

GS/JF

13 December 2018

Mr P Gregson
27 Riversdale Grove
EDINBURGH
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Dear Mr Gregson

There have been a number of pieces of correspondence between us since the investigatory process relating to yourself was started. It is also my view that since we began the formal process relating to yourself, you have continued to send out anti-Semitic materials and breach the rules of the Union. Under the circumstances I thought it appropriate to set out the main statements of the case that will be presented the disciplinary next week. This letter is not exhaustive or a definitive position, but I think in the interests of fairness it should help you understand the case against you.

On 2 November 2018, you were advised of an investigation into whether you had indulged in anti-Semitic activities and promoted views that are anti-Semitic.

On 5 November 2018, you were asked to cease and desist promoting anti-Semitic material. You were advised that promoting anti-Semitic material whilst identifying yourself as a GMB shop steward is in contravention of rule because GMB has a clear policy of support for the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism. Unfortunately, you continued to promote anti-Semitic views and indeed campaigned against the union's position of opposition to anti-Semitism.

On 6 November 2018, I wrote to you outlining that what you were posting online was anti-Semitic and that it ran contrary to the aims and ethos of our union.

In addition to the allegations of anti-Semitism set out in my letter of 6 November 2018, you have subsequently posted materials online headlined Sewage Sunday; you stated "Why have union leaders let Netanyahu re-write their rule book to suit Israel's needs. The fact is that Israeli state concocted the IHRA definition with US support". This in itself is in my view anti-Semitic, playing to old tropes about Jewish people as it suggests all-powerful Jews manipulating and dictating to trade unions and to the United States. As I will point out at the hearing whilst we refer to the definition of anti-Semitism set out by IHRA, the actual origins of the IHRA working definition is in the EU Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, now the European Fundamental Rights Agency, which continues to use the definition in its work monitoring the persistent problem of anti-Semitism across Europe. It is my contention that you have repeatedly propagated anti-Semitic views and, in line with GMB policy, the basis for this contention is the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism.

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On 9 November 2018 an article appeared in the National newspaper about the disciplinary process involving yourself. I understand that you placed this story with the media. You certainly have encouraged "supporters" to generate publicity around what is an internal GMB matter. In an email of 7 November 2018 from you the headline reads "Help me publicise what is happening at GMB". In the email it states "and if you want to know of journalists that might run this story I will be able to give you their contact details". It is clear from these emails and actions that you have acted against what you know to be union policy because I had advised you that this was the case. You are, I will contend, guilty of trying to harm the union and you have acted against the best interests of GMB. All of the above put you in clear breach of Rule 5.4.

Your actions in contacting outside unauthorised organisations and the media are also a clear breach of Rule 35.13. Moreover, also in breach you have made our business known to outside parties. Under Rule 35.13 it is very clear that you should not be sending out addresses and circulars in the way you have without prior approval from Scottish Council, Scottish Committee or Central Executive Council. Apart from sending out addresses and circulars to parties outside GMB Scotland, you have also sent unsolicited correspondence by email to GMB employees, GMB activists and GMB branches in Scotland as well as across the UK.

In following the course of action you have, you have failed to follow the decisions and policies set out by the governing authorities of the union.

In addition to the above, in an email of 3 December 2018 you admit that you are guilty of "Accusing Israel as a state of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust". This I believe makes you a Holocaust denier and in breach of the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism. Very concerning for us as a union, and employer, in the course of what I contend to be propagating anti-Semitic rhetoric you have made a direct attack on one of our employees. The employee in question is a young female Jewish organiser, Rhea Wolfson. On the National newspaper website on 9 November you clearly left a link on the comments page attacking an employee.

Rhea Wolfson has never been involved in the case against you in any way. It is clear that you have singled out Rhea as your "nemesis" for the reason that she is a Jewish woman. In your brief "My GMB Grief: Rhea Wolfson" you state that Rhea Wolfson "had persuaded GMB to act against him" (ie you) and this is utterly without foundation.

You describe Rhea Wolfson as an "avowed Zionist", having never met her. You in the same document say "how strange a grip the Zionists have on Labour", again this plays to an old trope about Jewish people and falls foul of the IHRA EU Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia definition of anti-Semitism. It is clear you imply that Rhea Wolfson is part of the controlling Zionists in Labour.

Again in the "My GMB Grief: Rhea Wolfson" piece you state "just found out who's behind my problems. It's Rhea Wolfson...". As per the above this is utterly untrue and of course what you assume has occurred is that it must be Rhea Wolfson who is behind your problems because she is a Jewish organiser employed by the union.

You also say in the same article referring to Rhea Wolfson "it becomes clear how obsessed she is with rooting out supposed anti-Semites". This in part refers to a then member of the SNP, a blogger who in a very sinister manner trolled Rhea Wolfson with vile anti-Semitic abuse. The SNP member in question and that you refer to isn't a supposed anti-Semite, they have been expelled from the SNP for anti-Semitism against Rhea Wolfson. In a very sinister way you also say in reference to Rhea Wolfson "there's much more juicy stuff on her twitter feed.... which is littered with GMB stuff. And this very juicy one where she accuses an SNP guy of anti-Semitism".

You finish by describing Rhea Wolfson in this piece as a "raving Zionist". On more than one occasion you actually refer to Rhea Wolfson as a raving Zionist. In another article on 21 November you say that Rhea Wolfson is an "Ambitious Zionist Zealot" and you go on to misrepresent the Glasgow Women's Strike organised by Rhea Wolfson before describing her as a "liability".

On 7 December you said of Rhea Wolfson "Rhea is both a Jew and a Zionist. As a Jew I love her; as a Zionist I despise her". Despite being categorically told Rhea Wolfson was not a source in the case against you, you have asked her to appear as a witness at your hearing. You said in an email of 3 December "might she not speak on her own behalf and bear witness against me and made available for cross examination.

Finally, in a post dated 4 November you said in adopting the IHRA working definition, GMB is totally supporting a racist regime. "GMB are indirectly supporting apartheid". This in itself is anti-Semitic under the IHRA working definition.

It is also very clearly in breach of Rule 5.4, acting against the policy of the union against the best interests of the union, Rule 43.3 because as a shop steward you are failing to follow the policy of the union.

In conclusion I will argue that your conduct is on several counts in breach of Rule 5.4, Rules 35.13 and 43.3. Targeting a young female. It is my contention that the reason you have targeted Rhea Wolfson in the way you have is because she is Jewish. Your behaviour towards Rhea Wolfson is deeply disturbing, sinister and anti-Semitic. In behaving in the way you have over Rhea Wolfson you are clearly in breach of the ethics and values of GMB as well as Rule 5.4 because your actions amount to making "defamatory or abusive comments against an official". In misrepresenting the Glasgow Women's Strike in the manner in which you have and your description of Rhea Wolfson a leading player in the strike as a "liability" it is also in my view evidence of misogyny on your part.

Targeting a Jewish organiser in the way you have is not only sinister and anti-Semitic, it is literally incompatible with GMB membership. Your behaviour betrays misogynistic intent too. You have breached the rules of our union, attacked an employee in the most disgraceful way and brought our union into disrepute.

I hope this letter clarifies the position and will assist in formulating your response. Any questions will need to specifically address the issues relating to the breaching of the aforementioned rules and your conduct. There will be no "witnesses" or debate over union policy on the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism or indeed any other policy matter allowed. For the avoidance of doubt the purpose of my investigation and of the hearing that is to be held is to determine whether or not your behaviour permits you to continue as a member of our union, not to debate the policies of the union.

Yours sincerely



GARY SMITH
GMB SCOTLAND SECRETARY