



# Britain: Labour NEC capitulates to Zionist smear campaign

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The Labour Party NEC's decision to adopt all 11 unofficial examples attached to the IHRA definition of antisemitism represents a serious retreat from solidarity with the Palestinians and a victory for anti-socialist forces inside and outside the party who are determined to prevent the election of a leftwing Labour government.

In capitulating to the Zionist smear campaign, the NEC has allowed itself to be bullied into surrendering its political independence and trampled party democracy into the mud.

The NEC's decision was practically a foregone conclusion after the big affiliated trade unions, including Unite, called on Jeremy Corbyn to drop his opposition and adopt the examples. For the trade union bureaucracy, the issue had become a distraction and an obstacle to electing a Labour government. For them what the political basis of this government will be does not stretch beyond their narrow union agendas.

Yet far from defusing the right wing offensive, this capitulation is the thin end of the wedge. For now, the IHRA definition and examples, if allowed to stand, will only gag opponents of Israel's colonial project in the Labour Party.

But in their determination to destroy the growing movement of solidarity with the Palestinians, it cannot be long before the Zionists seek to apply it more widely in the labour movement, branding trade unions who support the BDS campaign as 'institutionally antisemitic'.

The final humiliation came when Jon Lansman and Rhea Wolfson denounced a clarification put forward by Corbyn, which, whilst accepting all 11 examples, argued:

?? It cannot be considered racist to treat Israel like any other state or assess its conduct against the standards of International law. Nor should it be regarded as antisemitic 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.?

This statement directly contradicts the most controversial IHRA example which states that regarding 'a state of Israel' as a 'racist endeavour' could be antisemitic. Corbyn's attempt to gut this example, after apparently accepting it, was a futile gesture.

Ultimately the NEC agreed a bland statement, recommending 'that we adopt the IHRA in full with all the examples. This does not in any way undermine the freedom of expression on Israel or the rights of the Palestinians'??.

It is abundantly clear that this freedom of expression on Israel does not extend to calling it what it is: a racist endeavour, founded on the ethnic cleansing and expropriation of the Palestinians, and a Jewish majority maintained through military occupation, Jewish-only immigration, American financial subsidy and the denial of equal rights even to supposed Israeli Arab citizens.

By adopting the IHRA examples, Labour's NEC has decided to side with the Zionist demand that Israel be an exceptional state above criticism, against the democratic rights of anti-Zionist Jews, and the right of the Palestinians to

return to their homeland and choose their own destiny.

Those who think this concession will appease Corbyn's opponents are badly mistaken.

The Jewish Leadership Council revealed its priorities, claiming 'The 'free speech caveat' drives a coach and horses through the IHRA definition. It will do nothing to stop antisemitism within the Party.' There you have it ' free speech on Israel is synonymous with antisemitism.

The protests of the Zionist extremists do not in any way diminish the fact that this is a victory for the right. They have attacked Corbyn where he is strongest ' his lifelong, principled antiracism and support for the Palestinians ' and defeated him by turning his own allies against him.

Momentum's disgraceful failure to support Corbyn left the leader naked in the chamber. But Corbyn himself is hampered by his support for a utopian two-state solution which the Israeli regime is, and has always been, intransigently opposed to.

Donald Trump's actions, the expansion of Israeli settlements, the continued siege of Gaza, all show that the so-called 'peace process' is dead in the water.

And yet the Palestinians continue to resist. The Great Return March, which saw over 100 peaceful protestors shot down in cold blood by Israeli occupation troops, was a powerful reminder of the Palestinians' will to resist in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds.

Jeremy Corbyn has pledged a Labour government led by him would recognise Palestine as a sovereign state, and condemned the ongoing Israeli atrocities in Gaza. These actions unleashed the unprecedented slander campaign. But when Corbyn tried to defend free speech in the Labour Party his allies stabbed him in the back.

This shows more clearly than ever why the socialist and internationalist left needs to organise itself independently inside the Labour Party. We need to have the organisation to defend Corbyn when he under attack from the right, but also put forward a programme of class struggle, socialist policies that challenge the capitalist class and their agents inside the Party.

National Momentum, the NEC, the trade union leaders, and, with a few honourable exceptions, the 'left' MPs have all proven themselves incapable of standing up against the right wing offensive at the critical moment. If they are not prepared to fight on a point of principle now, even less will they be able to when a Labour government is subjected to the full force of the bosses' resistance.

As socialist internationalists we reassert our unconditional solidarity with the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for equality and justice; a struggle whose victory means the defeat of the occupation, the overthrow of the Zionist regime, and the establishment of a united, secular state where the rights of all are guaranteed and defended by working class, socialist democracy.

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