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28th Sept 2017

To complaints@Labour.org.uk

Jenny Formby
General Secretary of the Labour Party
Southside,
105 Victoria Street,
London SW1E 6QT.

Dear Ms Formby,

I complain that the [Jewish Labour Movement](#) (JLM) is not entitled to be an affiliate member of the Labour Party. They support a racist regime and reflect poorly on Labour's founding platform as being the party of social justice. I also claim that [Labour Friends of Israel](#) (LFOI) are intent on undermining Labour Party democracy and call upon the Party to decree that membership of LFOI be proscribed, in that it has become nothing more than a tool for promoting Netanyahu's racist doctrine.

The JLM website states "The Jewish Labour Movement is a membership organisation of Labour supporting members of the Jewish Community. A formal affiliate of the Labour Party in the UK since 1920, JLM campaigns within the party and the wider community to support labour values within the UK, Israel and Internationally."

"In addition to the UK Labour Party, the Jewish Labour Movement is also affiliated to the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Zionist Federation of the UK, and organise within the World Zionist Organisation alongside our sister party in Israel, Havodah - the [Israeli Labor Party](#)."

The JLM is not shy of making clear where its sympathies lie.

The JLM affiliate status within the Labour Party comes under the mantle of being a "socialist society". The Labour Party website asserts such socialist societies are fighting for a fairer Britain. But the JLM has no interest in fighting for fairness in this country; they are 100% focussed on building support for Israel. Unlike any of the other Socialist Societies, the JLM is unique in that it seeks to gloss over the racist nature of a single country, Israel, in order to promote the idea of a Jewish homeland which all Jews should support as second nature. To be Jewish and to be critical of Israel is, in their eyes, to be a "Jew-Hater". They peddle the myth that anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are the same thing, and by so doing they devalue the very term "anti-Semite".

The [Labour Friends of Israel](#) claim to be working towards a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine but in fact care little for the Palestinians, through studiously ignoring [United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194](#) which defined principles for reaching a final settlement and returning Palestine refugees to their homes. That they have no care for the fortunes of the Party is demonstrated by their promotion of LFOI Chair Joan Ryan's Machiavellian [letter to you of the 2nd August](#), demanding Corbyn be investigated for bringing the Party into disrepute, in a letter that Netanyahu himself would have been proud to have written. They sought – and received – maximum coverage in the mainstream media, knowing full well that by so doing they were publicly aligning themselves with those who want to see Labour fail.

I do not deny that Ryan has a right to complain about Corbyn, but what I object to is they she and LFol have sought to publicise their complaint at every opportunity, with the sole intention of causing damage to Corbyn and by extension, Labour's reputation.

What is even worse, both agencies are working with the Israeli Government, a foreign power, to undermine Jeremy Corbyn and democracy in the UK. I urge you to watch the undercover documentary investigation "[The Lobby](#)" which shows exactly how dangerous the JLM and the LFol are. These agencies bear no respect for the aims and values of our Party and are quite simply taking advantage of their affiliated status to cause the maximum damage to our policies on Palestine and Israel. Israeli attorney Eitay Mack [has filed an FOIA request](#) to determine the Israeli government's role in the anti-Corbyn campaign.

I appreciate that the Labour Party felt the Jews to be an oppressed minority back in the mists of time when Zionism was deemed a cause worthy of support. But the actions of a state founded on the ethnic cleansing of 700,000 Arabs out of Palestine into the makeshift bomb-riddled townships they occupy today, denied access to energy, medicine and rights to trade has well and truly taken any kind of moral cause out of the Zionist creed. It stands for the very opposite of social justice.

The JLM and LFol happily promote a country which is a racist endeavour as articulated in this Mondoweiss piece "[Israel's new Jewish Nation State law is a reaction to Palestinian demands for equality — Ben White](#)". Over 50 laws enshrine rights of Jews over that of other citizens and both the JLM and the LFol have consistently failed to condemn such racist laws. These Israeli laws explicitly or implicitly discriminate on the basis of creed or race, in effect privileging Jewish citizens and disadvantaging non-Jewish, and particularly Arab, citizens of the state. These include the Law of Return, laws making military conscription mandatory for certain religions only, the Ban on Family Unification, and many laws regarding security, land and planning, citizenship, political representation in the Knesset, education and culture. [The Adalah database of 50 discriminatory laws in Israel](#) details them all. And in July the Jewish nation law defined Israel as the national home of Jewish people and downgraded Arabic from an official language, leaving Hebrew as the sole national language.

If the Jewish right to self-determination means riding roughshod over the rights of others, then for the Labour Party to ignore this social injustice, would be for it to go against one of its founding planks. That the Party has now enshrined tolerance of such views, whereby one ethnic group has rights over other groups occupying the same country (as espoused by the examples added on 4th Sept), shows just how far the Party has been manipulated, in weakening its stand on equality for all.

There is nothing published by JLM or LFol condemning these racist Israeli laws. For it is, indeed, racism: as Wikipedia makes clear "**Racism** is the belief in the [superiority](#) of one race over another, which often results in [discrimination](#) and [prejudice](#) towards people based on their [race](#) or [ethnicity](#)."

Whilst both Jews and Arabs are Semitic peoples, the discrimination against Arabs is based purely on ethnic criteria. In Israel, to worship under Mohammed is to be a second-class citizen with far fewer rights. The courts constantly and routinely discriminate in favour of Jewish Israelis, as we all know.

That the JLM and LFol are allowed to parade their beliefs under the Labour Party's banner does nothing good for our reputation. Labour gives harbour to such extremist Zionist bodies at its peril.

We pay far too much credence to these groups representing a vocal Jewish minority in the UK, at the cost of hearing the views of the reasonable, respectful mass, as recent statements and letters from these weaker and less well-funded groups show.¹

¹ The *Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations* is an umbrella organisation representing over a hundred congregations and educational establishments in Greater London. In a statement recently issued by twenty-nine leading rabbis from the group, they supported “respected” Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and distanced themselves from “irresponsible claims in the media that the Jews of Britain are outraged towards the Labour party’s respected leader Jeremy Corbyn. They have spread rumours that the Jewish population are considering leaving the country for fear he becomes Prime Minister... [and] rumours that the Jewish population are considering leaving the country for fear he becomes Prime Minister.”

Shraga Stern is a prominent Charedi (Orthodox) Jewish activist in London, and was one of the organisers of this letter. He wrote to the Jewish Chronicle [in a letter](#) they refused to publish that :

“We believe that the anti-Semitism smear and witch hunt against Jeremy Corbyn is a Zionist agenda and has all the footprints leading to that direction. It is being promoted by the Board of Deputies and by the self-made unelected JLC, who are a well-known pro-Israel bodies- and it’s completely cruel and unjustified.

The Board of Deputies and JLC do not represent Charedi Jews, who do not have voting rights at BoD elections and number today over fifty thousand in the UK, of which 30,000 live in Stamford Hill. According to a 2007 study by Dr Markov Wise at the University of Manchester, almost three out of every four Jewish births in the UK – home to the largest strictly Orthodox community in Europe – are in the Charedi community.

The strange thing here is that they are 263,000 Jews living in UK according to the 2011 census. Half of them do not belong to a synagogue according to BoD population statistics, so this half would not have voting rights in the BoD elections.

Add this up with 50,000 Charedi Jews it equals 181,000 out of 263,000 who will not fall under the BoD and the BoD do not represent them. So how on earth can the BoD have the chutzpah to say they represent the Jews in UK? BoD is a pro-Israel body and only represent a very particular part of Jews who are pro-Israel.

Chareidi Jews and most mainstream Jews in the UK are only interested in Anglo Jewry matters and do not get involved in Israel politics. However saying this we do recognise that real anti-Semitism is an issue all over the country and in all political parties. We are convinced that Jeremy Corbyn is doing his best to tackle real anti-Semitism in his party while still giving his people of his party freedom of speech to criticize Israel.

However, we are nowhere near to fleeing this country because of this. As a Charedi Jew I can say that Charedi Jews are the most vulnerable to anti-Semitic attacks as they dress differently and one can see that they are Jewish, therefore this support [letter](#) from leading Charedi rabbis from Stamford Hill including Chief Rabbi Padwa from the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations (UOHC) says it all.

Jeremy is a long friend and neighbour of the Charedi community here and everyone who knows him personally says that he loves Jews and is against real anti-Semitism, and this is what he has done all his life.

Times have changed and we will not stop here. We will not be hijacked by the BoD and JLC. We will go further than this to make it clear to all the government bodies and to the press, not to fall into the trap of the BoD and JLC who are extremist Zionist bodies and do not represent mainstream Jews.

Discussions are now taking place that I’m personally aware of and talks are in place on considering setting up a new body of Board of Deputies of mainstream British Jews that will focus only on anglo-jewish matters and will represent the entire Jewish population no matter if they are associated to a BoD synagogue or not and act for the many Jews not the few.”

A 2015 Guardian [article](#) quotes studies for the Institute of Jewish Policy Research showing that a majority of UK Jews will be from the Charedi community by the 2030s.

I argue that the JLM and the LFOI, by their continued meddling in the working of our Party and their complete lack of empathy to the plight of the British working class, are bodies we could do well without. By their actions they bring the Labour Party into disrepute.

I would go further, by saying they stoke the flames of anti-Semitism in the UK, by their flagrant smears on any who would differ from their stated view, by their gleeful denunciation of any who they perceive as challenging their claim to speak on behalf of UK Jewry. Their deep involvement with the Board of Deputies, an agency increasingly seen to be extremist and marginal to many UK Jews, speaks volumes of those who fear a conspiracy.

[As the rulebook states](#) on page 16:

“8. No member of the Party shall engage in conduct which in the opinion of the NEC is prejudicial, or in any act which in the opinion of the NEC is grossly detrimental to the Party...”

The JLM and the LFOI have engaged in conduct which has been grossly detrimental to the Party. In addition I consider they have encouraged-

“bullying or any form of intimidation towards another person on the basis of a protected characteristic as determined by the NEC, wherever it occurs, as conduct prejudicial to the Party.”

They have done this by encouraging a hysteria within the party, not least within the Parliamentary Labour Party, on the premise that anti-Semitism is entrenched in Labour. They have done this with the sole aim of undermining Corbyn and others like him (including myself) who declaim Israel as being a dysfunctional state, intent of taking absolute control of the land from Gaza to the Golan Heights that they occupy in defiance of the UN, with little regard to the wellbeing of Muslims, giving preference in every instance to Jews through both legislation and intimidation.

They have worked with the [Jewish Leadership Council](#) and the [Board of Deputies](#) to peddle the myth that Labour is rife with anti-Semitism and that Corbyn is an anti-Semite, by mischievously conflating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. They have even succeeded in bullying the NEC into adopting the four additional examples into Labour’s IHRA code, thereby forcing Labour to consider action against any who declare Israel to be a racist endeavour. The JLM and the LFOI have no interest in promoting the aims and values of Labour; they exist purely to promote Israel. They have no qualms in undermining Corbyn through fallacious claims that he is an anti-Semite and have no regard to the damage their actions cause – and continue to cause – the Labour Party.

I urge you to take action on them without delay.

Yours sincerely,



Pete Gregson
(Labour Party membership no L1156630)