

Jeremy Corbyn the Zionist

by: Rabbi Jeremy Rosen

Yes, I really do think Corbyn qualifies as a Zionist! By now I think everyone is aware of the situation in the UK where the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn has a serious problem with anti-Semitism. No Jew, however removed from his or her Jewish identity, feels comfortable with the antagonistic and abusive atmosphere that pervades the Labour Party hierarchy, even when the Jews concerned are either not supporting Israel or critical of its policies. Recordings of the abuse and hatred directed towards those who complain about it have gone viral. And, as is too often the case with rape, the victims are blamed.

It is true that the disease of anti-Semitism is deeply imbedded in British society, despite there being a counter-strain of philo-Semitism. For proof, just read Anthony Julius's great and comprehensive book *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England*. The pathology has equally affected the Right and the Left in the UK, over many years. As we know, much of the aristocracy was favorably inclined towards Hitler and to the Fascist party led by Oswald Mosley, who, with his black shirts, led marches into the heavily Jewish East End of London; and at the other end of the scale, the lower classes keep present-day fascism alive, if marginalized.

The Labour Party always used to be the natural home of Jews. Very much as the Democratic Party in the USA once was. In my youth there were more Jews in the Labour Party than in all the others combined, and double that. Sure, Ernest Bevin the Foreign Minister in the post-war Attlee government was viscerally anti-Semitic and opposed to Israel's establishment. But the charismatic duo of Aneurin Bevan and Jennie Lee more than compensated, with their passionate support. Hugh Gaitskell, the party leader, was pro-Israel and married to a Jewess; and Harold Wilson was a great supporter of Jewish causes.

In Europe the socialist parties were enthusiastically pro-Israel, because they saw it as socialist state with a socialist government and a strong command economy. The Kibbutzim, the collective agricultural settlements, were idealized socialist havens. This of course was why initially the Soviet Union voted for Israel at the UN despite its intrinsic Marxist opposition to religion and religious states.

That began to change after the Six-Day War, when Israel was no longer regarded as a struggling, endangered state at risk, surrounded by enemies, but rather a militarily successful aggressor. This, combined with the economic need for oil and the massively bigger Muslim markets and bloc vote, led to the alienation of most of the European Socialist world from Israel. One of the most influential anti Zionist figures was the Jewish-born Austrian socialist Bruno Kreisky. This mood of antagonism led to the left supporting the most dishonest and prejudiced resolution at the UN ever, calling Zionism racism, on November 10, 1975. Even in the UN there were enough who realized what a pathetic travesty this was, and the resolution was overturned in 1991.

If we add to this the shift Menachem Begin initiated towards a positively proud Jewish religious and cultural stance and a free, innovative economy, socialism moved further and further away from any sympathy for Israel. All socialist governments, from Scandinavia to Spain, have now adopted an antagonistic stance towards Israel that defies logic, fairness, and truth. Any anti-Israel propaganda is automatically accepted as true, and anything proving the contrary is accepted as a lie. Any action Israel takes is aggression. And anything its opponents do is fighting for freedom. Although there are small signs that some governments are no longer willing to go along with such a one-sided biased narrative.

The success of Jeremy Corbyn's extreme left-wing takeover of the Labour Party has brought all the subcutaneous cancerous hatred out into the open. Anyone who supports Israel, even with plenty of qualification, is a fascist, imperialist, racist aggressor, and is called a Zio dog or bitch in full hearing and view of the party members.

On June 1, 2017, the European Union, much to everyone's surprise, voted to adopt a resolution to apply the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of anti-Semitism. The definition includes examples, such as Holocaust-denial and attempts to apply a double-standard to the State of Israel.

The Labour Party has refused to accept any part of the IHRA's definition that refers to Israel. In other words, one can say what one likes, true or not, and not be accused of being offensive to Jews. Can you imagine if that same position was taken towards Muslims? Imagine that you may not say anything against individual Muslims, but you may say that Muslim states should all be abolished as being racist. Do you really think the Muslim community would tolerate that?

Anglo-Jewry has woken from its stupor. A 1,000-strong protest outside Parliament in March, led by disaffected Jewish members of the Labour Party, resulted in an internal report that almost everyone else agreed was a whitewash. Labour retorted by claiming that a series of expulsions and new rules would demonstrate that Labour, at last, was taking the problem seriously. Instead, its attempt to cover up its anti-Zionism has resulted in Britain's three main Jewish newspapers giving an unprecedented warning that a Labour government under Jeremy Corbyn would be an "existential threat to Jewish life in this country." "A lot of Jewish people are genuinely scared of the Labour Party," says one Jewish member, "and it feels like the leadership doesn't understand that."

This has led to the reality that the Jewish community has completely lost confidence in Labour. It has not yet led to confidence in British society. But more and more Jews are seeking escape routes. The numbers making Aliyah to Israel is growing exponentially. Many Jews who never thought much about being Jewish are now coming back into the fold.

This is why I say that Corbyn is a great Zionist. He has done more to bring about support for Israel than anyone else. He has generated a change in a lukewarm attitude on the part of most Anglo-Jews. He has inspired more Jews

since the Six-Day War to go to Israel, to support Israel, and to fight back. He has done more than anyone else to prove why in a postmodern, supposedly post-nationalist world the Jews have a right and an ongoing need for a land of their own.

Who knows where it will end. In the meantime, as someone brought up in a Labour family and who always voted Labour in the past, I never, ever thought I would say this, but thank goodness for the Conservative Party.