

RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS MADE BY GARY SMITH, GMB SCOTLAND SECRETARY ON 13/12/18

From Pete Gregson, GMB member 222003F; GMB Case Reference 0054023

- Replies to statements are in blue -

GS/JF

13 December 2018

Mr P Gregson
27 Riversdale Grove
EDINBURGH
EH12 5QS



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.

Response: None of my materials are anti-Semitic, according to the OED Definition: "*hostility to or prejudice against Jews*". The only material I have is a petition which says *Israel is as a racist endeavour*, which is NOT anti-Semitic.

What the GMB Executive Council adopted was the IHRA *Working* Definition which gives examples to guide IHRA in its work, which *may* serve as illustrations. (note the use of the words "*Working*" and "*may*" in the document, both of which underline the fact that it is a working definition and is thus, not definitive (see it at tinyurl.com/ihradef)).

One of the examples given is to "deny the Jewish people their right to self-determination eg by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor. "

I am charged over my petition which declares "We Labour Party members declare Israel to be a racist endeavour. We are not anti-Jewish."

My inclusion of the qualifier "We are not anti-Jewish" negates any reading of the preceding line as being anti-Semitic, as the preceding line is, the documents itself acknowledges, not definitive.

For how could the petition be anti-Semitic, if it explicitly states there is no hostility to or prejudice against Jews intended?

Furthermore, it's important to note that the State of Israel does not comprise the Jewish people. There are 15 million Jews in the world. Only 6.5 million live in Israel, or 43%. The majority of Jews prefer to live outside Israel. Thus in no way can Israel claim to represent the Jewish people if but a minority choose to live there. Many Jews consider it, as I do, a racist endeavor. In the UK, around half of the country's 350,000 Jews reject Zionism and do not believe the Jewish people living in Israel have the right to self-determination if it means trampling on the rights of others living there. Would all Jews who consider Israel to be racist be called anti-Semites by the GMB? In these situations, the IHRA cannot comply as its authors could not comprehend that many Jews would not favour Israel.

To observe, the actual definition itself is so bland as to be almost meaningless. It is vague, non-specific, and hedged with ambiguities. The eleven so-called "working examples" were not formally adopted by the IHRA (which is itself an intergovernmental body of almost

entirely European states); they were circulated as addenda to the definition, not part of it, but have since been uncritically accepted, without any justification, as part of the definition itself.

The examples are not presented as a definition of antisemitism. They are offered as “examples (which) may serve as illustrations... taking into account the overall context”. Of the eleven examples, seven relate unambiguously to statements critical of the policies and practices of the state of Israel, rather than to attacks on Jews. And paradoxically, several of these, by claiming that opposition to Israel is equivalent to anti-Semitic hatred, themselves fall foul of the eleventh: “Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel”.

This is not a serious way to combat anti-Semitic racism.

In fact, the definition and examples offer no guidance about how to block the very real threat of violent anti-Semitic racism coming from the far right. Instead, they focus on the secondary, and relatively minor, phenomenon of the inappropriate use of language when discussing the Israel-Palestine conflict. The IHRA document has been criticised by many leading authorities on anti-Semitism.

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.

There was no investigation. There was simply the invitation to respond to allegations that were expounded in accusatory fashion. There was no effort to explore the intent or circumstances around the petition. There was the assumption that to say “Israel was a racist endeavor” was to “promote views that are anti-Semitic”. As the above exploration of the IHRA shows, there is no evidence presented that my petition is 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.

The statement that *“GMB has a clear policy of support for the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism”* is quite untrue.

In fact, the Secretary only stated in his second letter to me that the [IHRA working def'n of anti-Semitism](#) has been adopted by the GMB's Central Executive Council, but **it's not in the Rulebook** ([read it here](#)). There is no clear policy of support; the rulebook defines itself as “the rulebook following congress 2018”. There is no evidence that the IHRA definition was put before Congress; if it had been, it would have been incorporated into the GMB rulebook.

The only clear policy of support emanates from Tim Roache and Gary Smith. Neither of these people represent members' views. They cannot claim they do, for no consultation with members was undertaken before the full IHRA was adopted. There is nothing about the IHRA in the National Policy Guide 2018 (at <http://www.gmb.org.uk/2018-GMB-NATIONAL-POLICY-GUIDE.pdf>)

Nor in the GMB Congress 2017 –Progress Report on Carried and Referred Motions and Rule Amendments (at <http://www.gmb.org.uk/assets/media/progress-motions-congress17-june.pdf>)

Obviously if the GMB has such an important policy which affects members' ability to comment on Israel, one would have thought the union would have mentioned it to its members. For if it does not, how can it discipline folk on a rule they know nothing about? If one goes to the GMB site enters <http://www.gmb.org.uk/results?id=112&search=IHRA> one gets no results.

Unfortunately, you continued to promote anti-Semitic views and indeed campaigned against the union's position of opposition to anti-Semitism.

See above. Even now, the union's position of opposition to anti-Semitism is not published on any GMB website. If one enters anti-Semitism into the GMB search facility all that comes up is 4 press releases about Rhea Wolfson. So the union's position on anti-Semitism is not promoted to members AT ALL.

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.

Gary Smith is seeking to put words in my mouth here. It is a fact that the US State Dept worked with Israelis to develop the IHRA definition. Please read this: ([BDS, Guardian 14th August 2018](#)) 'Perhaps Israel's most powerful tool in the campaign against delegitimisation has been to accuse the country's critics of antisemitism. Doing so required changing official definitions of the term. This effort began during the final years of the second intifada, in 2003 and 2004, as pre-BDS calls to boycott and divest from Israel were gaining steam. At that time, a group of institutes and experts, including Dina Porat – a Tel Aviv University scholar who had been a member of the Israeli foreign ministry's delegation to the 2001 UN world conference against racism in Durban, South Africa – proposed creating a new definition of antisemitism that would equate criticisms of Israel with hatred of Jews.'

So it was not "all-powerful Jews" doing this as Gary claims, but University scholars working in tandem with the Israeli Government as Jews in the US. As the article points out:

These experts and institutions, working with the American Jewish Committee and other Israel advocacy groups, formulated a new "working definition" of antisemitism, including a list of examples, that was published in 2005 (and later discarded) by an EU body for combating racism. This working definition was adapted in 2016 by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), and has been used, endorsed or recommended, with some small modifications, by a number of other organisations – including the US Department of State, which, since 2008, has defined antisemitism to include any of three categories of criticism of Israel, known as the "three Ds": delegitimisation of Israel, demonisation of Israel and double standards for Israel. (More recently, the IHRA working

definition has been at the centre of the antisemitism controversy in the Labour party, which adopted a modified version of the examples accompanying the definition.)

By the state department's definition, delegitimation includes "Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, and denying Israel the right to exist". Thus anti-Zionism – including the view that Israel should be a state of all its citizens, with equal rights for Jews and non-Jews – is a form of delegitimation and therefore antisemitic. According to this definition, virtually all Palestinians (and a large proportion of ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel, who oppose Zionism for religious reasons) are guilty of antisemitism because they want Jews and Palestinians to continue living in Palestine but not within a Jewish state. Kuperwasser, for one, stands by the charge: "Anti-Zionism and antisemitism are the same lady in a different cloak."

The second D, demonisation, includes "Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis" – as the Israeli army's deputy chief of staff did during a Holocaust remembrance day speech in 2016, likening the "revolting trends" in Europe and Germany in the 1930s and 40s to tendencies visible in Israel today. The last of the three Ds, applying double standards, holds that singling Israel out for criticism is "the new antisemitism". Yet practically every earlier divestment and boycott initiative around the world could be accused of double standards, including the campaign against apartheid South Africa, most of whose proponents ignored graver transgressions elsewhere, such as the concurrent genocides in Cambodia, Iraqi Kurdistan and East Timor.

The new definition of antisemitism has been frequently deployed against Israel's critics in the US, especially on university campuses. Israel advocacy groups have urged several universities to adopt the state department definition. At Northeastern University in Boston and the University of Toledo in Ohio, pro-Israel students and advocacy groups attempted to thwart even discussing boycott and divestment, arguing that it would create an antisemitic climate on campus. The California legislature passed a resolution in 2012 to regulate speech on California campuses; it cited examples of antisemitism that included not just delegitimation and demonisation of Israel but also "student- and faculty-sponsored boycott, divestment and sanctions campaigns against Israel".

In 2015, an anonymous website, Canary Mission, began publishing lists of pro-Palestinian students who support divestment, often accusing them of antisemitism; the Israeli government has used Canary Mission profiles to interrogate and deny entry to pro-BDS US citizens. On several campuses, pro-Israel groups have intimidated pro-Palestinian students and faculty by placing names from the Canary Mission website on posters that state: "The following students and faculty ... have allied themselves with Palestinian terrorists to perpetrate BDS and Jew Hatred on this campus."

Kuperwasser was unapologetic about the perceived excesses of Israel's anti-BDS campaign at home and abroad. He was confident that Israel was taking the right approach and would succeed, as it had against past assaults: "We won the war on the conventional battlefield. To start with, our chances were very slim. We won the war on terror. Again, it wasn't easy. I remember when we went to the big battle – the second intifada – and many generals around the world were telling me, 'Listen, Kuper, you're wasting your time: nobody ever won a war against terrorism,' citing Vietnam and other cases. And I said: 'No, we shall win this war as well. We are innovative and determined enough. And unlike many other battles, we don't have a second option, an alternative. We have to win.' The same goes here. We shall win."

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.

I have not breached rule 5.4. If I offer people the contact details of journalists, it is because I have been active with the press since I left the BBC in 1979. I know many journalists; I have been campaigning for 40 years.

Here is the actual wording from the email which Gary Smith obtained by raiding the Edinburgh & Lothian Branch Secretaries GMBActivist email account (Andrew.McDonald@gmbactivist.org.uk), an action which I assume broke GDPR rules, since it was done without Andy McDonald’s knowledge.

Hi all,

As you can see, the battle to recover my name in GMB Scotland will be long and slow. It will, like most battles, be won or lost in the media. First, let me point you towards two recent articles which spell out my position on the petition: [National 31/10/18](#) ; [Common Space 26/10/18](#)

Also here is my fundraiser – I may need to pay for a solicitor – it says more (see the bit about my bio at the end, for the real filth on my past)- tinyurl.com/legalihra

If you are able to tell others of what is happening, eg on Facebook, please just post these links. <http://www.kidsnotsuits.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GMB-SCOTLAND-APPEAL.pdf>

And <http://www.kidsnotsuits.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GMB-SCOTLAND-APPEAL-PART-TWO.pdf>

If I post them, it will count against me. But if others do, I can do nothing about that. And if you want to know of journalists that might run this story I might be able to give you their contact details.

Cheers

Pete

I see no problem with the above in terms of Rule 5.4. All I have sought to do was defend myself. As is my right under the convention on human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Articles 18–21, sanctions the so-called "constitutional liberties", with spiritual, public, and political freedoms, such as freedom of thought, opinion, religion and conscience, word, and peaceful association of the individual.

Indeed the rule 5.4 undermines promoting the social, moral and intellectual interests of GMB members. As espoused in the “Core Rules – Rule 2 – Aims” [p8]
“9. To promote the social, moral and intellectual interests of our members.”

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.

I must point out that on 20th November Gary Smith sent me [this letter](#). In it, he invites me to bring written statements or witnesses in order to present and support my case. In order to do that I need to contact bodies outside the union. You will see the results of such work in the statements I present from Labour Against the Witch-hunt and Free Speech on Israel plus many from individuals. Including my key witness today.

So Mr Smith (a) invites me to collect statements in my support and (b) in the policy and procedure papers he sent me after I had nagged him several times it states that “A non-member may attend to give evidence as a witness.” So the rules make clear that I may speak to non-members in order to secure their participation.

Therefore, I must contact “unauthorized organisations” and “outside parties” in order to secure witnesses and statements.

I challenge Gary Smith to present any evidence that I have contacted the media about GMB business, but even if I did, I would be entitled to do so under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Articles 18–21, etc (see above)

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.

All these addresses are published on the GMB website at www.gmb.org.uk. Why publish these, if not to use them? There is no statement next to these email addresses stating GMB members may not use them to communicate with other GMB employees, GMB activists and GMB branches.

So, if they are made widely available to be used, people will use them. By the fact that it is on

the website, the clear intention is that it is for public first-time contact use, ergo all initial correspondence will be unsolicited. Gary Smith’s allegation is a specious one.

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.

This is what I actually said:

I will agree one thing. I am guilty of “Accusing Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust”. It is the exaggerating part I admit to.

[I must make clear that when I said this I meant exaggerating [the importance](#) of the Holocaust.]

But here I must refer you to the words of the Israeli former minister of Education, Shulamit Aloni, who said in a US interview that "[anti-Semitism is a trick. We always use it](#)". The interviewer said: “Often, when there is dissent expressed in the United States against policies of the Israeli government, people here are called anti-Semitic. What is your response to that as an Israeli Jew?”. Shulamit Aloni replied: “Well, it’s a trick, we always use it. When from Europe somebody is criticizing Israel, then we bring up the Holocaust...”

So if a former Israeli government minister says that Israel exaggerates the Holocaust

whenever it suits itself to do so, then presumably that whole example becomes meaningless.

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.

I did not “attack” her;- I simply said she was the one behind the allegations.

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.

Quite untrue. My source for this information is a senior officer in the GMB, who passed this knowledge onto me through an intermediary. And even a brief look at the internet over the many articles about Ms Wolfson allows one to quickly understand why it could only be her who causes this witch-hunt.

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.

I was not even aware that Rhea was Jewish until Mr Smith pointed it out. All I have ever observed is that she is a Zionist, which is what causes me concern, because Zionists are racists. The fact that Gary Smith is so determined to protect Zionists also gives me great concern. It suggests he is actually quite relaxed about racism, as long as the recipients are Palestinians. But I digress. I need to explain how I know that Ms Wolfson is a Zionist.

Her CV records she was until 2015 manager at **New Israel Fund** and is former president of the **Oxford University Jewish Society**. Just a few weeks ago the BBC reported she had been behind their story “[SNP suspends blogger in anti-Semitism row](#)”

She proudly attests her membership of the Zionist group “[The Jewish Labour Movement](#)” . [The Lobby](#) TV programme exposed how this group, affiliated to the Labour Party, received huge amounts of money from the Israeli embassy which was used to undermine Labour politicians that the Israelis disapproved of (including Corbyn, the leader of the Party).

The whole anti-Semitism furore in Labour was stirred up by Zionists and Israeli Government Cash in an effort to prevent sanctions and to take out critical politicians. I believe that Wolfson works alongside “[Friends of Israel](#)” and the Zionist group “[The Jewish Labour Movement](#)” , bodies proven to have undermined democracy in the UK. It is well-known that she and Jon Lansman together, within Momentum and the Labour Party, set themselves the task of getting the IHRA adopted by Labour and succeeded in this.

On 30th July she had written this piece for Common Space where it becomes clear how obsessed she is with rooting out supposed anti-Semites:

[“Rhea Wolfson: I've been a victim of anti-Semitism - Labour is doing the right things to stamp it out”](#) and the same in the Scotsman:

[“Rhea Wolfson: I've been a victim of anti-semitism, but I trust Corbyn”](#)

That Wolfson, an avowed Zionist, was allowed to chair the recent Labour Conference session debating the oppression of Palestinians shows how strong a grip the Zionists have on Labour.

She did her best on the day to silence those speaking about Labour's witch-hunt (see [“Zionist Chair” here](#)). Viewers can hear how she even tried to interrupt Palestinian campaigner's Colin Monehen barn-storming [speech to Conference](#).

More on the emails between Lansman (as NEC rep) and myself here, where Lansman shows his true colours [“Letter from Lansman to little me”](#).

One can only imagine that the decision to “take me out” came from Lansman, who I've been told is desperate for my scalp. I suspect Wolfson is only too happy to oblige.

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.

The senior GMB source says Rhea Wolfson is the source of my problems.

I don't know about the Jewish element; it is only Gary Smith who repeatedly brings that up. He needs to focus less on her religion and more on her politics.

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".

Again, Gary Smith has his facts quite wrong. There was no vile anti-Semitic abuse, just a thoughtless comparison by Grousebeater with Hitler's treatment of the unions in Germany. Please read what was actually said of Wolfson here:

<https://grousebeater.wordpress.com/2018/10/28/gmb-a-cockney-clique/>

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".

All this is true. I believe she represents a significant risk to both the GMB and the Labour Party.

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.?”

I stand by this request and cannot understand why, if Gary Smith is so confident of his facts, that he refuses to put her in the witness box.

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.

I don't understand how this conclusion can be arrived at. If the GMB expels me, then it will be sending a message to our 631,000 members that if they state the truth about Israel they will be expelled. When Israel adopted the nation state law in July, it made absolutely clear that Jews would henceforth be officially recognized as the master race in Israel. If the GMB silence any who observe that Palestinians are treated as racially inferior by the Israeli Jews, to the point where settlers can pump their excrement into Arab schools in order to drive them away (as happened in Qalqiliya on 1st November – [see here](#)) without fear, then it is clearly indirectly supporting apartheid.

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.

I would argue the opposite; if Gary Smith succeeds in expelling me for my personal beliefs – that Israelis must share power with the Palestinians, then I think the union will suffer hugely. He would be acting against the best interests of the union. For when members and would-be members realise that criticism of Israel as racist is forbidden, watch the exodus: of the black members who are affronted by racism, of Muslims who care more about the Palestinians because they follow Islam, and by anyone who cares about freedom of speech.

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.

I have indicated above why I think Ms Wolfson is responsible for my ills. I do not believe Gary Smith would have known of my petition had he not been alerted to it by Wolfson. The reason Wolfson knew of it was because I had written to her when she sat on the NEC as an NEC rep. In my eMails to her dated the 1st, 17th and 25th September I challenged the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, which in hindsight, most surely must have put me in her sights.

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.

Again, I posit I have not breached any rules and there is no evidence of misogyny. Misogyny is "dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women". If I complain about Wolfson as a Zionist it is because of that, nothing more. Nothing I have ever said suggests misogyny. At this rate, Mr Smith would be claiming that anybody who dared criticise anybody who just happened to be a woman would be guilty of misogyny. Thus all those

people shouting “Maggie, Maggie, Maggie – out, out, out!” would be “vile misogynists” according to Mr Smith. If he himself has ever complained of our Prime Minister then he must therefore be a misogynist too.

His claim that I display misogynist intent is clearly ridiculous and betrays his utter desperation in trying to find mud to throw at me that he thinks will stick.

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.

To conclude, there has been no “investigation” by Gary Smith, just a collection of baseless smears and allegations that betray a real lack of integrity on his part. It is astonishing that since his first letter to me on the 2nd November that I have been subjected to relentless tirades and confused and contradictory statements (for example, in the same letter he states only GMB members may speak at my hearing whilst enclosing an attachment which says the opposite). When asked to clarify such matters, he simply ignores the request and piles on more baseless allegations. Since 2nd November I have received 18 letters from him, - one every 2.5 days, each one furious and ranting, to the point where I now dread opening an envelope with the words GMB on it, for I know it will contain yet more vitriol and bile, served on a bed of imagined demons and baseless allegations. And because he insists on sending them both by regular post and by recorded delivery it actually feels more like one a day. He refuses to use email and has prevented me emailing him from my regular account. He has sanctioned me unilaterally and without reason, thus denying NHS Lothian of its only GMB Steward for a staff of 24,000.

And to think that I help pay this man’s wages.

Yours sincerely

GARY SMITH
GMB SCOTLAND SECRETARY

Here are other notes where I think the rulebook has been breached by Gary Smith’s actions:

Parts of the GMB Rulebook pertaining to the case against Pete Gregson on allegations of anti-Semitism

The rulebook can be downloaded at www.gmb.org.uk/assets/media/RulebookfollowingCongress2018.pdf

The IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, adopted by the GMB Central Executive Council in 2018, can be downloaded at www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism

The GMB Scotland Committee might take heed of the following extracts from the rulebook:

“Our Purpose” [p2]

“We will work to widen the understanding of employers whose experiences, knowledge and aims are more limited. We will aim to end exploitation, discrimination and injustice.”

By expelling PG the GMB will be sending a clear message to employers that they suppress members who speak out against exploitation, discrimination and injustice in Israel. The GMB joined other unions on November 4th, 2017 in a national rally calling for “Justice for Palestine”. If the Union did that now, it would need to expel any member who marched and declared Israel the cause of Palestine's problems - for being anti-Semitic. By silencing criticism of Israel as a racist state, the GMB is in contravention of one of its own mission statements. Without any consultation with members, the GMB has moved full circle from supporting the Palestinians to supporting the Zionists and Netanyahu, who seeks a racially pure apartheid country. Now the GMB must follow the policy it adopted earlier this year and expel anybody who declares Israel to be a racist state – for being “anti-Semitic”.

“We aim to achieve the reputation as the best trade union in Europe.”

By expelling PG, the GMB will garner the reputation as being the worst trade union in Europe, for its suppression of freedom of speech of its members - on the most apartheid country in the world.

“Core Rules – Rule 2 – Aims” [p8]

“9. To promote the social, moral and intellectual interests of our members.”

By expelling PG, the GMB will be undermining the social, moral and intellectual interests of GMB members, by making them party to a decision which is a fundamental denial of human rights. In addition it will be sending out the message that racism is acceptable, so long as it is in Israel, and so long as the victims are Palestinians and non-Jewish minorities.

By disciplining members who decry apartheid in Israel and call out racism, the union is in breach of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Articles 18–21, which sanctions the so-called "constitutional liberties", with spiritual, public, and political freedoms, such as freedom of thought, opinion, religion and conscience, word, and peaceful association of the individual.

Such conduct is not promoting the social, moral and intellectual interests of GMB members.

“Core Rules – Rule 5 – Membership” [p9]

“1. GMB is an open and democratic organisation and welcomes into membership people from any industry or walk of life who are committed to upholding the aims and rules of the Union”

By adopting the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism without consultation with members, the GMB acted in a closed, undemocratic fashion in severely restricting members rights to free speech on Israel. That such a fundamental right to freedom of expression was removed in this manner goes against all principles of democracy and both natural and social justice.

“4. The Central Executive Council, a regional council or a regional committee has the power to suspend a member from benefit or ban them from holding any GMB office, or ban a member from taking part in GMB business and affairs, in any case for as long as the council or committee feels necessary:

- if they believe the member is guilty of trying to harm the union or acting against the rules;*
- if the member makes or in any way associates themselves with any defamatory or abusive comments made against any of our officials or committees;*
- if the member, alone or together with any other members or people opposes or acts against any of our policies;*
- if the member acts against the best interests of the GMB*
- if the member encourages or takes part in the activities of any organisation or group whose policies or aims are racist or promote racist beliefs,*
- or for any other sufficient reason.”*

If the regional committee continues to suspend PG, it will be harming the union; its reputation will be ruined if it is seen to be a *de facto* supporter of racism, by silencing those who raise awareness of it. PG has publicly identified Rhea Wolfson, Glasgow GMB Organiser as being the source of the allegations against him. He was informed of this through a senior GMB officer. The only statement he has made of Ms Wolfson that could be construed as defamatory is that she is a raving Zionist.

However, it cannot be said to be defamatory if all the evidence points to the fact that this is the case; evidence to support this claim can be garnered at www.tinyurl.com/rheagmb That the GMB continues to shelter and protect racists such as Wolfson should be a concern for all members.

PG has opposed the policy whereby the GMB has adopted the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism for the simple reason that it condones Israeli racism. In doing so, he is acting in the spirit of the union's espoused purpose which is "to end exploitation, discrimination and injustice."

PG has not acted against the best interests of the GMB- rather the opposite; by seeking the support of other branches and speaking out against what the GMB Scotland Secretary is doing he is acting in the best interests of the GMB, in seeking to prevent a miscarriage of justice; if he is expelled, the decision will be in the worst interests of the GMB.

PG's email to branches can be [viewed here](#) . The model motion he promotes against the IHRA can be downloaded at www.tinyurl.com/unionihra

He is not alone in condemning the IHRA definition; the model motion lists the many academics, barristers, and Jewish groups and Palestinian trade unions who argue the IHRA definition is not fit for purpose and does not prevent anti-Semitism; it rather seeks to prevent boycotts and sanctions against Israel and is designed to prevent its apartheid system from being dismantled. In effect, it could be argued that the GMM has let Netanyahu write its rulebook.

Finally, it is not PG who encourages organisations whose aims are racist, but the GMB, in its *de facto* support for Zionism and Israel; its efforts to suppress freedom of speech on Israel will be of concern worldwide for any that take the view that Israel's 50+ discriminatory laws against non-Jews and its Nation State law are evil manifestations of an innate Zionist desire to remove any Palestinians from the land Israel has stolen from them.

"5 Regional councils or regional committees have the power to recommend that the Central Executive Council cancel, and the Central Executive Council (with or without a recommendation) has the power to cancel, the membership of any member for any of the reasons set out in clause 4 above. The Central Executive Council will make the final decision on a recommendation from a Region. A member who has their membership cancelled will not be eligible to rejoin without the permission of the Central Executive Council or the appropriate regional committee."

If the Scotland Regional Committee recommends the cancellation of PG's membership it will be acting against the best interests of the union. No Muslim will want to hold membership of a union that *de facto* condones attacks on Muslims in Israel. Furthermore, Jewish members opposed to Zionism will be offended by the GMB's support for Zionist objectives. Indeed, any member who is concerned about racism will likely tear up their membership card.

Pete Gregson
GMB Member 222003F

17th December 2018

HERE IS MY SUBMISSION OF 15th November 2018 against the first raft of allegations:

RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS MADE BY GARY SMITH, GMB SCOTLAND SECRETARY ON 6/11/18

- From Pete Gregson, GMB member 222003F; GMB Case Reference 0054023

Note

Documentation in support of my statements are encoded as hyperlinks in the text. Please download and print these if circulating paper copies of this statement.

Allegation 1: that I posted or distributed materials on social media that are of an anti-Semitic nature.

This allegation is presumably on account of my petition to Labour's National Executive Committee where I state:

"Labour members declaring Israel a racist endeavour ask NEC to abandon full IHRA

We Labour Party members declare Israel to be a racist endeavour. We are not anti-Jewish.

*We challenge our National Executive Committee to expel us from the Party, if you believe that, according to the IHRA definition you adopted on the 4th Sept, we are anti-Semitic. If you will not, we expect you to return Labour to its previous position, which allowed full freedom of speech on Israel.**

We also call into question the adopted point 3) "Applying double standards to Israel by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation". Israel cannot claim to be a democratic nation. Haaretz noted that the number of Arabs in Israel (including Gaza and the West Bank) will exceed that of Jews by 2020. If it were a true democracy, the country would shortly be ruled by Arabs, a prospect so terrifying to Jewish leaders that they can only maintain their control through denying the 4.4 million Arabs living in the occupied areas the right to vote in national elections.

We believe that of 550,000 members, the fact that only 45 alleged cases are active in the LBC leaked dossier shows there is no particular problem with anti-Semitism in the Labour Party. However, adopting the full IHRA will multiply the number of these cases many times over. Please keep the Labour Party united and abandon the added examples that stifle me from expressing my view on the racist nature of Israel and the lack of democracy there.

My name is below.

**We are aware that Corbyn was minded to [add the rider to Labour's IHRA, which was rejected](#) - "It should not be regarded as anti-Semitic to describe Israel, its policies or the circumstances around its foundation as racist because of their discriminatory impact, or to support another settlement of the Israel-Palestine conflict." We urge the party to adopt this rider in full, in order to keep us as members."*

The petition has, at 14/11/18, attracted 730 signatures. It can be found at tinyurl.com/israelihra

The GMB Scotland Secretary states that "Posting or distributing materials that is anti-Semitic in nature would also be in breach of rule 5.4 in our Rule Book".

I take issue with this on two counts:

A) What is anti-Semitism?

B) Might it not be that the GMB Scotland Secretary who is breaching rule 5.4 himself?

I shall explain.

What is anti-Semitism?

There are, in circulation, two definitions of anti-Semitism. The OED is the commonly accepted one:

Google defines it as "hostility to or prejudice against Jews." Also [see Wikipedia](#).

Then there is the IHRA definition, promulgated by Israel in order to prevent sanctions ever being imposed upon it. To understand how Israel drives the above actions through its IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, now adopted by most UK public bodies and Parties, please read "[International campaign is criminalizing criticism of Israel as 'antisemitism'](#)" from "If Americans Knew" blog.

Also note that 24 Palestinian trade unions wrote to UK unions and the Labour Party just a week before Labour's NEC voted for the full IHRA on the 4th Sept. Their request, headed "Labour must reject biased

IHRA definition that stifles advocacy for Palestinian rights” was an appeal by Palestinian civil society to the British Labour Party and affiliated trade unions. The appeal was ignored: [read it at here](#). These trade unions correctly observed that the IHRA is a “politicised and fraudulent definition of antisemitism”. Norman Finkelstein, whose parents suffered in the Warsaw ghetto under the Nazis, also warned Labour against the IHRA in his blogpost of 28th August 2018 [WHY THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY SHOULD NOT ADOPT THE IHRA DEFINITION OR ANY OTHER DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM](#) Another appeal that was ignored...

Over 30 Jewish organisations world-wide say NO to the full IHRA. See [Jewish Voice for Peace](#). Also [Jewish Voice for Peace Board of Trustees Responds to Attacks on Jeremy Corbyn and Labour Party](#)

However, the GMB has, the GMB Scotland Secretary suggests, adopted the IHRA definition. He says in his letter to me that “Support for IHRA is GMB policy under rule 43.3” - but the 2018 GMB Rulebook he sent me simply says “The shop stewards and staff reps ..will work under the authority of the regional committee. They must follow the decisions and policies set out by the governing authorities of the union.”

So why does the Rule Book not explicitly state that it is now a breach of the rulebook to say Israel is a racist state? Are they ashamed to admit they have adopted such a hideous policy?

I have taken advice from Sir Geoffrey Bindman, an eminent QC specialising in human rights law, who knows the IHRA well and he says “It is simply false to say that criticism of Israel as a "racist endeavour " is anti-Semitic according to the Labour party rulebook. .. Context is all and the IHRA document says merely that such a statement could be anti-Semitic in context, which seems to me entirely possible. Of course, the IHRA definition is poorly drafted and perhaps deliberately misleading but the test will be how the party deals with future complaints.” You may have seen letters he co-signed in the Guardian complaining about the full IHRA.

Despite its self-description as a “non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism”, the IHRA definition seems likely to come before the courts in one of the British jurisdictions sooner rather than later. The reasoned legal opinion of Hugh Tomlinson QC, one of the leading experts on media and freedom of expression law, is worth reading, if only to be prepared: "[IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION AND POTENTIAL APPLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTI-SEMITISM](#)"

Geoffrey Robertson QC’s more recent, legal opinion reaches a similar conclusion to Tomlinson but with references to “Labour anti-Semitism-Gate” and some useful background to the IHRA’s definition. "[ANTI-SEMITISM: THE IHRA DEFINITION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION](#)" and in this [Doughty St Chambers article](#) of 31/8/18, "IHRA definition of antisemitism is not fit for purpose", Geoffrey Robertson concludes that the IHRA adopted by the UK government was not intended to be binding and was not drafted as a comprehensible definition.

Zionist Kenneth S. Stern, thinks the IHRA declaration is being used to stifle free speech. Who he? He drafted it in its original form. See "[Why the man who drafted the IHRA definition condemns its use](#)"

Jewish Voice for Labour take a more extreme view in condemning the IHRA. Just before the 4th Sept NEC meeting, [they said](#) "no definition ever saved a Jew from experiencing antisemitism. It’s time to abandon this tainted and deeply flawed text" . It notes "As [Neve Gordon writes](#): ‘The Israeli government needs the “new anti-Semitism” to justify its actions and to protect it from international and domestic condemnation. Anti-Semitism is effectively weaponised, not only to stifle speech . . . but also to suppress a politics of liberation.’ "

THE FOUR EXAMPLES OF WHAT MAY CONSTITUTE ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE IHRA THAT THE GMB IS USING
1) Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel;

- 2) Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis;
- 3) Applying double standards to Israel by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation; and
- 4) Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.

So, it seems the GMB Scotland Secretary considers me guilty of point 4. It is true, I do claim that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.

I argue that:

- a) The GMB, being a union fighting for social justice, must surely see justice for Palestinians as its responsibility, rather than those who have stolen their homes and land. The Nakba is a perfect example of ethnic cleansing in action; to deny it as such is patently ridiculous. Furthermore, with over [50 laws discriminating](#) against non-Jews, along with the lack of democracy in Israel for Palestinians, the reality is that Arabs suffer legislation which denies them equal rights. Racism is vile and the GMB Scotland Secretary needs to understand that failing to call it out as such is most offensive to its victims.
- b) The GMB ought to be supporting United Nations General Assembly [Resolution 194](#) resolving that "Palestinian refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return..." . All I am doing is seeking to further that aim
- c) The GMB must surely reflect upon why those who is accusing me of anti-Semitism:
I quote a comment from J.J. Ross on the [recent National article](#) about my campaign:

"The woman behind Gregson's problems is Rhea Wolfson. She is GMB's Glasgow organiser and high up in the [Jewish Labour Movement](#), which is affiliated to the Labour Party and highly effective at promoting Zionism within it. Wolfson worked with Lansman to force Labour and the GMB to adopt the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism and now they reap their rewards.

They regularly level charges of anti-Semitism against any who criticise them and destroy reputations with impunity. The undercover documentary "[The Lobby](#) " exposes how Israel funds the JLM to wreak havoc in the Labour Party.

The GMB and Labour rulebooks have been twisted by the greatest racists on the planet to silence any who call them racist. And labour and union leaders do Netanyahu's bidding without question. Orwell's 1984 is come to life with double think as standard. And bombs rain on Palestine with a muzzled world watching."

- d) Hundreds of Labour members have called upon Labour's Complaints Chief Sophie Goodyear and the General Secretary Jennie Formby to act against the JLM and the [Labour Friends of Israel](#) who bring Labour into disrepute by forcing it to ignore racism in Israel. All [requests for action](#) have been ignored time [and again](#), as the Party focusses its energy on rooting out pro-Palestinian activists instead.
- e) Also note that 80% of Conservative MPs are members of "[Conservative Friends of Israel](#)" so it's no surprise the Government is on the side of Netanyahu on this. All the [schools and Unis were browbeaten](#) into adopting the IHRA by May's Government,
- f) For my part, to defend my action, I refer to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Articles 18–21, which sanctions the so-called "constitutional liberties", with spiritual, public, and political freedoms, such as freedom of [thought](#), opinion, religion and [conscience](#), word, and [peaceful association](#) of the individual. Surely the GMB cannot deny these rights?
- g) The [Human Rights Act of 1998- Article 10](#) protects our right to hold our own opinions and to express them freely without government interference. I appreciate that the GMB is not a public authority so is not bound by this legislation. But if it has adopted the full IHRA because it believes it

should do so because public authorities and the Labour Party have, then why seek to excuse itself in this instance by this defence?

Those accusing me may then claim that "An authority may be allowed to restrict your freedom of expression if, for example, you express views that encourage racial or religious hatred." - but I think that would be a case that needed to be proven by this petition. Indeed, one might ask, in return, that Zionists such as Ms Wolfson, the Board of Jewish Deputies, the Jewish Chronicle, Jewish News and Jewish Telegraph ponder on whether they themselves have been complicit in encouraging the very anti-Semitism they seek to oppose.

Clearly not all Jews support the attacks on Corbyn through the IHRA. Please go to www.tinyurl.com/29rabbis to read the statement from 29 (now 34) leading rabbis of the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations where they support "respected" Corbyn and distanced themselves from "irresponsible" claims in the media that the Jews of Britain are outraged towards him.

Might it not be that the General Secretary of the GMB Scotland Secretary who is breaching rule 5.4 himself?

There is the statement of page 10 of the GMB Rule book- Rule 5, point 4 that "The Central Executive Council, a regional council or a regional committee has the power to suspend a member from benefit or ban them from holding any GMB office... etc .. if the member encourages or takes part in the activities of any organisation or group whose policies or aims are racist or promote racist beliefs."

By adopting the full IHRA and incorporating it into the Code of Conduct, the entire GMB leadership are complicit in the *de facto* encouragement of racism in Israel by persecuting members who would speak out against it.

That there is a racist state in Israel is without doubt. Because many 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. To understand how this law, now part of the Basic Law creates two classes in Israel: Jews hold "national" status which includes the right to protest; others hold "citizen" status – they have fewer rights on many counts, including no statutory right to protest; they must apply for permission to protest, an application which can be (and therefore frequently is) denied. For more information, please view [Know your Stuff: Israel's "Jewish Nation-State Law" Explained](#) – an illuminating 23 minute video by Dr. Shir Hever.

If Arabs are second-class citizens, and not equal with Jews before the law, then clearly Israel is a racist state. The country was established on the land of 750,000 Palestinians forcibly expelled in 1948 and founded on discrimination towards Arab people on the basis of religion and ethnicity. If that's not a racist endeavour, I don't know what is. Clearly Israel now has a right to exist, but it needs to forget the two-state solution, give those in Gaza and the West Bank the right to vote in Knesset elections, make payments or accommodations with the Arabs who were driven from their homes, amend the unfair laws, give Arabic the same status as Hebrew, and stop building illegal settlements and bulldozing Arab homes. (It [engages in ethnic cleansing](#) with impunity. Haaretz notes [vigilantes attack Arabs in the street](#) and the Government, bar one man, stays quiet)

Until it does those things, it is a racist state.

If the Jewish right to self-determination means riding roughshod over the rights of others, then for the GMB to ignore this social injustice would be for it to go against one of its founding planks. The GMB states as its purpose is to:

“... improve the lives of GMB members and make sure their achievements lead the way for working people in Britain and across the world”.

It would seem that Arabs living in Israel and Palestine are excluded from this purpose – the GMB actually persecutes those members who point out the racism these people suffer.

So – where did the IHRA come from? I quote [from this article](#):

“US Department of State, which, since 2008, has defined antisemitism to include any of three categories of criticism of Israel, known as the “three Ds”: de-legitimation of Israel, demonisation of Israel and double standards for Israel.

By the US state department’s definition, de-legitimation includes “Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination and denying Israel the right to exist”. Thus anti-Zionism – including the view that Israel should be a state of all its citizens, with equal rights for Jews and non-Jews – is a form of de-legitimation and therefore anti-Semitic. According to this definition, virtually all Palestinians (and a large proportion of ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel, who oppose Zionism for religious reasons) are guilty of antisemitism because they want Jews and Palestinians to continue living in Palestine but not within a Jewish state.”

I believe the GMB follow this reasoning - ie that because I am anti-Zionist that I must be anti-Semitic. I state here that I am the former but not the latter.

Allegation 2: that I have, in material published inline and by way of open letters deemed Jews to be collectively responsible for the actions of the State of Israel

This is patently untrue. I have never said such a thing. It appears the GMB Scotland Secretary has gotten mixed up. He seeks to justify this claim by referring to my open letter to the Labour NEC of 28 September where I say:

“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. “

That the GMB Scotland Secretary could take this to mean that I think all Jews are collectively responsible for Israel’s racism is utterly absurd. The above statement criticizes Zionists, not Jews. The two are different: Zionism is a political doctrine; the Jews are an ethnic grouping.

I’d like to refer the GMB Scotland Committee to read on, to see the text that I continued with in my letter to the NEC, after the paragraph cited above:

“..... It stands for the very opposite of social justice.

The JLM and LFOI 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 LFOI have consistently failed to condemn such racist laws.”

[see evidence of racist laws, cited above.. The letter goes on:]

"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 LFOI 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. The BDS understand Israel is apartheid as defined in international conventions and the founding statute of the international criminal court: "an institutionalised regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime". The recent **Nation State law** passed by the Knesset confirms this to be the case.

That the JLM and LFOI 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 there 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.

Charedi 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.

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.

Etc...

Yours sincerely,
Pete Gregson”

Allegation 3: The GMB Scotland Secretary also cites my email to the GMB of 30th October ..

- where I say: “How does this square with the GMB's de facto support for silencing those who see racist oppression perpetrated against 4.4 million Arabs living in Israel (I include the occupied territories) on a daily basis.”

You are reading my defence from the charge of anti-Semitism that he has himself framed. He seeks to silence me for highlighting racist oppression. I think this much is self-evident.

The GMB Scotland Secretary goes on to say that “under the IHRA definitions of anti-Semitism examples include: Holding Jews collectively responsible for the State of Israel.”

I have never held Jews collectively responsible for the State of Israel. I challenge the GMB Scotland Secretary to present evidence that I have done so.

To do so would be patently ludicrous. I am fully aware of the many Jews who are actively opposed to what is happening in Israel. The footnote cited above suggests 50% of the UK Jews are unhappy with the racist state.

The statement the GMB Scotland Secretary cites “Denying Jewish people about their right to self-determination, eg by claiming that the existence of the State of Israel is a racist endeavour” is itself problematic. One might support the idea of Jews having a country they might escape to in order to avoid persecution (as I have always done) without having to swallow the whole racist system that they have created there. I refer the Scotland Committee to my recent article in Common Space “[Pete Gregson: Why 641 Labour members & I will tell the truth about Israel even if it means party expulsion](#)” where I say:

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.

The statistics on Zionist power in the UK are stark. 80 per cent of Tory MPs are 'Conservative Friends of Israel'. This explains the UK Government's enthusiasm for the IHRA and its directives that publicly-funded bodies follow suit. Israel's Government now controls how so many countries must view their racist endeavour. Europe and the USA have fallen into line - and everywhere we look we see those who oppose Israel's apartheid being branded as anti-Semites.

So much depends on language. Just seeking to compare the Oxford English Definition of anti-Semitism with the IHRA's should lead anyone willing to open their eyes to see that the latter only serves the interests of Israel in supporting its persecution of non-Jews. We are in a war of words. The Palestinians suffer the real war of bullets, bombs, forced evictions, humiliating discrimination, starvation and misery, with our media, state and church becoming complicit in their persecution. The world wrings its hands and looks away, just as Netanyahu and so many of the Knesset wish.

One or Two States?

The deeper I get into this affair, the more I realise that Labour's conviction that only a "two-state solution" will work is another bad policy. To me, this approach smacks of South Africa's Bantustans – where blacks in South Africa were offered the chance to rule their own affairs, leaving the rich whites to control the best of the rest.

If, on the other hand, we had a "single state solution", we might see Israel become the kind of democratic nation that deserves to be called a democracy. That is, one where it's 50+ racist laws are abolished and all Arabs in Israel (including Gaza and the West Bank) get to vote in Knesset elections.

Palestinians I have spoken with support this solution. We should then see that country with an Arab prime minister. This prospect is so terrifying to Zionist leaders that they will do anything and everything to prevent it. And they are clever, as their success with the IHRA attests. The racist Nation State Law is another work of insidious genius. This apartheid will be so much harder to defeat than South Africa's.

Internal Struggles - Anyone Can Join In

Every action matters. The UK Labour Party has, for too long, been beholden to Zionists. This summer we saw its power. Yes, I'm talking about the Jewish Labour Movement (JLM) and the Labour Friends of Israel (LFI), bodies committed to promoting Zionism in Labour.

I felt that they, along with the IHRA, represented an existential threat to the Labour Party, so I registered a complaint against them, that they had brought the Party into disrepute. 'Of course they were innocent', the Head of Complaints, Sophie Goodyear, declared, as she tossed my complaint aside at the same time as her colleague, General Secretary Jennie Formby, decided that I must stand trial on charges of anti-Semitism and – yes- bringing the Labour Party into disrepute.

I urge readers to pick up the cudgel and make a complaint - you don't even have to be in Labour to do so. The more we send in, the more power we have. For a model to build on, go to tinyurl.com/labourcomplain.

I refer the Committee to recent support from pressure group "Labour against the Witch-hunt" who came out in support of the campaign on 13/11/18 with "[LAW Statement: Lift suspension of Peter Gregson from GMB, stop investigation](#)"

At the end of his letter the GMB Scotland Secretary says that "Shop Stewards must follow the decisions and policies set out by the governing authorities of the union and it seems that you have failed to abide by rule 43.4."

This is a fair point – as a Shop Steward I agree I should do that. But in this instance I am caught between two poles. To ignore the acts of Israel could be seen as condoning racism (a breach of the GMB Rule Book under rule 5.4), but now the union bosses tell me that I am in breach for so doing.

The GMB Scotland Secretary complains that I mentioned Rhea Wolfson in online comments. But I can see nothing in the rulebook that says I cannot name my nemesis.

If the GMB Scotland feels about racism as strongly as I do, I urge you to flip sides and take up the cudgel against this pernicious IHRA definition of anti-Semitism. Together we must kick this concept out of our Union and cease ongoing witch-hunts against activists such as myself.

Pete Gregson
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15th November 2018