithuania and I was brought up in an orthodox Jewish Community. I was an active member of the Labour Party during the 1980s, but left as I didn't like the direction in which the party was going. I rejoined once Jeremy Corbyn was elected as leader. I am now a CLP delegate and a member of the LCF.

In all my time in the Labour Party I have never experienced or witnessed any antisemitism at Labour Party meetings or gatherings, or from LP members. There is an evident ethos of antiracism, which includes fighting antisemitism, and positive encouragement to those of all faiths and none. I am sure there is some antisemitism in the Party, as there is in all other parties and society at large, and this needs to be dealt with robustly, but the data shows that this is a very tiny percentage in a Party of half a million members. I also condemn the nasty online anti-Semitic abuse that some Jewish MPs have received and this must be dealt with. However there is no evidence that this abuse comes from Labour Party members and possibly not even LP supporters. It has been demonstrated that Diane Abbott MP receives more online abuse than all the other MPs put together. It is a modern challenge as to how to deal with all online abuse that often manifests as both racist and misogynist.

The Labour Party has procedures to deal with allegations of abuse. Unfortunately, under the previous General Secretary, the system was opaque, with many unsubstantiated allegations being left uninvestigated for long periods of time. I believe that some of these allegations were malicious and designed to curtail free speech on Israel and Palestine, which I will come back to later in this submission. I welcomed the Chakrabarti report which proposed that all cases should be dealt with transparently and with due process. For a Party that advocates human rights around the globe, it should deal with its own members properly, respectfully and with due diligence. I am hopeful that the new General Secretary will now implement the recommendations swiftly.

The so called 'crisis of antisemitism' is not in fact a crisis of AS within the party or by its members, given my caveat above of the small percentage of cases. This crisis has been created deliberately, largely from those outside the party –the Board of Deputies, Jewish Leadership Council, Zionist Federation UK, CAA etc, abetted by some within the PLP and others within the Party who want to remove Corbyn as leader. This is because he is a socialist and also - mainly –

because he supports the rights of Palestinians to live their lives free of oppression in their own land. Those who are bombarding him with allegations – some of which I believe are libellous– are in the main Conservative Party supporters and donors and/or advocates for the Israeli Government. The media have picked up on this as if the Jewish Community is of one mind and allegiance and that the BoD etc speak for all UK Jews. This is most definitely not the case – they certainly do not speak for me or for many Jewish people.

Stating that all Jews support Zionism is extremely dangerous as it equates support for Israel – and its actions - with all Jews. Similarly that those of us who oppose Zionism are 'the wrong kind of Jew' and that our voices should not be heard. I and many Jews say "Not in my name".

Jeremy Corbyn is a lifelong antiracist campaigner, and there is ample evidence of his campaigns against AS and his support for the Jewish community in various forms over the years. I find it offensive that he should be being accused of AS, including by those like Margaret Hodge who saw fit to scream abuse at him in HoP and likened her own treatment to that of Jews in the holocaust.

Many of us have had meetings with Palestinian speakers disrupted and intimidated by members of the Zionist Federation and it was these individuals who had shouted down a Palestinian speaker who Corbyn was referring to in the latest manufactured incident. His words should not be taken out of context. The subsequent attack by Lord Sachs –former Chief Rabbi – comparing him with Enoch Powell and the River of Blood speech is not only libellous but is offensive to all those who have suffered racist attacks over the years arising out of Powell's speech.

We are currently witnessing the most horrific daily human rights abuses on the Palestinian people, with illegal land grabs, humiliation and intimidation, imprisonment of children, innocent protestors being killed and maimed in cold blood with live fire, and a regime that has just passed Nation State laws, giving citizenship rights only to Jewish people that are reminiscent of those in Germany in the 1930s. It is incumbent upon all of us to shout out loud and clear that this must be stopped, to call on Government sanctions against such a regime and yes, to be able to call it out as racist and make any historical comparisons that are relevant. It is not anti-Semitic to be anti Zionist. Zionism is a political ideology – also held by many Fundamentalist Christians - that has been opposed by many Jews since its inception in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. What should be investigated at this time, in addition to those actions of the Israeli Government classed as illegal under International Law, is the interference by a foreign state – Israel – in all our political parties, with its influences on MPs and Labour Party members. It could start with investigating both Labour and Conservative Friends of Israel, where their funding comes from and what it is being used for. There is ample evidence out there eg from the Al Jazeera undercover filming of The Lobby.

In addition an investigation should take place into the so called Campaign against Antisemitism whose charitable status should exclude them from participating in any political activity and yet they have stated that they aim to take Jeremy Corbyn down. Their recent online petition, on Change.org, is deeply offensive and is in fact an incitement to violence against Jeremy Corbyn, which we know, following the murder of Jo Cox MP, is a dangerous reality.

In conclusion, I believe the current crisis is being whipped up by those who want to silence criticism of Israel and to topple the Leader of the Opposition. The Labour Party stands proudly for Free Speech and human rights, as well as antiracism in all its forms, and we must be able to stand up to these bullies and continue to speak out.

I welcome the opportunity to give testimony to this enquiry and hope that my voice will be heard.

131. **Name:** Male

CLP: Labour International

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: > 50 years

Testimony:

I joined the Labour Party in the mid sixties and have always been active when I could. Outside the party I've experienced antisemitism in school and work. Usually the 'normal' prejudice based on upbringing, you're all rich, world conspiracy, money grabbing etc. I dealt with them on the wing and, apart from out and out nazis, helped clear up a lot of misconception. The question of Israel has come up in many family discussions and up till the Lebanon war there was a consensus that Israel was a bastion of hope and democracy. Since then my extended Jewish family has shifted its consensus to one of opposition to the growing persecution of the Palestinian people and the realisation that much that we believed to be so was in fact Israeli state propaganda.

With regards to the Labour Party I've seen a similar process of reassessment taking place but this seems to be confronted by a campaign by the Israeli state lobby to accuse this opposition with being antisemitism. This is not to deny antisemitism in the Labour Party. I've experience some usually based on ignorance of history and repetitions of commonly held false conceptions. These I've always dealt with by explanation and education with success.

Personally I've never come across conscious antisemitism but obviously where it exists it must be rooted out together with conscious racism or Islamophobia. Tragically there are members I've known all my life who are being disciplined for an antisemitism that they do not have. I do believe this to be a political campaign by the pro Israel lobby and will create more damage to a genuine fight against racism of all kinds.

132. **Name:** Female

CLP: -

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 3 years

Testimony:

1. I am a British Jew
2. I am a member of the Labour Party
3. Current attacks on the Labour Party for alleged anti-semitism are politically motivated and have no roots in concern for human rights. Quite the opposite.
4. It is an attempt to silence critics of Israel in order to shield it from censure for its own serious human rights abuses.

133. **Name:** Female

CLP: West Yorkshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 25-30 years

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party for about 30 years (with a gap of 5 years). I am Jewish by origin, though not practising. I have never witnessed or experienced any anti-semitism within the Labour Party, either at meetings I have been at or in discussion with other members.

I would like to see an end to Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian land and full human and democratic rights for all living there. I applaud Jeremy Corbyn's principled stand for Palestinian rights, please stand firm in the face of the hostility this has elicited.

134. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 3 years

Testimony:

I joined the Labour Party shortly after Jeremy Corbyn's election as leader- looking back now I'm amazed that I didn't engage with politics earlier, but Corbyn's election for myself and so many other was finally a vision that I could get behind- one of hope and coming together, his anti-racist record and one of fighting for so many people who many didn't bother with throughout his life made him a character that I could trust immediately, and to this day I feel exactly the same.

Three of my four grandparents were German jews who fled shortly before the war, I lost other relatives who weren't able to escape. I've thankfully grown up largely free from anti-semitic abuse, and although at school I was always aware of being different to most other kids, this was mainly through good natured jokes from friends rather than anything really nasty.

I have found the Labour Party to be a very accommodating place and I've not once been at the receiving end of any antisemitic abuse, nor have I ever witnessed it. I was pleased to learn that our branch secretary is jewish, and in fact many of Corbyn's biggest supporters in my CLP are Jewish. The fact that Corbyn has a significant following of Jewish Labour Party members is something which is completely overlooked by nearly everyone, as is the fact that some of his closest staff are.

It's this amongst many other factors in the 'anti semitism scandal' that has upset me so much; the fact the our voices aren't listened to, and the fact that when they are, we're labelled 'bad jews' or 'not real jews' shows how factional this whole 'debate' is, and it makes all Jewish people less safe as a result. As an anti-racist I call out anti semitism and all racism and bigotry wherever I encounter it, not just when it suits my political ends.

This is not to say that there is no anti semitism in the Labour Party, and whilst I've never witnessed it other than online, we must all call it out and act together on this regardless of if Blairite or Corbynite. As far as I'm aware this is something that Corbyn and his supporters have known and wanted to do from the very beginning, and it's the likes of Margaret Hodge, Chuka Umuna and others who've attempted to use it against the leadership. Suprised as the media may be to learn this- Jeremy Corbyn can not be held responsible for everything that's written online by members of the Labour Party, nor what's said in conversation. What he can and has done is taken seriously anti semitism wherever it has occurred and he has been determined to stamp it out- something which I trust he is doing.

Another point that to me has always been obvious, but judging by the coverage in the press is not is this: it is possible to oppose anti semitism in all forms whilst also supporting the Palestinian cause. This inevitably involves a criticism of the horrendous treatment of the Palestinians at the hands of Netanyahu's government. The NEC were right to rule that any definition of anti-Semitism which compromises our ability to do this is clearly not one we want to use. Criticising Israel is not anti semitic, and the intentional conflation of the two once again puts every jew in more not less danger.

In conclusion, I believe the current crisis is being whipped up by those who want to silence criticism of Israel and to topple the Leader of the Opposition. The Labour Party stands proudly for Free Speech and human rights, as well as antiracism in all its forms, and we must be able to stand up to these bullies and continue to speak out.

I am exhausted by this ordeal, mainly because it's so much wasted energy, imagine if all this energy those members of the Labour Party had spent attacking Corbyn over the last few months, and all that energy we'd spent defending him had been directed towards the resurgent far right; where the real threat lies.

A society with Corbyn as Prime Minister is a more equal one, with anti racism at its core and one which we need to come together to fight for.

135. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 2 years

Testimony:

I am Jewish, and the son of two refugees from the Nazis, each of whom lost members of their families in the Holocaust. I am an active member of my synagogue and of the Jewish community in London. I am a member of the Labour Party. Professionally, I am a doctor, educator and writer.

I want to place it on record that I have had no personal experience of antisemitism from people who are members of the Labour Party, in any context whatsoever.

I am aware that many members of my local Jewish community, and more widely among Jews in London, believe Labour to be antisemitic. I have tried hard to find out from them of specific examples but have only heard comments such as "it's an established fact," or examples that relate to reported views about the state of Israel or the current Israeli government, and not to Jews as an ethnic group.

I have contacted organisations like the Campaign Against Antisemitism, with an open mind, to try to establish if anyone is keeping neutral and dispassionate records of alleged incidents and how the Labour Party has managed these. I have yet to find any records that do not conflate "Labour supporters" (for whom the Party cannot be held to account), with verified party members - or that does not include members who have already been suspended, disciplined or dismissed (which would tend to prove that the problem is being addressed.)

In a situation that has become so charged emotionally, I hope the EHRC will use objective criteria to form a judgement, such as verified statements about Jews as a group, made by definite members of the party and subsequently reported - and how these have been addressed.

136. **Name:** Female

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >8 years

Testimony:

I have been a Labour Party member for more than 8 years and am Jewish. At no time have I felt that anti-Semitic remarks have been made at any meetings that I have been present at. This whole issue has been exaggerated out of all proportion by people who either want to discredit Jeremy Corbyn or want to hurt the party by dividing us, its members and supporters. The media has played its part in raising the tension around this non-issue.

It is essential that people of whatever religious persuasion should be able to criticise the state of Israel and its discriminatory policies without being worried that their comments will be deemed antisemitic. The state of Israel must be held to account for its actions and no party should feel silenced by the Zionist lobby. I use the word Zionist in its true meaning . I repeat I am Jewish and I support Israel's right to exist but we must not blind ourselves to its repressive and cruel policies and methods. We must retain our ability to criticise and to support the Palestinian people in some of their just demands.

137. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 3 years

Testimony:

I have been a member of the Labour Party since 2015 and active as an informal advisor to the shadow cabinet, and in particular the office of xxx. I also recently joined Jewish Voice for Labour and have been active in campaigning to defend the integrity of both the party and the leadership against what I perceive to be politically motivated attacks. These attacks have exploited, trivialised and grossly distorted the issue of anti-semitism in a way that is strikingly removed from my own direct personal experience as a Labour Party member and activist. In particular, I have had the experience of collaborating closely with high profile Labour members, including acclaimed film-maker Ken Loach, who have been directly labelled and accused of harbouring anti-semitic prejudice. These charges are categorically and demonstrably false. Though I recognise anti-semitic prejudice in a small number of incidents that have been subject to disciplinary proceedings, I have never witnessed or experienced it personally in my campaigning or advocacy work both within the Labour Party and more generally within progressive and socialist political circles over the last two decades. In fact, the vast majority of complaints that I am familiar with regarding anti-semitism within the Labour Party, including the complaint submitted to the ECHR, strike me as entirely without substance.

Whilst it is true to say that the Labour Party has a problem with anti-semitism, it is not the case that this problem is any sense disproportionate compared to other mainstream political parties and especially taking into account Labour's uniquely mass membership base. It is also clear that no politician has done more to confront and combat anti-semitism both as a back bench MP and as leader of the Labour Party than Jeremy Corbyn. To suggest otherwise is simply to ignore the facts of his voting record in Parliament over four decades, and the unprecedented measures he has taken to deal with this issue as leader of the party since 2015.

What I do recognise is a chilling effect on free speech, both about Israel and about anti-semitism, fostered by what amounts to a baseless and continuous assault on the legitimacy of a mass political movement. This is unambiguously a much graver and more pressing human rights concern, especially as relates to Article 10 of the ECHR, compared to the complaint which the ECHR is now investigating.

138. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 1.5 years

Testimony:

I am Jewish - the daughter of a holocaust survivor who moved to Australia after the war, and an East End Jewish mother whose parents moved here at the turn of the 20th century to escape the pogroms in Russia!

I would like to give testimony as a member of the xx branch of the Labour party that in the 18 months since I have joined I have never experienced nor heard of any anti-Semitism within the branch or the party generally.

I have however been very aware of a campaign that has set out to destroy the reputation and leadership of an honest, dedicated and decent man who has spent his life campaigning against racism of all forms. That is of course Jeremy Corbyn.

Why isn't Boris Johnson being investigated for his racist comments about Muslims?

I hope that the EHRC will be considering the testimony of myself and many in the Jewish community like me who see this latest attempt to smear the leader of the Labour party as anti-Semitic as nothing but fear of those who would see Labour come to govern for the many not the few.

139. **Name:** Female

CLP: South London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: many years

Testimony:

I am Jewish and have been a member of the labour party since I was 14 (I am now 49) – with breaks when I was living overseas. I have never experienced anti-Semitism that entire time. I have not discussed my Jewish identity at my branch until the last couple of years. It just never came up. It didn't seem relevant. I never heard anything that offended me or upset me.

As a Jewish person I have quite a complicated relationship with Israel. Family members live there – and one cousin has recently moved there. My mother was a Zionist in her youth and spent time there. But as a family we have always been horrified by the way that Palestinians have been treated. We are long term supporters of Medical Aid for Palestinians. As someone who has spent the majority of her working life in South Africa – the similarities between apartheid and how Palestinians are treated has always been obvious to me. We support BDS – especially for products made/grown in the occupied territories. I so want a soda stream but have resisted because of the company's behaviour!

It has only been in the last couple of years that I have felt that I should identify as Jewish in my local branch because members of our branch – who are not Jewish – have repeatedly tried to pass motions that condemn anti-Semitism in the labour party. These motions have been proposed by people who have never supported Corbyn. People who have not previously shown any interest in what is happening in that part of the world.

140. **Name:** Male

CLP: East Yorkshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >30 years

Testimony:

My mother was a jewish refugee from Hitler;

I have been a member of the Labour Party since 1968, except for a few years after the invasion of Iraq. I am currently Chair of xxx Labour Party. I do not see myself as a Corbynista.

I have never experienced or witnessed anti-semitism in the Labour Party, either from the left, right or centre.

The accusations made against Corbyn are ridiculous and owe most to the government of Israel's concerns that a Labour government might support Palestine, to right-wing Labour MPs seeing an opportunity to get rid of Corbyn and to mainstream media fears of a left-wing Labour government.

Before retirement, I was an academic employment lawyer, who received assistance from EHRC and its predecessors and respected its output. I was worried by the Chief Executive's irresponsible comments about the Labour Party and anti-semitism in 2017, and hope and trust that this inquiry will be rigorous.

141. **Name:** Male

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: 3 years

Testimony:

As a Jewish member of the Labour party in xxx constituency, i have never experienced any anti-semitic remarks or electronic communications. On the contrary, I have spoken in a comradely way to many other Jewish members, some from the ultra-orthodox community, others like myself secular Jews, who share my view that the campaign to highlight alleged anti-semitism in the party is a deliberate attempt to damage Corbyn and the Left. In all discussions on the issue of Israel, there are vehement disagreements, but none of these has ever descended into anti-semitism. These are political issues that need to be aired, not stifled.

142. **Name:** Female

CLP: North London

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: >3 years

Testimony:

I am a 76 year old secular British Jew who would like to give her testimony.

I grew up in 1950s Britain, where anti-Semitism was a casual and accepted part of life, off the cuff insults, the inability to join golf clubs, girl guides etc, occasional threats of physical violence. I was aware of the war, fears of German rearmament, of Hitler and what he did to Jews. The UK today is fortunately a very different place.

I was never aware, and still am not, of any Jews thinking of leaving the UK because they do not feel safe here. I find this assertion of Margaret Hodge (I believe) utterly incredible. As for her comparison of her situation in the Labour Party with that of Jews in Nazi Germany, it is hard to find words to express the crassness and ignorance of such a dreadful comment.

Although a secular family, my father, as a socialist, would be invited on occasions to debate in the schul. Historically, of course, Jews have always held widely differing political views, Zionism being a constant cause of controversy among them. Anti Zionism, being a political viewpoint, was in no way considered to be related to anti semitism. Jews in this country are connected by a shared history and culture but decidedly not by their politics.

As a socialist Jewish family in this country, we do not accept our right to become Israeli citizens and feel deeply distressed by the behaviour, in several cases in contravention of international law, of the Israeli Government and Israeli Defence Force.

My concerns relate particularly to developments in which certain groups, such as right wing Labour MPs, who have tried on several occasions to unseat Jeremy Corbyn but have failed due to his popularity among the constituents they represent, have found common cause in opposing his espousal of human rights for Palestinians, with pro Zionist groups, supporters of the current Israeli state, as well as the media and press who overwhelmingly oppose him and his policies. His critics know very well that he is no anti Semite. They also know that, should he get into power, the Palestinians would gain the recognition they deserve and the UK might stop arming the Israeli state. The Jewish press quoted in our media are relentlessly pro Israeli. We hear a lot from the Board of Deputies and the self styled Jewish Leadership Council (who votes for them?), as if they were independent bodies, almost nothing from other groups, Jewish Voice for Labour, Jews for Justice for Palestinians, Jewish socialist group etc. Zionist and pro Israeli Jews are frequently introduced in the press with the comment, ".....who lost relatives in the Holocaust".

The news is that all Ashkenazi Jews lost relatives and it is cheap and cynical to try to use this to help score some political leverage

The descriptors in the current definition of anti-Semitism which are particularly controversial (no one appears to know who added them) refer to opinions about the State of Israel and Zionism. Both are political issues. Any opinion of either should not be considered antisemitic unless expressed in association with anti-Semitic comments.

As a Jew who abhors the actions of the Israeli state and considers it to be racist (as it has now proclaimed itself to be), I could potentially be declared an anti Semite; not a fanciful notion as Jews have of course been suspended from the Labour Party for anti semitism, most notably the highly respected Israeli academic Moshe Machover. Others could include the orthodox Jews whose banners proclaim that Israel is a racist state, the brave Israeli rabbis who do their best to defend and rebuild Bedouin and Palestinian villages scheduled for demolition, who describe Israel as an apartheid state, and many other Israelis who also oppose their government. Could there be a more bizarre situation?

143. **Name:** Female

CLP: Hampshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party: approx. 30 years

Testimony:

I am a retired secular Jew living in a rural location in southern England and I am a moderately active long-term member of the Labour Party. I've always been on the left of the Labour Party and I support Jeremy Corbyn.

I have never, ever experienced anti-Semitism in the Labour Party. I find the current onslaught on Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party upsetting. I wish that the people spending so much of their energy searching years old records of what Jeremy did or didn't say would just stop. I have visited Palestine twice and also stayed in Israel for a few days where I have relatives. I have taken the trouble to read quite widely about the history and recent development in Palestine and Israel. I consider myself reasonably well-informed.

I could say a lot more about why I think we have got into the situation but I think I'll leave this short statement as it is.

144. **Name:** Male

CLP: Oxfordshire

Labour membership no.:

Jewish heritage: Yes

Time in Labour Party:

Testimony:

I am a Jewish member of the Labour Party and have been a member - apart from a break when I lived in Italy - since about 1980.

I have never been subject to antisemitism nor have I ever heard inappropriate remarks concerning Jewish conspiracies etc. You may wish to take into account, however, that in my then ward in Stamford Hill (I now live in a quite different constituency) leftist, anti-Zionist candidates for ward/constituency positions were frequently "deselected" by Haredi rabbis organising housewives of their congregation to attend and vote at critical meetings. Naturally these newly enrolled "members" were never seen again.