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ENGINE OF HATE

The online networks behind the Labour Party's antisemitism crisis

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WHY ARE WE HERE?

The problem of antisemitism in the Labour Party over the past four years has been fuelled by a flow of antisemitic tweets and posts on social media, carried out in the name of the Labour Party and its leader, Jeremy Corbyn. Many of these tweets use hateful language to attack Jewish Labour MPs or other people who raise concerns about antisemitism; other tweets claim that any mention of antisemitism is part of a conspiracy to 'smear' Corbyn and Labour.

The tweets and posts in question come from accounts run by Labour Party members; and from people who are not party members but who form its online support system and thereby influence its internal culture and attitudes. This report will reveal these online networks, explain their activities and show their contribution to Labour's antisemitism problem.



*This report includes images of offensive and upsetting social media tweets and posts. We apologise for any offence caused, but feel they are necessary to illustrate and evidence the analysis made in this report.

rodney stewart adams @rodadams46 Follow

@RachelRileyRR @lucianaberger support Killing #Palestinian BABIES so @HarrietHarman is TALKING BOLLOCKS @YoungLabourUK #iStandWithWavertree THE #zIONIST cancer is killing @UKLabour democracy - show your disgust in the traditional manner #resignwatson

Phillip Boyle 7 August 2018

Yeah and meanwhile Zionist lobbyists are using their usual trick in trying to condemn Jeremy Corbyn and label him as anti-semitic? Their Bilderberg Group secret society has currently contained the Conservative party yet they know they can't dupe Corbyn, love him or hate him, a man of principles and integrity, therefore they feel they may lose control they currently hold with their deep-state!



GRIME 4 Corbyn #JC4PM 7 August 2018 Like Page

23 April, 1977. Jeremy Corbyn, then Haringey Councillor, organised a counter demonstration in defence of London's Jewish Community & others, against the National Front - 1,000 of whom marched through Wood Green protected by the old bill. 81 arrests that day.

Saboteur Aesop @TheFabledAesop · May 29
Yup, Berger is another dishonest player IMO.



Has the Labour left subjected Luciana Berger to hatespeak and death... Matt Carr recently published an excellent article ("Are you or have you ever been an antisemite?") on his Infernal Machine blog in which... medium.com

TheSpecialGuestStars @SpecialGStars Follow

Replying to @TheFabledAesop @Fifilov80804085 and 3 others

Her loyalties are to the World Jewish Congress, and most of her payments since she became an MP came from their office in New York; which begs the question, did she ever care about her Jewish constituents, or just Israeli Zionists? #GTTO #JC4PM

ThePnyx @ThPnyx Follow

Exactly! The #antisemitism wolf whistling against @UKLabour has zero to do with antisemitism & everything to do with anti #Socialism . Shame on all those Jews who use the past suffering of their people as a ploy to achieve their deceitful political ends #GTTO #GeneralElectionNow

David Graeber @davidgraeber
this is how Alisdair Campbell's wing of the party dealt with dissent twitter.com/SocialistVoice...

1:13 am - 30 May 2019

Mirror Orchard #iStandWithChris... @AnahitaAredvi Follow

Replying to @JewishLabour

IHRA definition is a deeply flawed, politically biased, apartheid's tool of oppression. It is designed to quash criticism of supremacist ideology of Zionism. We won't buy it. Please leave the Labour Party. #PalestineLives #JC4PM

11:49 am - 9 Jun 2019

Ste Matthew Murray @SteMattMurray · Jan 23
I think its sick absolutely sick in the head that people are using antisemitism LIES for political gain whilst disabled are literally DYING

@RachelRileyRR is VILE.

Oisín EIRE @OisínEIRE

Replying to @SteMattMurray @NotoriousCeltic @RachelRileyRR

She has to be a paid Israeli shill to discredit Labour and Jeremy Corbyn. If she really cared as much about anti semitism as she says she does shed comment on it in the Tory party and other political outlets but she doesn't. Shes even called Jewish people anti Semitic before

Father Dan #GTTO #Socialism @Freedom4allnow2 Follow

You total racist scum bag @RachelRileyRR

Father Dan #GTTO #Socialism @Freedom4allnow2
FFS twitter.com/TheBirmingham6...

7:29 pm - 9 Jan 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report analyses the behaviour of Labour-supporting Twitter accounts, networks and alternative media sites to discover whether (and if so, how) antisemitic narratives have taken root in Labour-supporting online circles. Using up to four years' worth of tweets, it finds that there is no separation online between generic pro-Labour Twitter accounts and campaigns, and abusive Twitter accounts that claim to act in support of Labour in order to shut down allegations of antisemitism against the party.
- This report identifies 36 key pro-Corbyn Twitter accounts, each with their own, overlapping, online networks that drive social media conversations about antisemitism and the Labour Party. These 36 accounts have been dubbed the 'Engine Room' in this report as they are amongst the most influential accounts on Twitter in engaging with online conversations about Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour Party and antisemitism. Their status as Engine Room accounts reflects their general influence on these subjects and is not an indication about whether each account has itself tweeted antisemitic content; but further analysis does allow them to be subdivided into two distinct, but connected, groups that shed further light on this question.
- All 36 of the Engine Room accounts have, at some point, tweeted content arguing that allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party are exaggerated, weaponised, invented or blown out of proportion, or that Labour and Corbyn are victims of a smear campaign relating to antisemitism. Some have changed their position on these issues over the four years covered by this report, but all have, at one time or another, helped to build this narrative through the sharing of online content, largely from alternative media sites, to influence wider online conversations. In addition, a third of these 36 accounts have themselves tweeted antisemitic content.
- Original network analysis and mapping has found that the 36 Engine Room accounts identified in this report are all involved in, or connected to, Twitter networks that have used hashtag campaigns to target MPs or public figures because they have spoken out about antisemitism, via hashtags such as #BoycottRachelRiley, #SackTomWatson and #ResignTomWatson. These same accounts also drive generic pro-Corbyn, pro-Labour social media campaigns that use Twitter hashtags #GTTO (Get the Tories Out) and #JC9.
- These 36 Engine Room accounts have a disproportionate focus on subjects relating to antisemitism, Jews, Zionism, Israel, and alleged smears against Labour and Corbyn, measured for this report by a set of relevant research keywords. Their Twitter output on these subjects is seven times higher than that of official, mainstream Labour Party Twitter accounts (as a proportion of their output).
- Analysis of articles shared by Engine Room accounts in tweets that used the research keywords developed for this report shows a propensity towards alternative media sites rather than established media. Six of the top ten articles (by volume) shared by Engine Room accounts came from a single website, Electronic Intifada, and four of them were written by a single activist, Asa Winstanley, who joined Labour in 2016 to support Corbyn but was reported to have been suspended from the party in March 2019. All four of these articles claim that the Israeli government is behind an alleged campaign to smear Corbyn as antisemitic.
- These Engine Room accounts operate as networks via hashtag campaigns, in a way that allows people who have been suspended or expelled from Labour to retain their influence over how antisemitism and related issues are

discussed and understood in online, Labour-supporting social media spaces.

- Online discussion of antisemitism and associated issues connected to the Labour Party has exploded since Jeremy Corbyn became leader of the Labour Party in 2015. The most prominent spikes driving this increase in online discussion are fuelled by the sharing of online articles (often from alternative media) claiming that allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party are untrue, and are part of a deliberate smear campaign specifically to keep Jeremy Corbyn from power.
- Left-leaning alternative media websites that are used as source material for these online networks are disproportionately focused on the issues of antisemitism and Israel/Palestine compared to their interest in other political issues. These sites are more influential and popular than established media in online shares of articles relating to antisemitism. Some of these sites feature writers and bloggers who have been reported to, or suspended from, the Labour Party for allegations of antisemitism, but who still retain influence and authority as their material is shared widely in Labour-supporting online networks.
- Online supporters of Jeremy Corbyn claim that he is being smeared in several ways: as an antisemite, as an IRA supporter, as being soft on Russia or a supporter of terrorism. Measured by the sharing of articles making these claims, the idea that Corbyn is smeared as an antisemite is more popular amongst his online supporters than the idea that he is smeared as an IRA supporter or a supporter of terrorism. The only alternative smear narrative more popular than the 'antisemitism smear' is the idea that he is being smeared in relation to his attitude towards Russia.
- Articles blaming British Jewish organisations for falsely smearing Corbyn and Labour as antisemitic are twice as popular in online shares as articles blaming Israel-linked organisations, and are more popular than articles blaming the Conservatives or other Labour figures for this alleged smear. The most often-blamed source of this alleged smear is the media.

INTRODUCTION

Over a year after Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn promised to settle the 'vast majority' of antisemitism complaints by the end of July 2018,¹ concerns about antisemitism in the Labour Party have reached crisis point. MPs have left the party citing antisemitic abuse by members, disinterest from the leadership² and institutional racism in the party. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), a body which previously investigated the British National Party (BNP), has launched an official inquiry into the party to establish if they have unlawfully discriminated against, harassed or victimised people because they are Jewish.³

Over the last three years, the Community Security Trust (CST) has recorded a year-on-year increase in the number of antisemitic incidents reported in the UK. In 2018, the



1 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-43889678>

2 <https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2019-02-18/luciana-berger-quits-the-labour-party-over-institutional-anti-semitism/>

3 <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/ymchwil-adau-ac-archwiliadau/investigation-labour-party>



months in which CST recorded the highest monthly antisemitic incident totals correlated to periods when political and media debate over allegations of antisemitism in Labour was at its most intense.⁴ There have also been a large number of individual allegations, reported in various media, of antisemitic comments made – often on social media – by Labour members or officials. **Data collected for this report shows that Jeremy Corbyn's time as Labour leader has seen the baseline level for national online coverage and engagement,⁵ across all media, of Labour, antisemitism and related issues, reach a level unprecedented in recent years.**

During this time various responses have been put forward claiming that allegations of antisemitism concerning the Labour Party have been exaggerated to 'smear' Jeremy Corbyn,⁶ have been invented by Israel,⁷ are fake news⁸ or

4 <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/2/9/Incidents%20Report%202018%20-%20web.1549538710.pdf>

5 See Methodology section

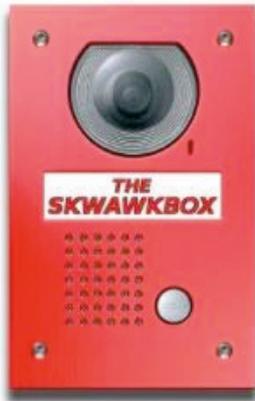
6 <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/labour-and-anti-semitism-2018-truth-behind-relentless-smear-campaign-against-corbyn>

7 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45517094>

8 <https://skwawkbox.org/2018/09/28/new-academic-report-95-serious-failures-in-msm-reporting-of-labour-antisemitism/>



about the skwawkbox and the aim of this blog



MANAFORT WORKED WITH ISRAEL TO 'CONCOCT' ANTISEMITISM SMEAR AGAINST OPPOSITION LEADER

15/09/2018 · by SKWAWKBOX (SW) · in Uncategorized ·

The **decision** of former Trump campaign head Paul Manafort to cooperate with the investigation into alleged interference by Russia in the US election campaign has led to a remarkable revelation that has been flagged by leading US journalists.

something that does exist but is primarily coming not from Labour supporters but from right-wing fascists.⁹ These responses are particularly prevalent online, promoted by Twitter accounts apparently operating in alignment with one another and sharing the same material in order to promote this 'smear' narrative.

Against this background, there is a need for an evidence-based assessment of the scale and patterns of alleged antisemitism amongst Twitter accounts that are active in mobilising and driving online support for the Labour Party. This report sets out to analyse the behaviour of Labour-supporting Twitter accounts and alternative media sites to discover whether (and if so, how) antisemitic narratives have taken root in Labour-supporting circles. It shows how **networks of Labour-supporting Twitter accounts endorse or spread the idea that allegations of antisemitism against Labour are a fake smear campaign; allegations that sometimes stray into wider conspiracy theories about a shadowy Israeli, Zionist or Jewish lobby.**

⁹ <https://www.ft.com/content/076cf26c-ab6f-11e8-94bd-cba20d67390c>

Underpinning all of this is a network of alternative media sites that have risen to prominence as supporters of the Corbyn leadership and have become influential voices on the left. These websites consistently claim that antisemitism is being weaponised as a smear.^{10 11 12} Sites have continued to defend people expelled from Labour even after those expulsions took place.¹³ **These websites provide the fuel for an atmosphere in which allegations of antisemitism are denied, while leading and encouraging attacks against anyone who criticises the Labour leadership for their record on the issue.**

¹⁰ <https://skwawkbox.org/2018/09/15/manafort-worked-with-israel-to-concoct-antisemitism-smear-against-opposition-leader/>

¹¹ <https://www.thecanary.co/uk/news/2019/05/04/thats-it-corbyn-is-done-with-antisemitism-smears-and-the-stress-theyre-causing-jewish-people/>

¹² <https://evolvepolitics.com/the-jewish-voice-twitter-account-is-absolutely-destroying-the-medias-latest-corbyn-anti-semitism-smear-tweets/>

¹³ <https://www.thecanary.co/trending/2018/11/28/twitter-censors-pro-palestinian-jewish-activist-while-allowing-antisemitic-abuse-against-him/>

DEFINITIONS:

What is antisemitism? What is anti-Zionism?

What is antisemitism?

Antisemitism is hatred, bigotry, prejudice or discrimination against Jews.

The word 'antisemitism' came into use in the late nineteenth century to describe pseudo-scientific racial discrimination against Jews, but is now used more generally to describe all forms of discrimination, prejudice or hostility towards Jews throughout history.

Antisemitism is strongly associated with the Nazi Holocaust; but antisemitism has taken many other forms, including religious, ethnic, racial and political antisemitism. Jews have been blamed for many things, such as the death of Jesus, the Black Death, communism, capitalism, undermining national identity, subverting traditional moral values and inciting revolutions and wars.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism is a useful guide to ways in which antisemitic language can appear.¹⁴ In addition, some common antisemitic tropes include:

- Suggesting that British Jews are not properly British, are more loyal to Israel than to Britain, or act secretly on Israel's behalf;
- An association of Jews with money or money-lending, especially if they are depicted as greedy or stingy;
- The notion that Jews are unnaturally wealthy and powerful, and that they use that wealth and power for negative purposes;
- Conspiracy theories that claim Jews, Zionists or Israel secretly control politicians, banks, the media or other parts of society, and that they

do so in order to advance Jewish interests at the expense of others. This conspiracy theory sits at the heart of modern antisemitism and was codified in the notorious antisemitic hoax The Protocols of the Elders of Zion;

- Conspiracy theories that claim Jews, Zionists or Israel are secretly responsible for terrible world events, including terrorist attacks such as 9/11 and the 7/7 bombings;
- Portrayals of Jews or Jewish entities as inhuman, diabolic or represented as beasts, dragons, rats, vampires or other non-human forms;
- Claims that the Holocaust did not happen or has been exaggerated;
- References to the blood libel, a medieval myth that falsely claimed Jewish people kidnapped non-Jewish children, murdered them and used their blood in religious rituals. This may include negative associations of Jews with blood or bloodthirstiness.

Antisemitic conspiracy theories are sometimes expressed via proxy terms such as 'Zionists', 'Rothschilds' or shadowy 'lobbies', which are then subjected to the same accusations that antisemites historically used to slander Jews.

What is anti-Zionism?

'Zionism' simply means a belief in the right of the Jewish people to a state, and support for Israel's existence as an expression of Jewish national self-determination. The term 'anti-Zionism' describes a wide range of hostile attitudes towards Jewish self-determination, and particularly towards the existence of the State of Israel. This is different from criticism of Israel's policies and actions.

¹⁴ <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>

Not all anti-Zionists are antisemites: for example, a minority of Jews, usually for religious reasons, do not believe that the existence of the current secular State of Israel is in the best interests of the Jewish people. However, they do not deny the Jewish people's historical and religious links with the land of Israel. Beyond this group, though, much anti-Zionism today is expressed in ways that deny Jewish peoplehood entirely; are actively hostile towards Jews and towards the Jewish people as a collective group; or that mimic older antisemitic language and imagery.

Some circumstances in which anti-Israel language and activity can be antisemitic include the following:

- Holding Jews in Britain and other diaspora communities responsible for alleged Israeli actions just because they are Jewish;
- Using traditional antisemitic themes or motifs, such as conspiracy theories, to criticise Israel or Zionism, or using 'Zionist' as a proxy term for 'Jewish';
- Using 'Zionist' as a pejorative label for political opponents, even in contexts that have nothing to do with Israel;
- Claiming that an 'Israeli lobby' subverts British politics by controlling or manipulating members of Parliament;
- Alleging that Jewish holy books preach Jewish supremacy and that this is the basis for alleged Zionist or Israeli racism;
- Attributing the characteristics or behaviour of Nazi Germany to Israel, Zionism, Jews or other Jewish entities.

The term 'Zio', sometimes seen in the deeply offensive slur 'Zionazi', was defined as "a new modern-day racist epithet" by the Labour Party's 2016 Chakrabarti Inquiry which found that "It is a term of abuse, pure and simple,

and should not in my view have any place in the vocabulary of Labour members, whether online, in conversation or anywhere else".¹⁵

The antisemitism 'smear'

One common response to complaints about antisemitism in the Labour Party is that such complaints are a 'smear', concocted to damage Jeremy Corbyn, silence his support for the Palestinian people and prevent the success of his socialist project. For example, the pro-Corbyn website The Canary has written that "the Labour right, the Conservatives, and supporters of Israeli apartheid" are deploying "bogus antisemitism smears against Jeremy Corbyn".¹⁶ In another article, Canary editor Kerry-Anne Mendoza claimed that there was a "coordinated effort" by "Blairites within the party and the media, along with their conservative peers and the pro-Israel lobby", to conduct a "sickening smear campaign" against Corbyn because he supports Palestinian rights.¹⁷

The implication of this 'smear' allegation is not just that complainants are wrong about whether there is a significant problem of antisemitism in the Labour Party: it is that they deliberately and maliciously invent, exaggerate or misrepresent alleged examples of antisemitism, in a coordinated and knowing way, for political purposes. This directly contradicts fundamental anti-racist principles, as set out in The MacPherson Report of the inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, that an allegation of racism should be taken

¹⁵ <https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Chakrabarti-Inquiry-Report-30June16.pdf>

¹⁶ James Wright, 'Jewish voters are done with the bogus antisemitism smears against Jeremy Corbyn', The Canary (26 March 2018) <https://www.thecanary.co/uk/analysis/2018/03/26/jewish-voters-are-done-with-the-bogus-antisemitism-smears-against-jeremy-corbyn/>

¹⁷ Kerry-Anne Mendoza, 'The sickening campaign to silence Corbyn and the Left by exploiting victims of the Holocaust', The Canary (28 April 2016) <https://www.thecanary.co/uk/2016/04/28/how-the-establishment-is-trying-to-silence-corbyn-and-the-left-with-cries-of-anti-semitism/>

seriously and investigated in good faith.¹⁸

Even worse, the notion that Jews would lie about antisemitism in order to prevent the election of a prime minister who would care for 'the many' against 'the few' echoes antisemitic conspiracy theories that accuse Jews of dishonesty and manipulation in pursuit of goals that are opposed to the interests of the nation as a whole. It assumes bad faith, cunning and secret coordination: standard features of antisemitic conspiracy theories down the ages.

The allegation that Jews invent false accusations of antisemitism to prevent people from criticising Israel was named The Livingstone Formulation by the academic Dr. David Hirsh, after Ken Livingstone had written in 2006 that "for far too long the accusation of anti-Semitism has been used against anyone who is critical of the policies of the Israeli government, as I have been." According to Hirsh, writing about the 'smear' allegation in 2018:

"The standard response to Jews is not that they have misjudged the situation, perhaps for understandable reasons related to their history... The standard response to Jews is that they know that their claims of having experienced antisemitism are false, and they persist in making them anyway for selfish tribal reasons. It is a nasty little trick to silence the voice of the Palestinians and to smear their great supporter Jeremy Corbyn... Moreover this is the charge made against the community as a whole, not only against particular individuals... Make no mistake, the charge against the Jewish community is that it is involved in a conspiracy against the left. Any individual could get it wrong. But when a whole community gets it wrong together, in an organised and co-ordinated way, and in bad faith, then the allegation is one of Jewish conspiracy to lie and to smear."¹⁹

¹⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277111/4262.pdf

¹⁹ David Hirsh, 'Stop accusing the Jewish community

The suggestion that Jews would invent allegations of antisemitism in order to prevent a socialist government also reinforces racist stereotypes that Jewish people are rich, greedy and selfish.

of conspiring against the left', Open Democracy (9 August 2018) <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/stop-accusing-jewish-community-of-conspiring-against-left/>

METHODOLOGY

This report uses a three-tiered approach with the objective of assessing the spread of antisemitism in Labour-supporting online networks and in the party itself. This involved original research to identify online material of interest, and to determine whether that content originated from, or was shared by, Labour-affiliated or Labour-supporting social media accounts.

1. What articles are being shared?

The decision to share something a person has seen online with their social media networks represents a higher personal investment, positive or negative, in that content, when measured against other social media actions such as 'like-ing' or 'favouriting'. It is a seal of approval.²⁰

On top of sharing someone else's tweet or post, sharing from the content's original source (which could be a blog, newspaper website, forum article etc.) onto social media represents an even higher personal investment in an article, as it involves a conscious decision (and greater effort) to place it in front of a person's own networks.²¹

To measure the sharing of online material, Signify used its own proprietary technology called ShareScore. This ranks material published online and shared on social media using a unique machine-learning analysis. It measures how many times an article has been shared from its source on to social media platforms. ShareScore assesses anything Google indexes as an article: including media articles, blogs, press releases or forum posts. These are first identified and obtained, capturing all articles and sharing behaviour around particular topic keywords.

In order to provide the broad context of discussion and narratives around antisemitism, Labour and

²⁰ <https://www.thedrum.com/news/2016/07/11/why-being-most-shareable-football-brand-so-important-adidas>

²¹ <https://www.digitaltrike.com/myth-3-following-three-click-rule-reducing-clicks-way-go/>

SHARESCORE METHODOLOGY



1. Source data
Obtain all articles and sharing behaviour about relevant topics



2. Clean data
Remove unrelated articles and noise



3. Apply threshold
Remove all articles outside of the top 10,000 most shared



4. ShareScore
Apply proprietary machine learning analysis to determine ranking



5. Insight
Deliver ShareScore (including human analysis)

associated issues, this research used three key queries: antisemitism, Israel/Palestine and smears. These were then cross-referenced for mentions of Labour, Corbyn and Momentum. This means that any article containing both one of the key queries and one of the Labour-related terms (i.e., antisemitism and Labour, smears and Corbyn, etc.) would be captured. **The study covers a time period stretching back five years to 2014, which allows a comparison to the period immediately before Corbyn became Labour leader.**

Data was then cleaned to remove unrelated articles and noise, and a significance threshold was applied (this sets a lower limit for the number of shares, so that only articles shared more than a certain number of times would be included). The most influential items were then scanned using machine learning to pull out the most relevant concepts, themes and entities in each, and aggregated across all of the articles to create the ShareScore for each item.

Across the three search queries, 16,761 articles were examined that had generated a total of 10,016,677 social media engagements on UK social media. Engagement is defined as tweets, retweets, quote-tweets, likes, mentions and replies.

2. What is being tweeted, and who is tweeting it?

Twitter accounts belonging to official Labour Party representatives were used from different strata of the party, including MPs, MEPs, NEC members, councillors, election candidates and others, to build a dataset of pro-Labour tweets for this research. As well as these official or representative accounts, Labour-supporting Twitter accounts that are active and influential online were also included in the research. Some of these latter accounts are run by people who self-declare as Labour Party members; some belong to people who were previously party members but have been suspended or expelled from the party; and others are fully anonymous. They were identified by examining the most prolific Twitter accounts mentioning Corbyn in the six months prior to the 2018 Labour Party conference, and by examining key Corbyn-supporting hashtags such as #GTTO and #JC9, as well as hashtags used to attack critics of Corbyn such as #ResignWatson and #BoycottRachelRiley. These results were filtered to remove those accounts that were critical of Corbyn or from other political parties. A pattern emerged whereby accounts that were driving generic pro-Corbyn hashtags also appeared to be driving hashtags that were used to attack people who spoke out over antisemitism, and to defend people in Labour who were accused of antisemitism. Several of these accounts were also amongst the most prolific tweeters by volume about Jeremy Corbyn per se. Through a process of elimination this led to the creation of a list of accounts that were not only amongst the top drivers of online conversation supporting Corbyn, but also frequently involved in the creation or amplification of hashtags that included, promoted or defended problematic material relating to antisemitism. These accounts have been dubbed the Engine Room Accounts in this report.

Pulling a maximum of the last 3,000 tweets from every account examined resulted in a sample set of 2,046 accounts producing 1,570,938 tweets. These were matched against a comprehensive list of keywords such as antisemitism, Jew, Jewish, witchhunt, Rothschilds, IHRA, Zionist, smear, and several other terms (and variations on those terms) to flag content of interest. This resulted in a flagged dataset of 33,767 tweets representing 2.15 per cent of the total public Twitter conversation from all these Labour-related accounts.

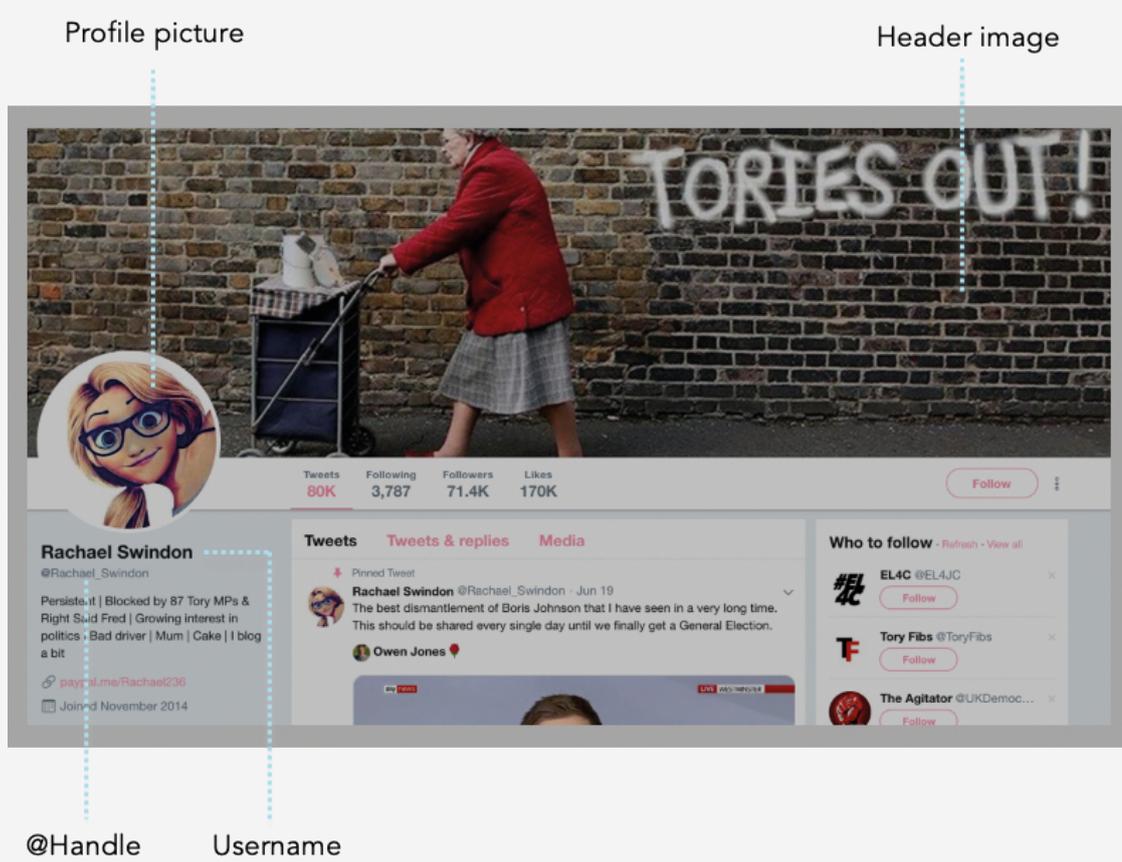
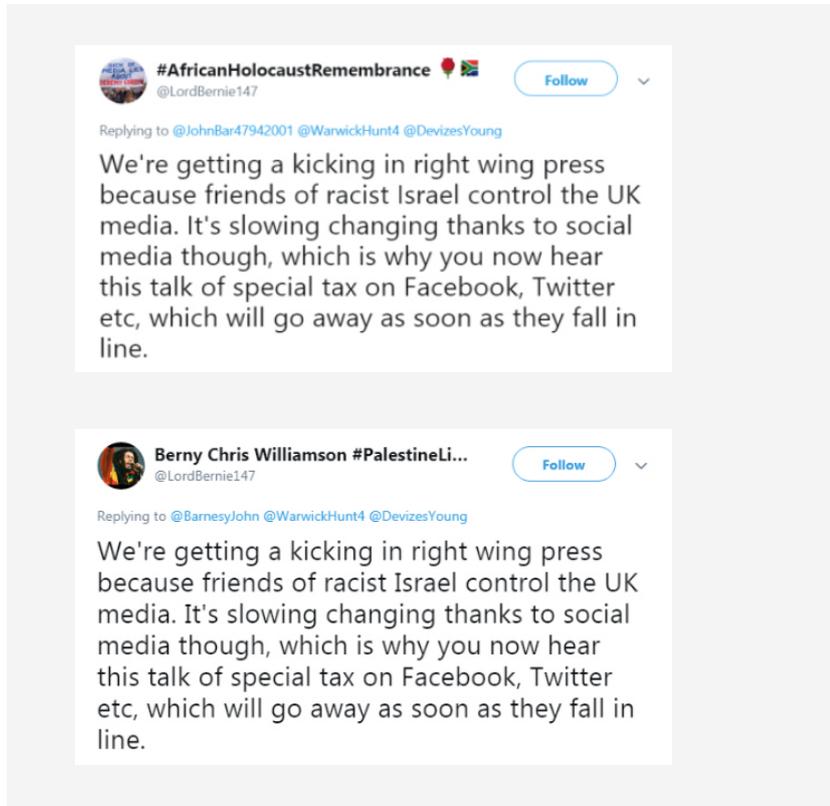
3. Online forensics

Online forensic investigations were conducted to illuminate individual threads of antisemitism linked to the Labour Party. This used specific events and accounts as anchor points and analysed linked content, engagement and associated networks across platforms including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. The investigations were carried out using Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) techniques. **OSINT relies upon data from publicly available sources used in a research context. This means that all information used and relied upon was at one point in the public domain on overt, public-facing channels.**

A GENERAL NOTE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms and accounts are extremely fluid. Users on Twitter, Facebook and other platforms can change their profile pictures or usernames on a regular basis. As you read through this report you may see examples of the same Twitter accounts posting with different profile pictures or usernames. This simply means that different examples from the account were collected at different times, between which the account changed an element of its profile such as the username or profile picture.

To the right, you can see a tweet from the account @LordBernie147 that has a different profile image and username ('Berny Chris Williamson #PalestineLives' and '#AfricanholocaustRemembrance #GTTO') simply because it was captured on two different dates.



Profile picture

Header image

@Handle

Username

FIVE YEARS OF GROWING ONLINE CONVERSATION ABOUT ANTISEMITISM

The period since Jeremy Corbyn became Labour Party leader has seen an unprecedented rise in national interest in the subject of antisemitism. This graph shows the sharing of articles across all UK social media that use the terms Labour, Corbyn or Momentum in combination with the keyword list generated for this research (which includes words such as Jews, IHRA, antisemitism, Zionist, smear, Jewish and so on). This resulted in 9,813 social media posts and online articles from the past five years, which had 6,035,876 linked social media reactions. The graph shows larger spikes of online sharing of relevant articles that correlate to key flashpoints since Corbyn's election; in some months, the number of articles being shared online in the UK with these search terms exceeded 1,000 and the total number of shares of those articles on UK social media reached just under a million.

Across the period 2016 to 2018 the largest spikes in online conversation about Labour-related antisemitism were significantly influenced by articles suggesting that accusations of

antisemitism relating to the Labour Party have been overblown or fabricated. In months with large spikes in sharing activity, at least a third of the top ten shared articles on all UK social media came from alt-left media sources and partisan websites such as The Canary, Evolve Politics or Electronic Intifada.^{22 23 24 25 26} This shows the ability of fringe websites, amplified by supportive social media accounts, to influence the wider online conversation about antisemitism.

22 <https://www.thecanary.co/uk/analysis/2018/03/26/jewish-voters-are-done-with-the-bogus-antisemitism-smears-against-jeremy-corbyn>

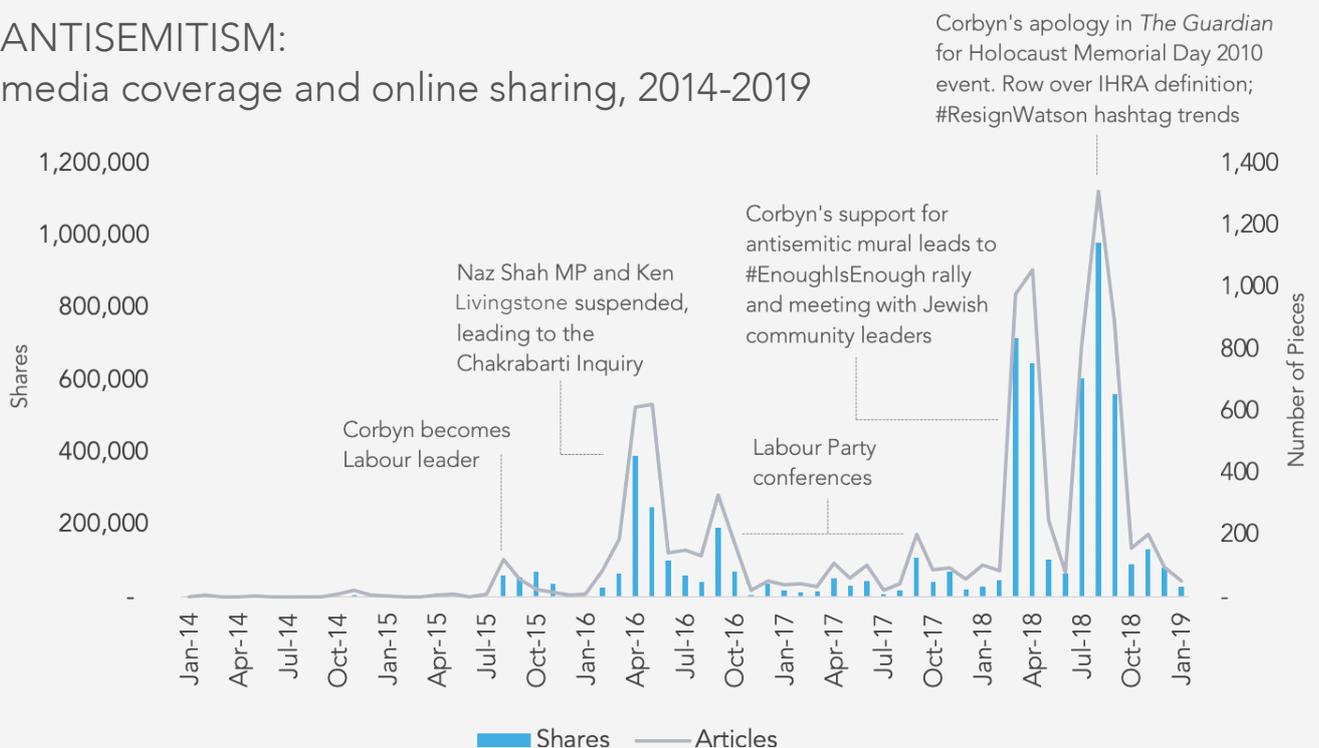
23 <https://electronicintifada.net/content/how-israel-lobby-manufactured-uk-labour-partys-anti-semitism-crisis/16481>

24 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/american-jewish-scholar-behind-labour-s-Anti-semitism-scanda>

25 <https://evolvepolitics.com/the-jewish-voice-twitter-account-is-absolutely-destroying-the-medias-latest-corbyn-anti-semitism-smear-tweets>

26 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/apr/02/stop-jeremy-corbyns-trial-by-media-over-Antisemitism>

ANTISEMITISM: media coverage and online sharing, 2014-2019



Narrative dominance

Over the same period the single most popular website for article shares about the subject of antisemitism, the Labour Party and Israel/Palestine was Electronic Intifada, a radical anti-Zionist website which has consistently promoted the idea that allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party are false, and are part of a smear campaign against Jeremy Corbyn that is orchestrated by the Israeli government. Electronic Intifada generated nearly four times the online engagement than the Guardian did for content about this specific area of discussion (see top table, right). This demonstrates the power of campaigning sites with specific editorial agendas. The third most popular website for article shares on this subject is Middle East Eye, which has published articles titled 'Labour and antisemitism in 2018: The truth behind the relentless smear campaign against Corbyn' and 'The Israel lobby is leading a witch hunt against Corbyn. It has to stop.'^{27 28}

This in part tracks a general increase in the use of social media and the growth of alternative media sites; but it also reflects how a mass movement of political activists with pre-existing interests in these topics have become more engaged, raising their voices online during the period of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership.

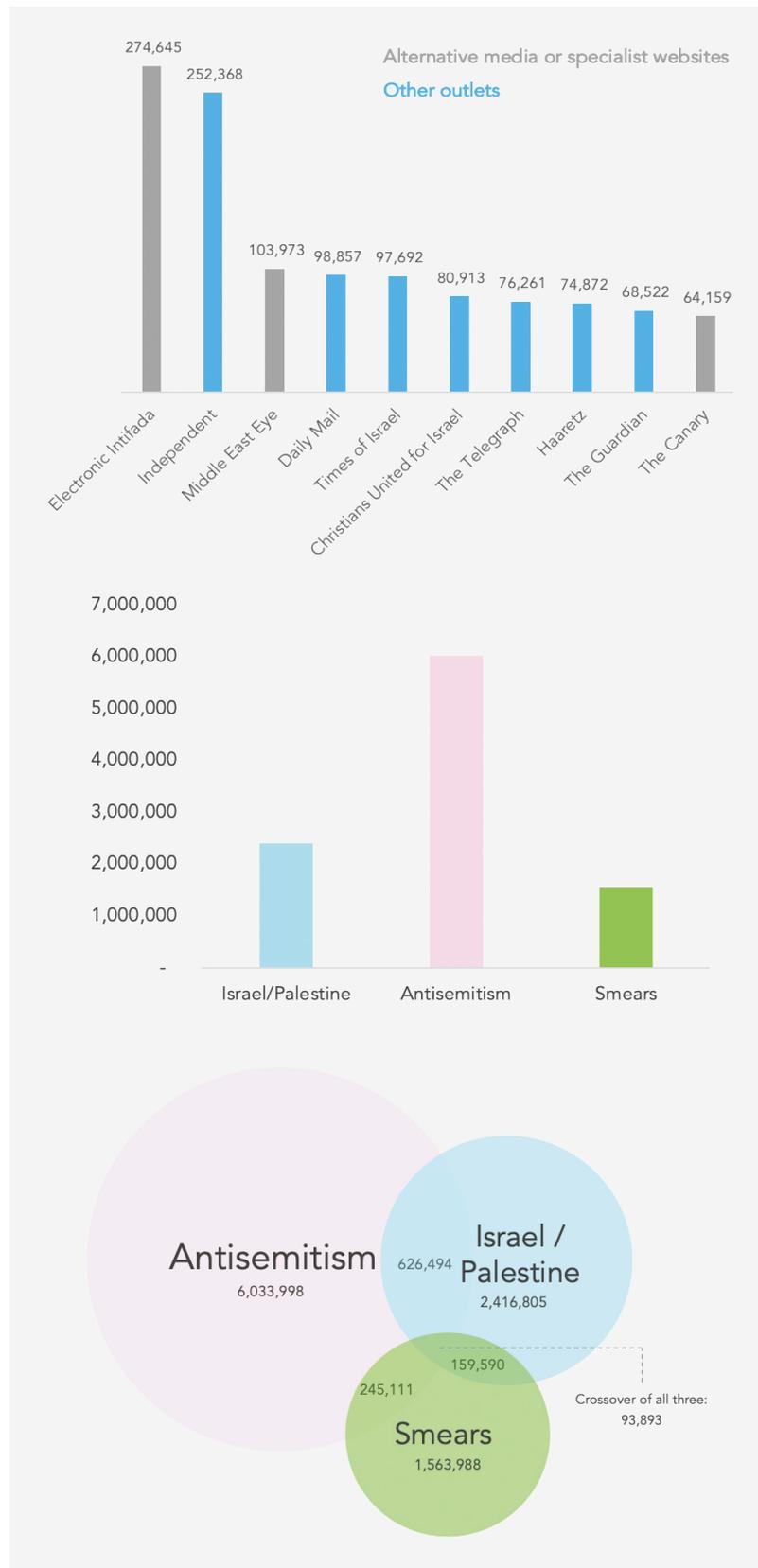
The next table shows the relative sharing of articles relating to Israel/Palestine; antisemitism; and smears, as subsets of the articles generated by the keyword searches outlined above. It shows that articles about antisemitism are the most prevalent of the three groupings: these have been shared over twice as much as articles about Israel/Palestine.

There are significant points of overlap between these three queries, which are shown in the bottom diagram. For example, over ten per cent of the article-sharing in the antisemitism query also show up in sharing of content relating to Israel/Palestine.

27 <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/labour-and-anti-semitism-2018-truth-behind-relentless-smear-campaign-against-corbyn>

28 <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/israel-lobby-leading-witch-hunt-against-corbyn-it-has-stop>

However, the overwhelming majority of online discussion about antisemitism relating to Labour, Corbyn or Momentum (the filtering queries used in conjunction with this research's keywords) does not include discussion of Israel and Palestine.



THE ENGINE ROOM

Signify began this research prior to the 2018 Labour Party conference by identifying the top 100 Twitter accounts mentioning Jeremy Corbyn over the previous six months, measured by level of engagement

(cumulative retweets, quote tweets, replies and favourites). At this stage the research only related to mentions of Jeremy Corbyn and did not include any analysis about content relating to antisemitism or similar issues.



@SocialistVoice



@WarmongerHodges



@TomLondon6



@georgegalloway



@Muqadaam



@DPJHodges



@ToryFibs



@_BrexitTory



@Rachael_Swindon



@Corbynator2



@mac123_m



@evolvepolitics

These 12 Twitter accounts, listed on the left, generated the most engagements about Jeremy Corbyn, by volume, in descending order. They include a mix of accounts from various political standpoints as well as identifiable and anonymised profiles.

Engine Room accounts

Following this initial analysis, accounts that were critical of Corbyn or from other political parties were removed to produce a dataset of influential Corbyn-supporting accounts. Next, networks of Twitter accounts promoting the hashtags #GTTO, #JC9, #BoycottRachelRiley, #ResignWatson/#TellTomWatson and #SackTomWatson were all examined. Thirty-six accounts from the original top 100 accounts tweeting about Corbyn, were also regularly found in the top 100 accounts engaging with these hashtag networks (engagement is defined as tweeting, retweeting, quote-tweeting, likes, mentions and replies). These 36 accounts are called the Engine Room in this report because of their centrality in driving online discussions around Jeremy Corbyn and antisemitism. Some of them started the hashtags under review; all engaged with at least three, and usually all five, of the hashtags listed (as the hashtags occurred over an extended period of time, some accounts had been suspended or deleted by the time some hashtag campaigns developed). It is important to state that at this point, no analysis had been done to assess whether these accounts had tweeted antisemitic content. This is simply a list of the most influential accounts tweeting about Jeremy Corbyn and engaging with these five hashtags. The 36 accounts are:

@SocialistVoice	@corbynator2
@RAYHALL10	@asawinstanley
@Sargent_Sellers	@mac123_m
@WarmongerHodges	@ScouseGirlMedia
@MyArrse	@The_Awakened
@Cornish_Damo	@evolvepolitics
@YEEqual	@LuckyHeronSay
@otivar55	@joan32173631
@georgegalloway	@chelleryn99
@corbynsgeordie	@davcon73
@damian_from	@zele_zeka
@Muqadaam	@JulietB270880
@BiztheBuz	@James4Labour
@moodynotblue	@Allchanges
@petergloss	@MomentumCV
@labour_party_supporter	@55krissi55
@Rachael_Swindon	@NeverSoPretty
@helensclegel	@minxymartin

The initial hashtag examined for this research was #JC9, which was used in summer 2018 to generate support for a Momentum-backed group of nine candidates for the Labour Party National Executive Committee (NEC). When controversy arose over allegations of antisemitism involving NEC candidate Peter Willsman, the hashtag began to be used to defend Willsman and to criticise people who wanted him to be dropped from the #JC9 list (this led to the use of the variant hashtag #JC9YES9).

Hashtags with particular focus on issues around antisemitism relating specifically to the Labour Party were then analysed, including:

#BoycottRachelRiley
#ResignWatson/#TellTomWatson
#SackTomWatson

#GTTO was used as a baseline as it has been used to rally Labour supporters, with many adding it to their account usernames, throughout the Corbyn leadership. 'GTTO' stands for 'Get The Tories Out' and it is a generic pro-Labour, pro-Corbyn hashtag.

When the overall Twitter output of these accounts was tested against the list of keywords generated for this research (keywords such as antisemitism, Jew, Jewish, witchhunt, Rothschilds, Zionist, IHRA, smear and so on), it was discovered that the Engine Room accounts are likely to engage with these keywords much more than the average Labour Party-related Twitter accounts. Their engagement with these keywords, as a group, generated 2,856 flagged tweets, which represented 16.9 per cent of their total public conversation (this is an average percentage across the 36 Engine Room accounts and it varies from account to account). This is much higher than the average figure of 2.15 per cent engagement with the research keywords that was found for the entire Twitter dataset gathered for this project; suggesting that these influential online accounts have a disproportionate interest

in topics such as antisemitism, Jews, Zionism and related issues. Their relatively high engagement with the keywords, combined with their influence via hashtag networks and the high level of engagement they command when tweeting about Jeremy Corbyn, means that these 36 Twitter accounts, as a group, have a significant influence over the online conversation in broader Labour-supporting Twitter on subjects relating to antisemitism, Jews and the Labour Party. The fact that these accounts are found to repeatedly engage with the same hashtags as each other is the reason why their collective impact is relevant to this study.

All 36 of the Engine Room accounts have, at some point, tweeted content arguing that allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party are exaggerated, weaponised, invented or blown out of proportion, or that Labour and Corbyn are victims of a smear campaign relating to antisemitism. Some have changed their position on these issues over the four years covered by this report, but all have, at one time or another, helped to build this narrative through the sharing of online content, largely from alternative media sites, to influence wider online conversations. Twelve accounts

– a third of the total – have also, on occasion, tweeted content or used language that is itself antisemitic. This includes: allegations of a deliberate conspiracy by Israel, Zionists or Jews to smear Corbyn, or other claims of a 'Zionist' conspiracy to influence British politics; pejorative reference to a 'Jewish lobby'; denigration of UK Jewish organisations and activists as 'traitors' or as agents of a foreign country; antisemitic conspiracy tropes relating to the Rothschild family; equivalences between Israel and Nazi Germany; or other content that would be defined as antisemitic under the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

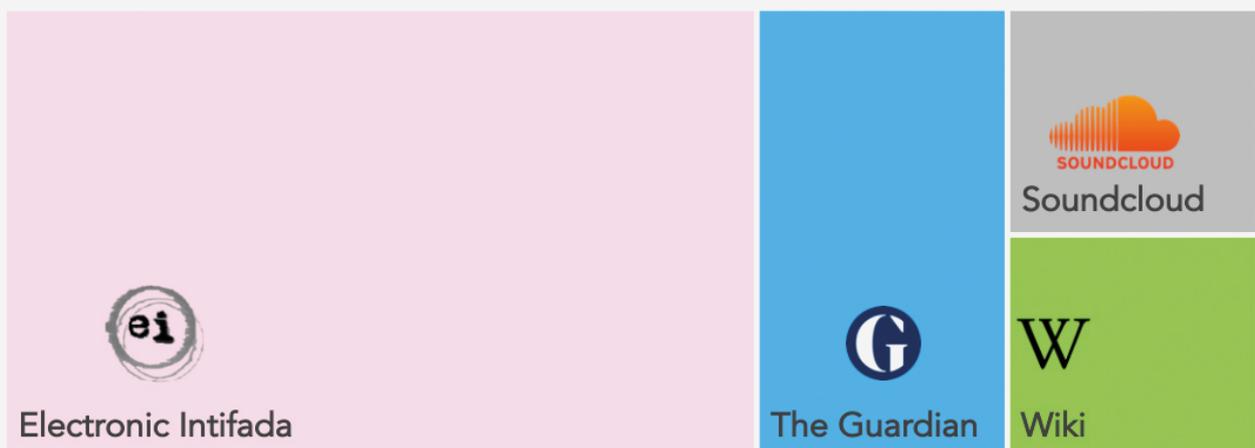
This subset of Engine Room accounts that have tweeted antisemitic content captured during the research phase of this report are as follows:

@SocialistVoice	@Muqadaam
@petergloss	@otivar55
@WarmongerHodges	@Rachael_Swindon
@asawinstanley	@damian_from
@georgegalloway	@minxymartin
@55krissi55	@BiztheBuz

Nine of the Engine Room accounts were deleted by their users or suspended from Twitter in between the research phase of this project and

TOP 10 URLs BY ENGINE ROOM SHARES

■ Electronic Intifada ■ The Guardian ■ Soundcloud ■ Wiki



the publication of this report. These are as follows:

@corbynator2	@James4Labour
@RAYHALL10	@labour_party_supporter
@YEqual	@helensclegel
@corbynsgeordie	@joan32173631
@davcon73	

Analysis of articles shared by the 36 Engine Room accounts in tweets that used the keywords, found that they show a propensity towards alternative media sites and stories that implied Labour figures who criticised Corbyn, particularly in relation to antisemitism, were operating under Israeli influence or direction. This list shows the ten most popular articles shared by Engine Room accounts, measured by share volume:

URL analysis of Engine Room accounts' flagged tweets by share volume

1. <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/asa-winstanley/jewish-labour-movement-worked-israeli-embassy-spy>
2. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antisemitic_canard
3. <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/asa-winstanley/how-racist-blogger-david-collier-infiltrated-labour-party>
4. <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/asa-winstanley/jewish-labour-movement-was-refounded-fight-corbyn>
5. <https://electronicintifada.net/content/israel-arming-neo-nazis-ukraine/24876>
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/07/netanyahu-vows-to-annexe-jewish-settlements-in-occupied-west-bank>
7. <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/asa-winstanley/jewish-labour-movement-harassed-labour-activists>
8. <https://soundcloud.com/john-wight-554616324/the-clark-wight-episode-6>

9. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/feb/20/jeremy-corbyn-labour-party-crucially-in-fight-against-antisemitism>
10. <https://electronicintifada.net/content/antisemitism-vs-anti-colonialism/25346>

These ten links generated 24 per cent of the total shares for the 912 unique URLs shared by the group.

Six of these top ten unique URLs shared by Engine Room accounts in tweets that mentioned the keywords came from one website: Electronic Intifada. Four of these six articles were written by one person, Asa Winstanley, who claims to have joined the Labour Party in 2016 to support Jeremy Corbyn but at the time of writing is suspended from the party for alleged antisemitism. Winstanley's Twitter account, @asawinstanley, is one of the 36 Engine Room accounts discovered by this research, but he is far from solely responsible for the popularity and spread of his articles.



Electronic Intifada and Asa Winstanley

Electronic Intifada is a radical anti-Zionist website based in the United States. Its co-founder and Executive Director, Ali Abunimah, publicly backed Ken Livingstone in 2016 when Livingstone claimed that Hitler "supported Zionism". Abunimah criticised Labour for suspending Livingstone "for recalling fact of Zionist-Nazi alliance" and went on, "Zionism and pandering to the thuggery of those promoting it has brought the Labour Party into disrepute."²⁹ He has accused Israel of "lurching into open fascism"³⁰ and compared it repeatedly to Nazi Germany, while campaigning for an end to

²⁹ <https://twitter.com/AliAbunimah/status/725680148897361921> and subsequent thread

³⁰ <https://electronicintifada.net/content/israel-lurches-fascism/8064>

Israel's existence as part of a one-state solution to the Israel/Palestine conflict.

Asa Winstanley is an Associate Editor of Electronic Intifada and one of their main UK contributors. Winstanley has written several articles arguing that all allegations of antisemitism in Labour are part of a deliberate smear campaign orchestrated by the Israeli Embassy, and has claimed that the "primary function" of mainstream Jewish organisations the Board of Deputies, the Jewish Labour Movement and the Jewish Leadership Council is "to lobby for Israel, an institutionally racist, apartheid state." He has condemned Jeremy Corbyn for trying to 'appease' the Jewish community by allowing former comrades Jackie Walker and Tony Greenstein to be suspended and expelled from the party.³¹

31 <https://electronicintifada.net/content/jeremy-corbyn-must-stop-pandering-labours-israel-lobby/23731>



The Jewish Labour Movement "Israeli spy" story

In April 2018 Asa Winstanley, writing in Electronic Intifada, claimed to have found proof that the Jewish Labour Movement (JLM) acts "as a proxy for the Israeli embassy".³² This highly-charged claim was drawn from a documentary broadcast by Al-Jazeera in 2017, which had used undercover filming to record conversations with various Jewish

32 <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/asa-winstanley/jewish-labour-movement-worked-israeli-embassy-spy>

and pro-Israel activists in Britain (and in which Winstanley had appeared). The documentary focused on the Israeli Embassy's senior political officer at the time, Shai Masot, who Winstanley claimed was an "Israel embassy spy"; and who had been in contact with a JLM staff member who had previously worked at the embassy before taking up her JLM post. There is nothing unusual about political organisations in the UK having contact with various embassies, nor is it strange for British citizens to work at other countries' embassies in London; but Winstanley used this to suggest that the JLM is not an authentic UK Jewish organisation or a genuine Labour Party body, but in fact is following a secret agenda to promote the interests of a foreign state. This is a classic 'dual loyalty' trope, by which Jews (and other minorities) are often accused of not being fully loyal to the country of their birth. It also portrayed the activities of the JLM as a secret conspiracy that differs from the organisation's stated aims.

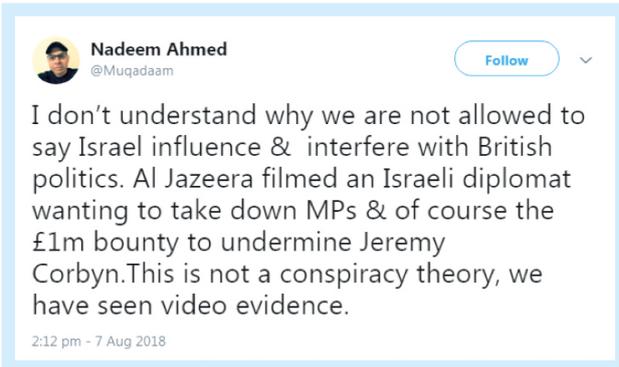
The £1 million trope

The same documentary broadcast by Al-Jazeera in 2017 claimed to have shown, using undercover filming, that an official of the Israeli Embassy in London had offered to provide £1m to Labour Friends of Israel to pay for Labour MPs to visit Israel on official fact-finding trips. This has been twisted by conspiracy theorists into, variously, a "£1,000,000 bounty for Labour insiders to undermine Jeremy Corbyn by using false claims of antisemitism"³³ or a "£1 million bounty to topple MPs"³⁴ as part of a "plot by the Israeli government to undermine Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn."³⁵ None of these inflated charges and allegations of an Israeli-funded conspiracy against Corbyn were made by Al-Jazeera itself in relation to this funding, but they have been widely spread as part of a conspiracy theory that claims pro-Israel or Jewish groups in the Labour Party are actively trying to undermine democracy and subvert the party, and are using foreign funding to do so.

33 <https://twitter.com/SocialistVoice/status/989161997920096256>

34 <https://twitter.com/Muqadaam/status/1029070301517238272>

35 <https://www.thecanary.co/uk/analysis/2018/03/28/reminder-israel-put-up-a-1000000-bounty-for-labour-insiders-to-undermine-corbyn/>



Engine Room case study 1: @SocialistVoice³⁶

This account is the number one most-engaged by volume Twitter handle tweeting about the term 'Corbyn' and is present in every hashtag network mapped for this research – and it has a history of sharing antisemitic material. It has over 66,000 followers on Twitter. The account holder, Scott Nelson, was expelled from the Labour Party over his social media conduct following a series of tweets including tweeting an Israeli flag peeling away to reveal a swastika and proclaiming Tesco and Marks and Spencer as companies with 'Jewish Blood.' One tweet from September 2014 showed an image of the BBC logo with a Jewish Star of David in place of the C, alongside the caption "David Cameron's bedroom wallpaper". This falls into a common trope that Jews or Israel control the media and pull the strings of power in Westminster. Labour's press team tweeted in December 2015 to say the person behind the account "has already been removed from the Labour party" (however, the account replied saying they had not received direct notification of this).



36 <https://twitter.com/SocialistVoice>



In 2016 Mr Nelson tweeted official Labour Party letters saying that an appeal against his expulsion had been rejected but that he could apply to re-join after two years. He claimed that he was the victim of antisemitism smears and that he wouldn't be silenced in his support for Jeremy Corbyn,³⁷ noting that his desire to re-join the party was entirely dependent on Corbyn still being present.



Following Nelson's expulsion, the account @SocialistVoice was anonymised and started frequently referring to Scott Nelson in the third person, listing him as a victim of centrist or Blairite smear campaigns alongside others who had been expelled from the party for antisemitic abuse. Despite persistently claiming that accusations of antisemitism are smears and issuing an apology in 2018 addressing the issues of his swastika and 'Jewish blood' tweets, the account @SocialistVoice has continued to tweet claims of smears by lobbies and attacks on prominent figures who suggest antisemitism is a problem within the Labour Party.³⁸



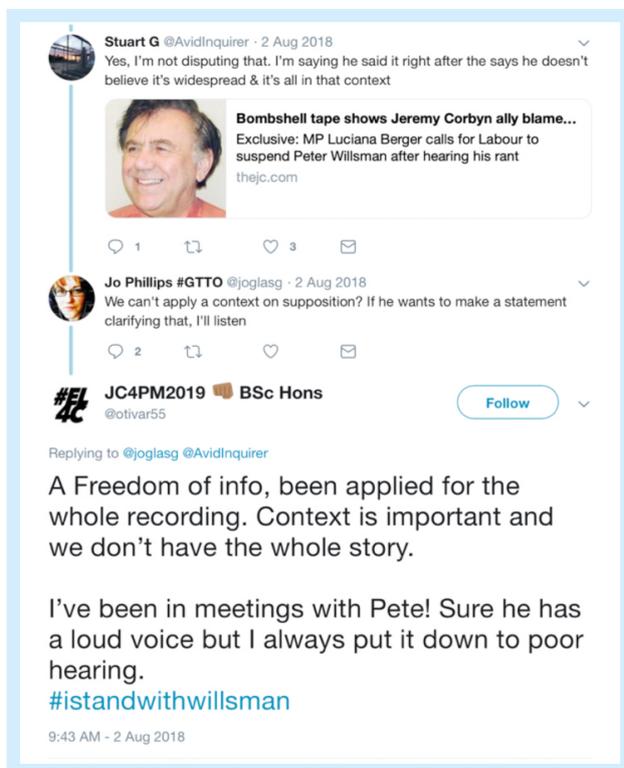
37 <https://twitter.com/SocialistVoice/status/725750821988741120>

38 <https://twitter.com/SocialistVoice/status/1036695229578059776>

Engine Room case study 2:

@otivar55³⁹

@otivar55 is another Engine Room account with nearly 5,000 Twitter followers. The account bio describes itself as a former Liberal Democrats voter who was “betrayed” by their decision to go into coalition with the Conservatives in 2010, and now supports a “REAL LABOUR” party.



39 <https://twitter.com/otivar55>

@otivar55 was a strong supporter of the #JC9 election slate, including defending Peter Willsman, who he claimed to have been in meetings with, after Willsman was dropped from the official JC9 slate due to allegations of antisemitism.

The account has accused Labour moderates of being instructed or controlled by the Israeli Embassy.

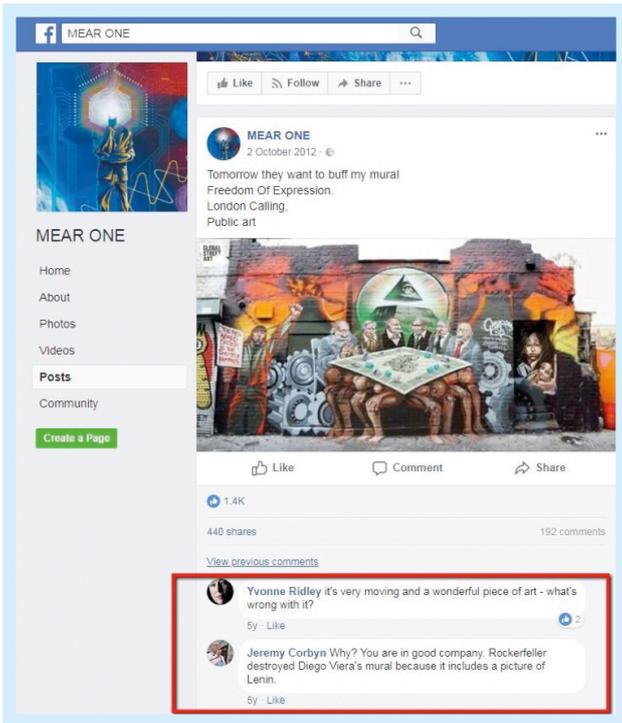


The account has accused anti-racist organisation Hope Not Hate of having “fallen into hands of Zionist nationalists”, because they have spoken out over alleged Labour antisemitism.

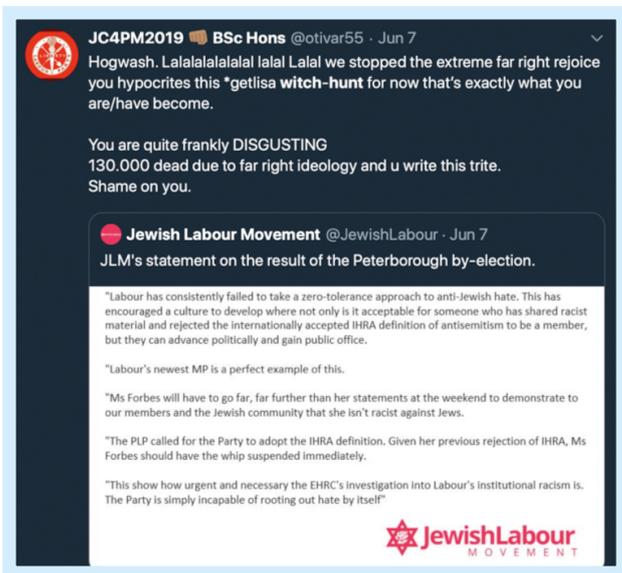


@otivar55 has also defended the antisemitic mural that Jeremy Corbyn was criticised over, after it emerged in 2018 that Corbyn had posted a message of support on the Facebook page of the artist.⁴⁰ The account wrote that talk of the mural was a “witch-hunt” and it wasn’t “real racism”.

40 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-43523445>



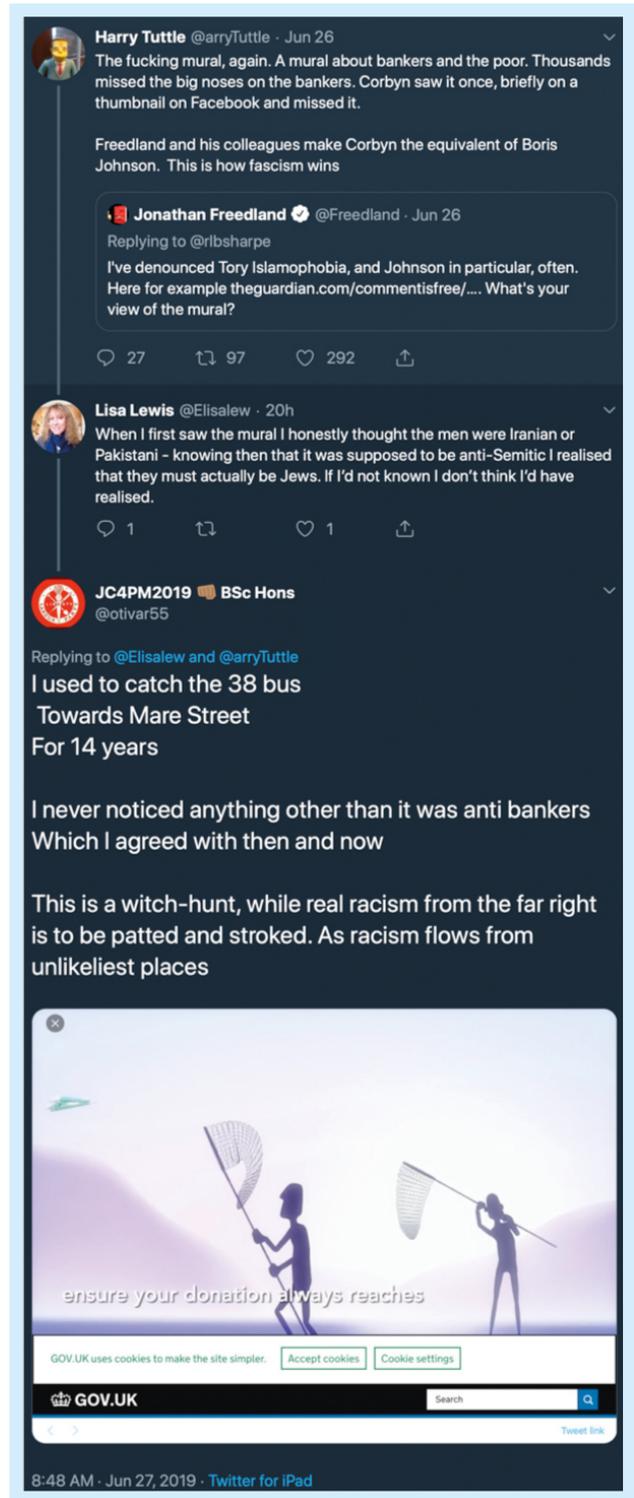
Elsewhere @otivar55 has accused the Jewish Labour Movement of a “witch-hunt” and suggested they indulge “far right ideology”.



Engine Room case study 3:
@Rachael_Swindon⁴¹

@Rachael_Swindon is a Twitter account with vast influence in pro-Corbyn Labour circles, named by BuzzFeed as “one of the most popular, prolific, and polarising figures on political Twitter”. She revealed her real name in a

41 https://twitter.com/Rachael_Swindon



September 2018⁴² article to be Rachael Cousins, a 42-year-old living in Swindon with her husband Jon. She tweets about 40 times a day to more than 71,000 followers.

42 <https://www.buzzfeed.com/markdistefano/heres-the-woman-behind-britains-most-divisive-twitter>



Cousins joined the Labour Party in August 2016 to support Corbyn. The account was accused of antisemitism in November 2016 after tweeting conspiracy theories about the Rothschilds, a common antisemitic trope. The account eventually apologised for this in February 2019.

@Rachael_Swindon has also used the £1m trope popularised by Al-Jazeera and Electronic Intifada. When the Jewish News tweeted about the fact Labour Friends of Israel did not have a stall at the 2018 Labour Party conference, she commented: "Don't get much for a million quid these days."



The @Rachael_Swindon handle was created shortly after Cousins' husband Jon's account was banned. He had tweeted problematic material that played into themes of Jews, money and political influence, such as this image (right) showing a giant hand marked with an Israeli flag slotting a coin into the Houses of Parliament which is held in another hand that bears a Star of David.

The @Rachael_Swindon account was banned from Twitter in March 2019 to outcry from supporters who began a hashtag in her name, #FreeTheSwindon1. However, she was soon reinstated and is back to tweeting as much as ever.



Engine Room case study 4:

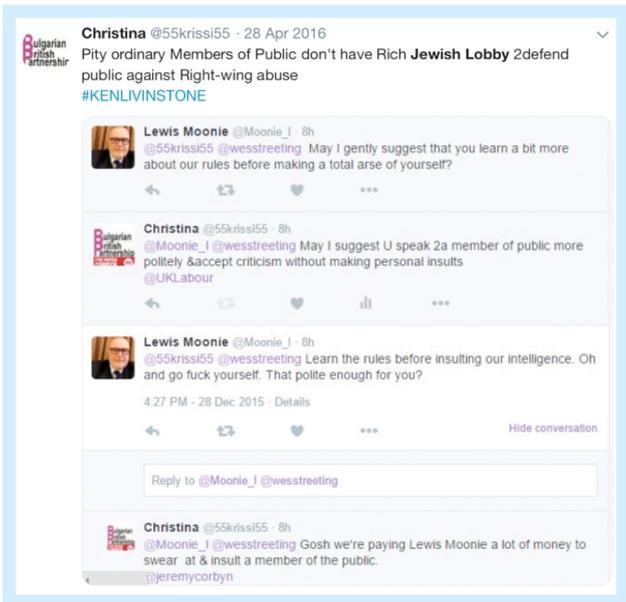
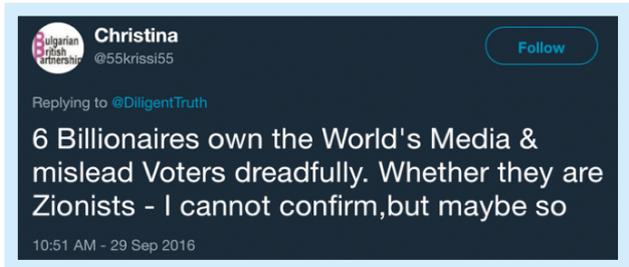
@55krissi55⁴³

Engine Room account @55krissi55 is a self-declared Labour member with over 10,000 followers on Twitter. The account was set up in 2011 but was virtually dormant until 2014 when it began sending 100s of tweets per day. Most of these tweets are related to politics.

Zionism as “very extreme/fascist”. These tweets echo antisemitic tropes about Jews or Zionists using wealth to control the media and politicians.



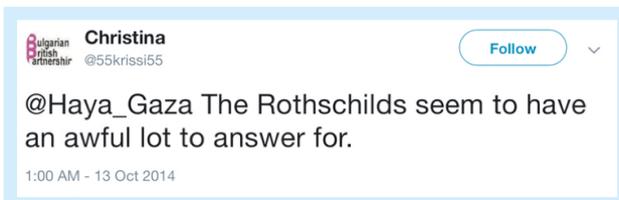
@55krissi55 has claimed that a “rich Jewish lobby” is behind allegations of antisemitism relating to the Labour Party and has also suggested that propaganda from the “Jewish lobby” conceals the reality of the “occupation of Palestine.”



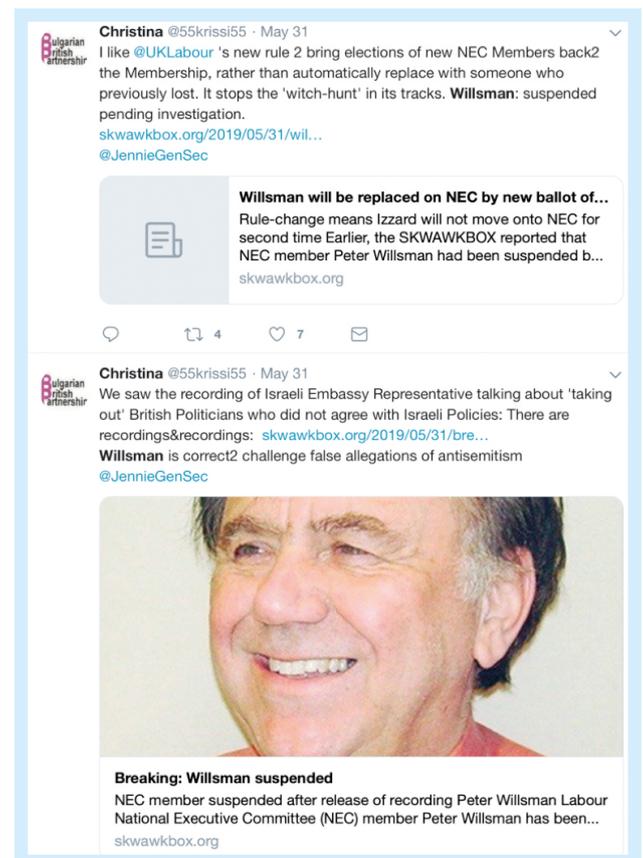
The account has also tweeted content that claims “powerful Zionists” have used political donations to buy “policies against Palestine”, and suggests that the media is owned by a handful of Zionist billionaires. Elsewhere, the account has defined

43 <https://twitter.com/55krissi55>

Some tweets from @55krissi55 display a belief that the Rothschild family plays a significant role in manipulating world events. This is a long-standing antisemitic trope that dates back to the 19th century and was used extensively by Nazi Germany.



This account has also shown strong support for various people who have been suspended or expelled from the Labour Party for alleged antisemitism, including Peter Willsman, Marc Wadsworth, Jackie Walker and Chris Williamson MP. @55krissi55's support for Willsman began during the initial #JC9 campaign in 2018 when Willsman was dropped from the JC9 slate by Momentum following allegations of antisemitism, and returned when Willsman was suspended in May 2019 for claiming that antisemitism allegations against Labour were orchestrated by the Israeli Embassy.⁴⁴



44 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/aug/01/antisemitism-row-momentum-drops-peter-willsman-from-nec-re-election-list>; <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/may/31/israeli-embassy-labour-antisemitism-claims-peter-willsman>

Engine Room case study 5:

@WarmongerHodges⁴⁵

@WarmongerHodges is anonymous but identifies him or herself as a registered Labour member. The person behind the account claims to have joined Labour “to help Corbyn bring democratic socialism to the UK after 40yrs of uninterrupted neoliberal oligarchy.”



This account, which has over 23,000 followers, came top in an analysis of which accounts engaged the most on Twitter with the topic ‘Rachel Riley’. Riley is the presenter of the TV show Countdown and is Jewish; since speaking out about antisemitism in late 2018 she has received extensive abuse and bullying on social media. @WarmongerHodges has called Riley, in various tweets, “deranged” and “unhinged”; accused her of making false and malicious allegations of antisemitism to smear “anti-racist Palestinian rights campaigners”; and implied that she is allied to violent far right movements such as the English Defence League.



Another example of @WarmongerHodge's tweets targeted Luciana Berger, the MP who left Labour citing institutional antisemitism after extensive online bullying. @WarmongerHodges wrote: “Luciana Berger's refusal to deny the falsehood that she needed police protection at the Labour Party conference has just been used by a Tory MP to smear Jeremy Corbyn.”⁴⁶ It was retweeted over 500 times, despite the fact that its central claim – that Berger did not have police protection at the 2018 Labour Party conference – was false.



⁴⁵ <https://twitter.com/WarmongerHodges>

⁴⁶ <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/jewish-mp-luciana-berger-flanked-13298354>

@WarmongerHodges has also implied that the departure of Berger and other MPs from Labour in February 2019 and their initial formation as The Independent Group was explained by their common membership of Labour Friends of Israel; and that they were funded in this activity by a donor to LFI who, @WarmongerHodges claimed, also paid Tom Watson to 'smear' the Labour Party.



@WarmongerHodges, like several other Engine Room accounts, has also shown an interest in the alleged activities of the Rothschild family.



#HASHTAGS

Hashtags are a way of curating conversations on Twitter. Adding a hash sign, #, to the front of a word or name highlights it. Hashtags are searchable and are used to draw attention to particular things. They are often used to drive campaigns and build conversations and communities. Hashtag engagement is measured on Twitter and ranked in a section called Trending. Trending has become shorthand for popularity: the higher your hashtag trends, the more popular it is. In the political sphere, if your campaign or issue is trending it is often seen as a proxy for popular support.

Mainstream Labour and antisemitic Labour: the online nexus

The Engine Room group are not only the strongest drivers of conversation around Labour and antisemitism, they are also major drivers of hashtags around a range of Labour-supporting topics. The hashtag network maps on the following pages are generated by collecting tweets that use the hashtags in question and then measuring several points of interaction. The size of the circle/node for each individual Twitter handle indicates the influence and reach of that account in spreading that particular hashtag. Lines between accounts indicate links between them; the thicker the line, the stronger the link between accounts in relation to the hashtag. The distance between nodes is an indication of the degrees of separation or the number of connections between accounts in relation to the use of that hashtag.

The hashtags examined in this report cover one generic pro-Labour campaign (#GTTO); one generic pro-Corbyn campaign that morphed into support for someone accused of antisemitism (#JC9); a campaign targeting an external Jewish critic of the party (#BoycottRachelRiley); and campaigns against an internal Labour critic of Jeremy Corbyn (#ResignWatson/#TellTomWatson and #SackTomWatson). Their meaning and use are described in more detail in the following

pages. Crucially, the same Engine Room accounts that drive generic pro-Labour hashtag campaigns also drive campaigns relating to the denial of antisemitism and attacking those who complain about antisemitism.

Gephi methodology

This research used the data visualisation tool Gephi to create the hashtag network maps on the following pages. This analyses the dataset of tweets for a particular hashtag to capture relevant data such as tweet type (reply, mention or retweet), source (which account tweeted) and target (which account was, for example, retweeted). The software allows users to dynamically visualise networked data and intuitively discover patterns. This in turn makes it possible to see a cluster of different communities.

Using Gephi's feature for highlighting modularity class, colours can be applied to divide the network according to its different clusters or communities. By applying a degree filter of accounts with 25 connections or more, the dataset's main accounts can be more closely examined. Because of the smaller dataset for #TellTomWatson (9,000 tweets), a degree of 15 (those with 15 connections or more) was applied.

#GTTO network map

The #GTTO hashtag (Get The Tories Out) is a campaigning hashtag designed to rally support for Corbyn and Labour and to call for a Labour government. The hashtag itself has a long history which saw it used for sports,⁴⁷ in the gaming community⁴⁸ and as sexual slang,^{49,50} but the first time it is mentioned in relation to the Conservatives is in February 2015 in a conversation between Jon Cousins (@Rachael_Swindon's husband) and an account called @TheBrRevolution (The British Revolution). The hashtag is then virtually dormant in relation to Labour and Tory politics until September 2018 when various accounts including the Engine Room accounts @Rachael_Swindon and @ScouseGirlMedia launched the hashtag again. It is now very popular amongst Labour supporters, many of whom use #GTTO in their Twitter username.

The network map for #GTTO shows Twitter handles with the highest level of engagement on the #GTTO hashtag. That means they tweet and share the most content about the topic. The bigger the handle (or Twitter name) appears on the graphic, the higher its level of engagement; while the lines between the handles show how much interaction is taking place between them. The network mapping and associated link analysis show that Engine Room accounts have a larger share of engagement, and therefore online reach and influence within these networks, than established commentators like MPs or journalists.

47 <https://twitter.com/CoachDayejr/status/533769624274620416>

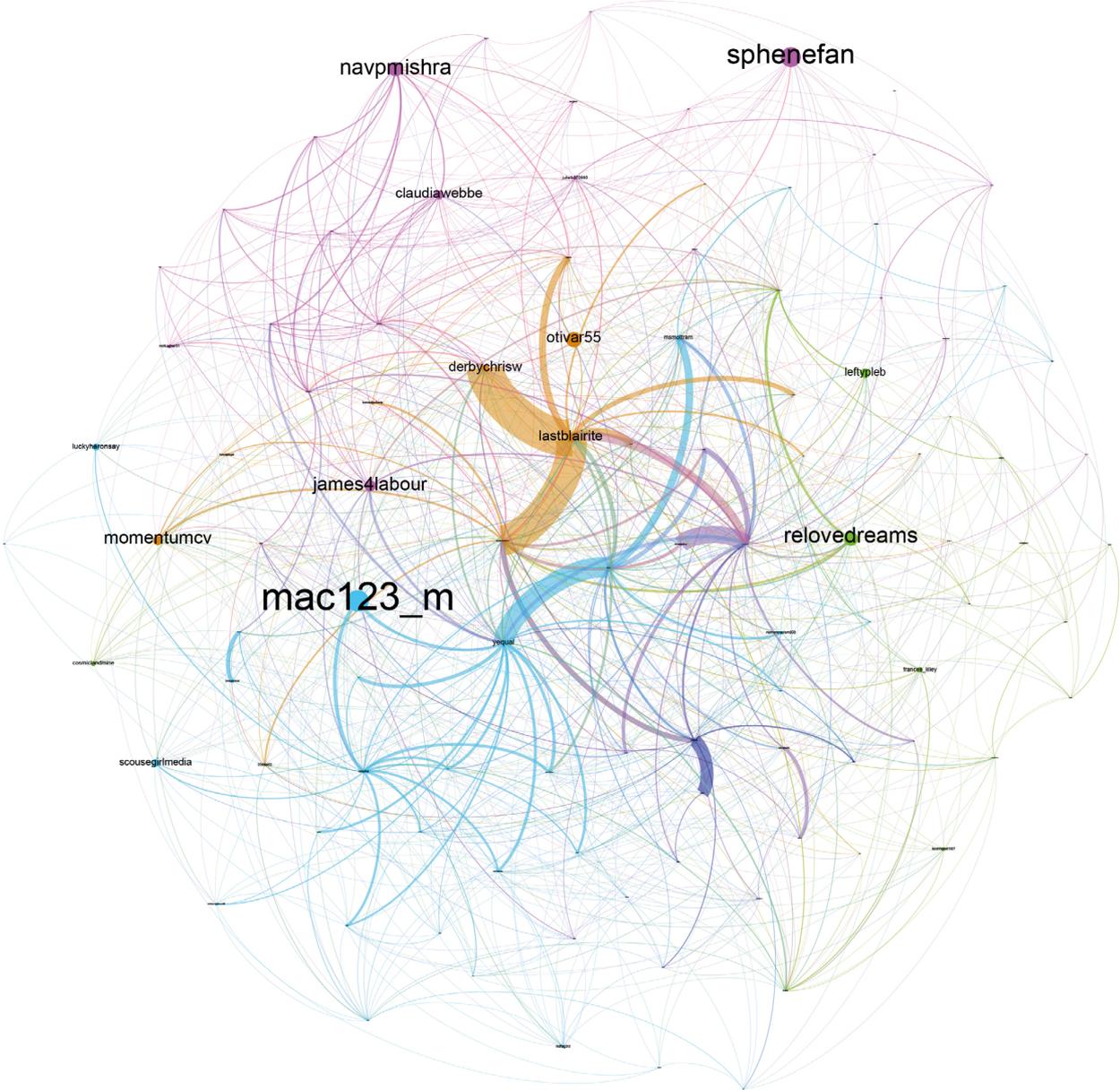
48 <https://twitter.com/MrKikiDontPlay/status/380550533561339904>

49 <https://twitter.com/YourMumzNewBF/status/313153830684614656>

50 https://twitter.com/rakeem_marica/status/433727202090553344



DIAGRAM OF #GTTO NETWORK MAP

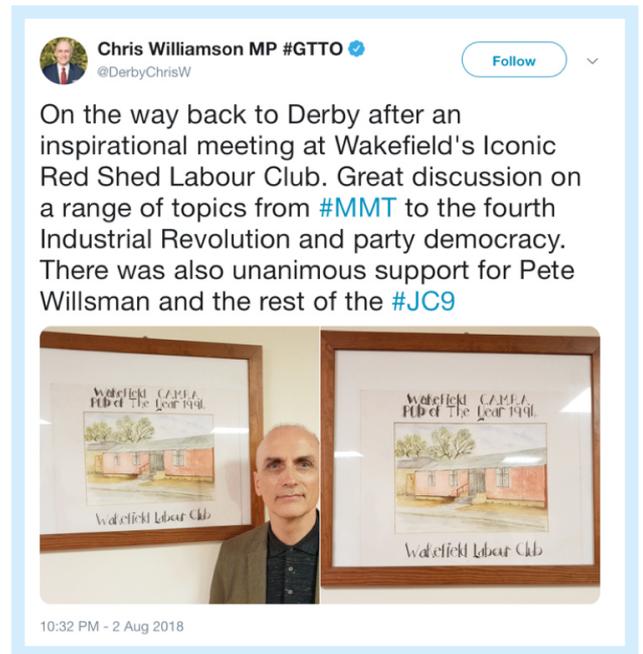


- UK Labour community
- #GTTO community
- Wider #GTTO online support
- Extended #GTTO community

#JC9 network map

#JC9 was a hashtag that ran for several weeks in the run up to Labour's NEC elections in September 2018. The hashtag referred to nine Momentum-approved candidates with Corbyn supporters wanting to ensure all nine were elected to the NEC to help secure control of Labour's governing body. In July 2018 Momentum dropped Peter Willsman, a long-standing supporter of Jeremy Corbyn, from their slate following his claim that British rabbis complaining about Labour antisemitism were "Trump fanatics" making up their allegations; a claim that led to Willsman being accused of antisemitism.⁵¹ Subsequently, the hashtag #JC9 was used as an affirmation of support for Willsman and sign of a rejection of allegations of antisemitism directed at the Labour Party.

This network map shows similar strong presence of Engine Room accounts: many of the same accounts that drove the generic pro-Labour hashtag #GTTO also drove this hashtag. Furthermore, the map shows that several Engine Room accounts are closely linked online to mainstream Labour accounts such as @uklabour, @jeremycorbyn, @peoplesmomentum, @jonlansman and @claudiawebbe. While the content of the tweets on which these links are based will vary, from those criticising Willsman's views to those opposing the decision of Momentum and its founder, Jon Lansman, to remove Willsman from their NEC election slate, their interconnectedness illustrates the ability of the Engine Room accounts to influence Labour's internal online conversation on subjects relating to antisemitism and Jews.



51 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/jul/31/corbyn-ally-says-jewish-trump-fanatics-make-up-antisemitism-claims>

#BoycottRachelRiley network map

This hashtag calling for a boycott of Rachel Riley came after Riley, the star of Countdown and other TV shows, had repeatedly spoken out about antisemitism in the Labour Party and called for Macmillan Cancer Support to stop advertising on The Canary, a leading alt-left media website. The campaign for the hashtag ran from 28th March 2019, having been started by an account called @tedtully, and was soon the number one trending topic in the UK.



Again, the hashtag network map shows the presence of key Engine Room accounts: on this occasion to promote the online bullying of a public personality who had repeatedly spoken out against antisemitism.



According to one analysis of the campaign, ten per cent of the accounts using the hashtag were responsible for 45 per cent of the tweets involved.⁵² This shows the ability of a relatively small number of dedicated Twitter users to generate significant online influence, so that their views and opinions dominate the online conversation and outweigh other trending Twitter content.



⁵² <https://twitter.com/Psythor/status/1111396106510979072>

#ResignWatson/TellTomWatson network map

#ResignWatson was a hashtag that ran in August 2018. It was launched by the account @damian_from in response to Tom Watson calling antisemitism allegations and the way they had been dealt with an "eternal shame" on the Labour Party.⁵³ It was used in conjunction with a second hashtag, #TellTomWatson, so the two hashtags are analysed together in this map.

The hashtag was a textbook case in how Twitter networks can create headlines and online buzz around a particular issue. The hashtag was launched in the small hours of Saturday night/Sunday morning and then focused with the request for a 7pm Twitterstorm (a Twitterstorm is when multiple users coordinate tweets using a single hashtag to get their chosen hashtag trending and draw attention to their campaign). During the day alt-left media sites like Skwawkbox promoted the Twitterstorm which peaked between 7pm and 8pm that evening, making #ResignWatson the top trending hashtag worldwide.⁵⁴ Of the 89,373 tweets sent using the hashtag, 62 per cent came from 1,200 accounts, showing how a network of accounts can multiply their influence until their chosen hashtag becomes the most prominent campaign on global Twitter.



53 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/aug/04/tom-watson-labour-antisemitism-eternal-shame>

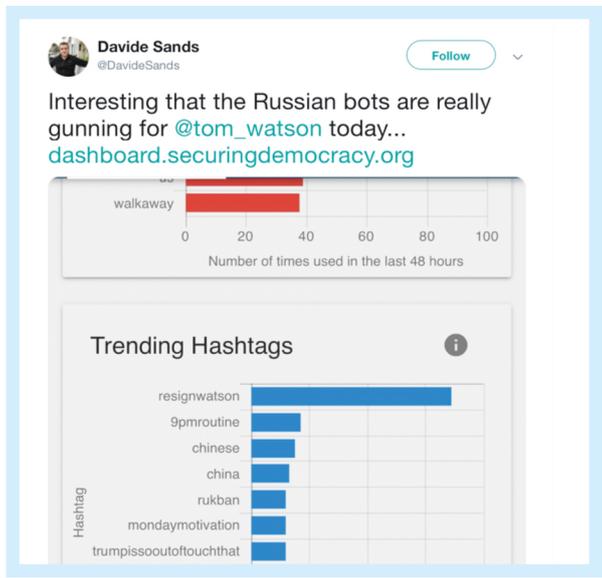
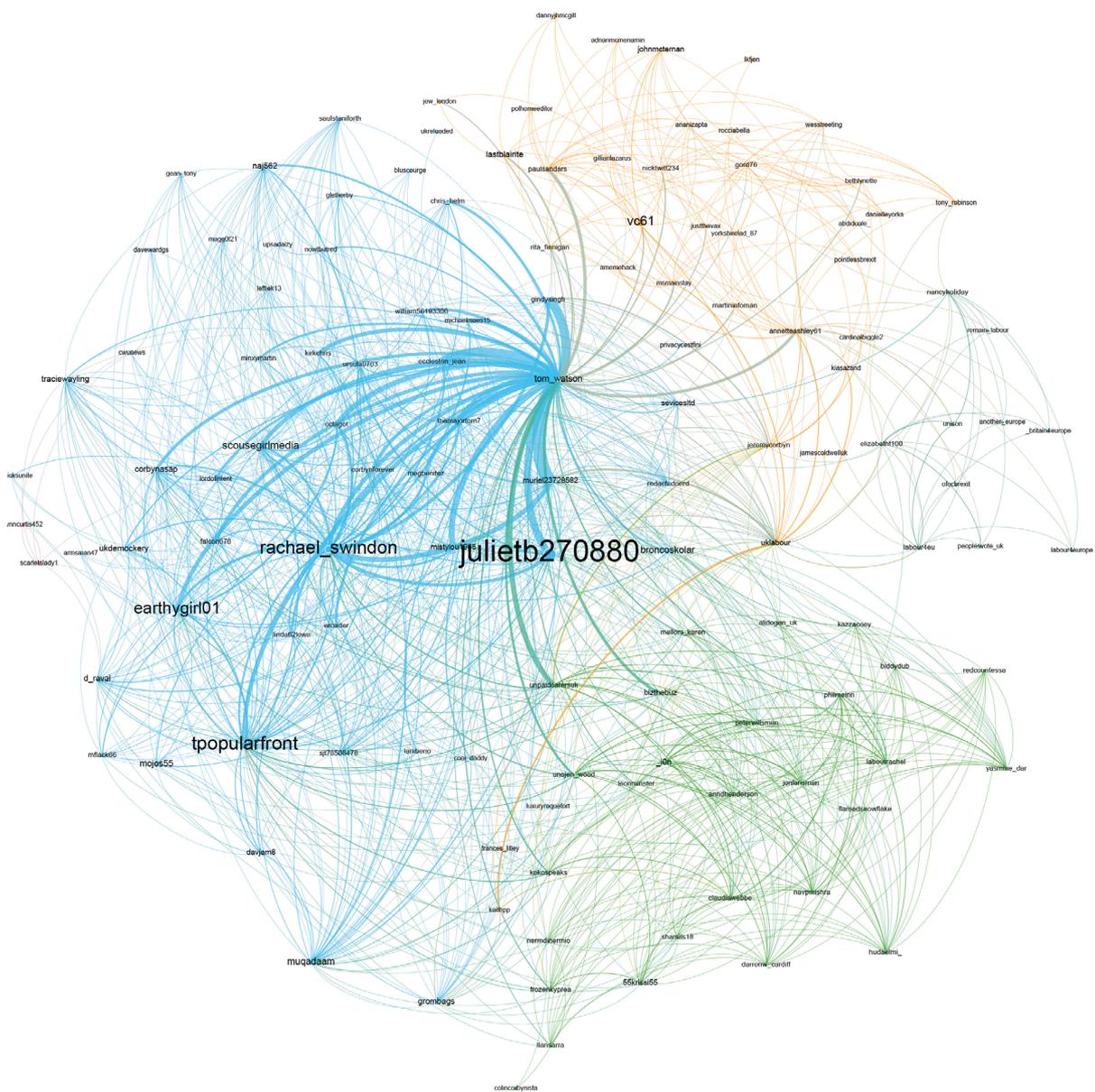
54 <https://skwawkbox.org/2018/08/05/resignwatson-reaches-no-1-global-trending-spot>



Engine Room accounts were again heavily involved in promoting this Twitterstorm. Unlike the previous hashtag #BoycottRachelRiley, this particular campaign was used to attack an internal Labour Party critic of Jeremy Corbyn. The fact that Tom Watson is the elected deputy leader of the party did not protect him.

However, in addition to Engine Room and other Labour-supporting accounts, the Alliance for Securing Democracy – a bipartisan US think tank – suggested that the hashtag may have also benefitted from promotion by 'bots', or

DIAGRAM OF #TELLTOMWATSON NETWORK MAP



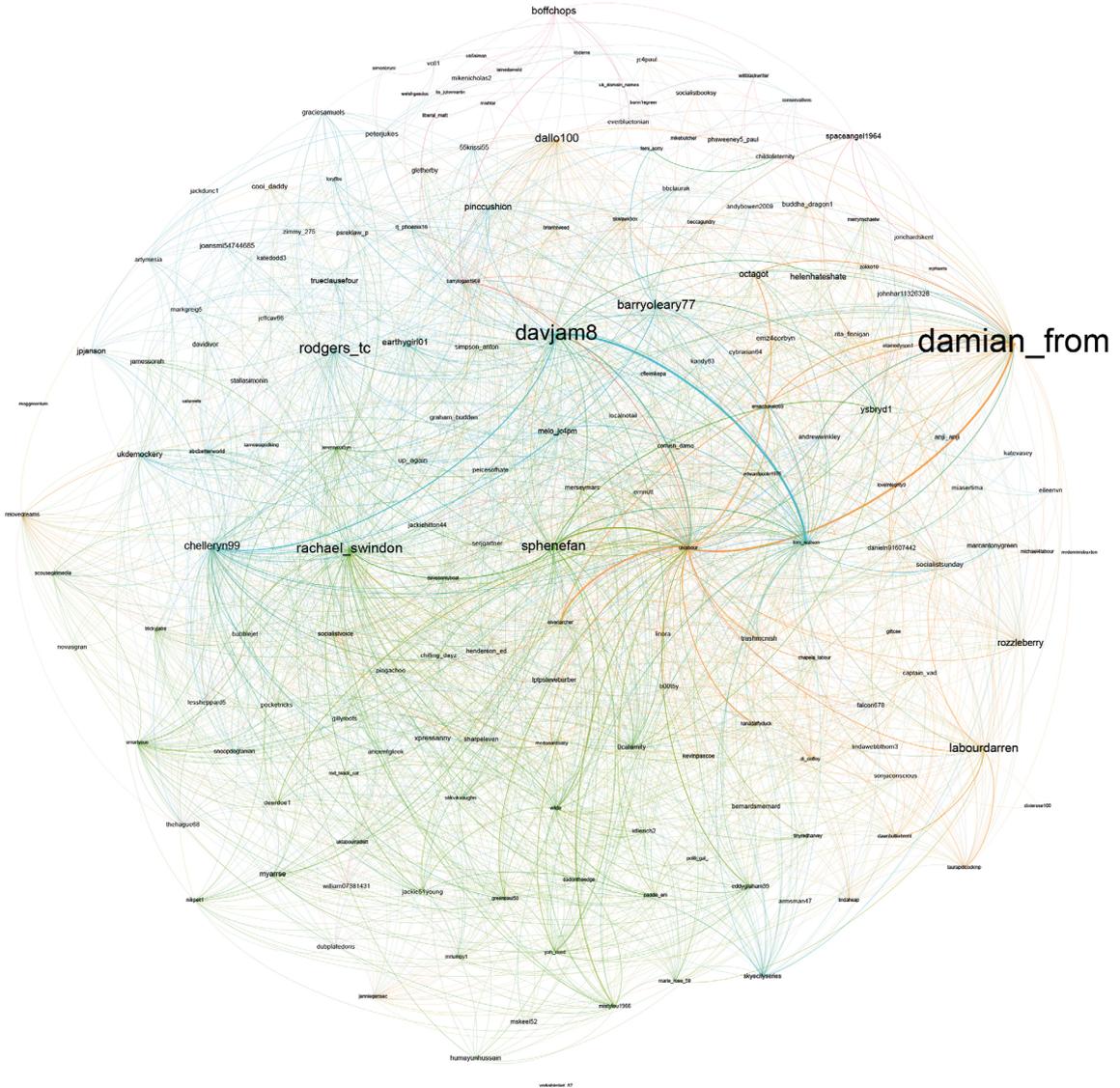
- UK Labour community
- #TellTomWatson community
- Wider #TellTomWatson online support

automated accounts used to promote or amplify content for political purposes, but not linked to individual human Twitter users. However, one effect of Twitterstorms is that the accounts involved can appear to have bot-like behaviour with high frequency tweeting and time-limited activity.

#SackTomWatson network map

Similar to #ResignWatson, this hashtag was led by the account @damian_from. It was again focused and organised by a Twitterstorm.

DIAGRAM OF #SACKTOMWATSON NETWORK MAP



- UK Labour community
- #SackTomWatson community
- Wider #SackTomWatson online support

'SMEARS'

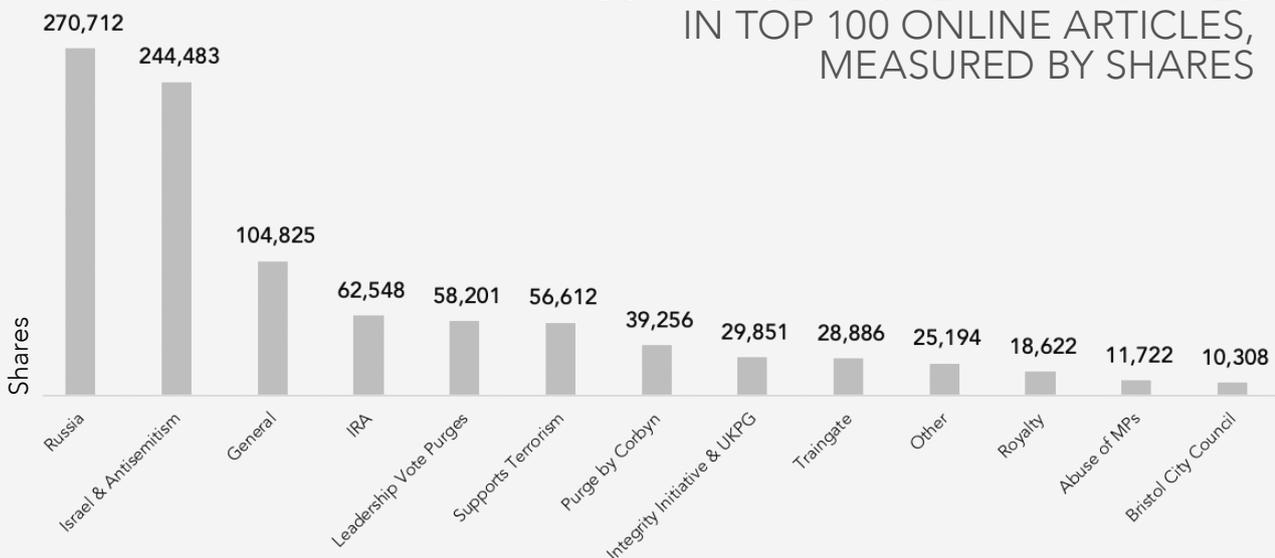
The idea that Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party are the victims of smears by their political opponents is a common response to allegations of wrongdoing. This includes the idea that Corbyn is being smeared as an antisemite; as a supporter of terrorism and of the IRA; as an extremist; as being close to, or soft on, Russia; as being smeared over his views of the Royal family; and, in one case, in a row over whether he could find a seat on a Virgin train. These are all subjects over which Corbyn has been criticised by his political opponents and in the media; and some of his supporters have, in turn, claimed that these were not genuine or legitimate criticisms, but were invented or orchestrated smears being used to damage his reputation. This section of the report will examine the popularity of these different 'smear' narratives, and look in more detail at the most popular articles and websites promoting the idea that allegations of antisemitism are part of a smear campaign against Corbyn and Labour.

A keyword search for the words Labour, Corbyn and Momentum alongside terms such as smear, purge, witchhunt, lynch mob and lobby returned 2,564 articles published over the past five

years, associated with 1,563,995 social media reactions. This section of the report is based on that dataset. Some terms that might be considered relevant could not be used as they produced too many irrelevant or misleading results. For example, 'traitor' produced articles claiming that Corbyn is himself a traitor due to alleged support for terrorist organisations; while 'elite' is too vague and multi-faceted a term, even though conspiracy theories about shadowy elites can sometimes provide a framework for antisemitism to enter.

In the top 100 online articles in the dataset from all sources (ranked by number of shares), articles suggesting that Corbyn is the victim of a smear campaign relating to Israel or antisemitism were the second most popular type of smear narratives. The only smear narrative that was more popular was the idea that Corbyn is smeared by allegations relating to his attitude towards Russia and the Soviet Union. It should be noted that popularity in this case indicates the extent to which articles making these claims are shared across UK social media, rather than simply the number of articles themselves.

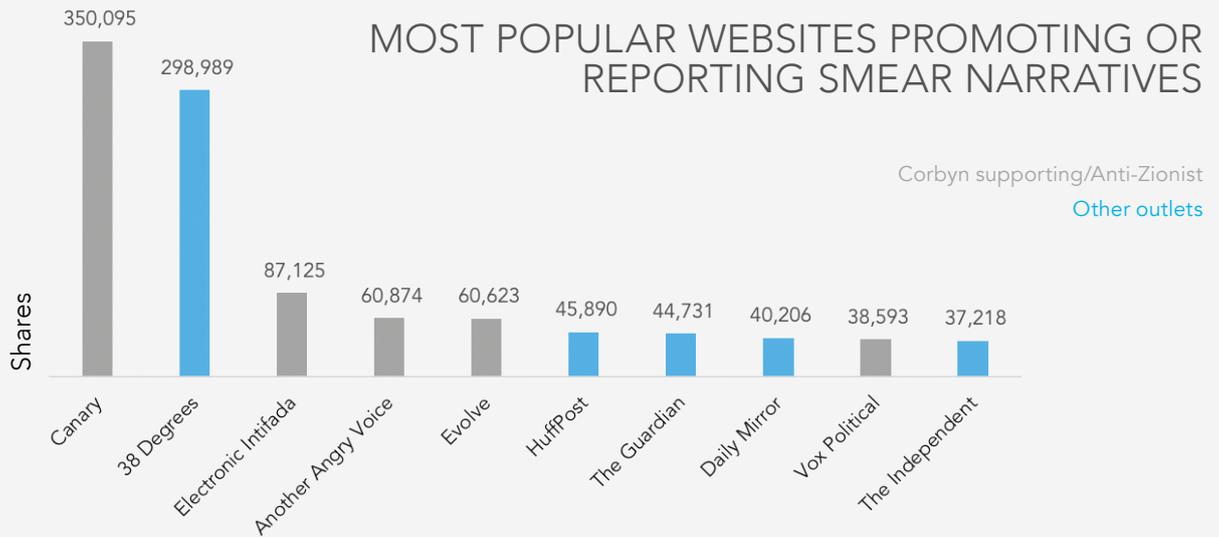
MOST POPULAR SMEAR NARRATIVES IN TOP 100 ONLINE ARTICLES, MEASURED BY SHARES



Most popular websites promoting or reporting smear narratives

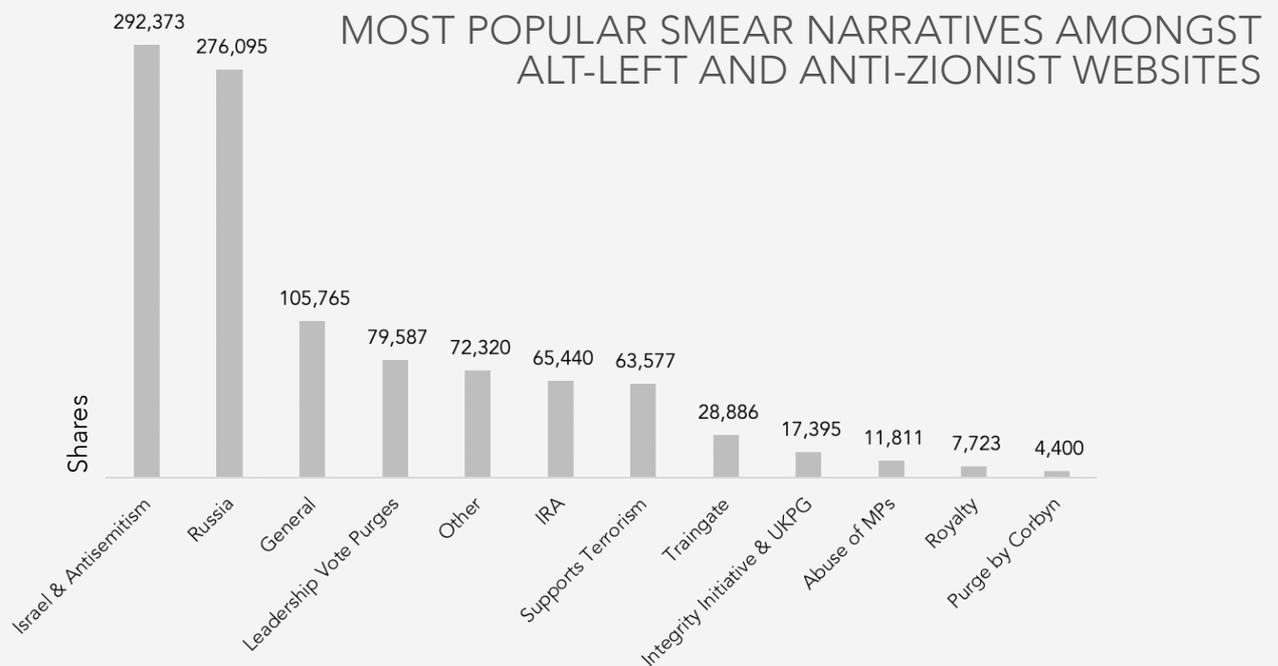
The online discussion about all types of smears and purges, and about the role of lobbies in promoting alleged smears, tends to be dominated by shares of articles originating with dedicated Corbyn-supporting or anti-Israel outlets. As the

next graph shows, four of the top five online sources of articles relating to all types of smear narratives (ranked by popularity according to number of shares) are websites fitting this description; while the other, 38 Degrees, is a public petition website that carried a petition arguing that allegations of Labour antisemitism are a smear.



Looking exclusively at a wider group of pro-Corbyn, alt-left media and anti-Zionist news websites, this next graph shows that discussion of alleged smears relating to Israel and antisemitism was – perhaps unsurprisingly – the most popular smear narrative for these types of

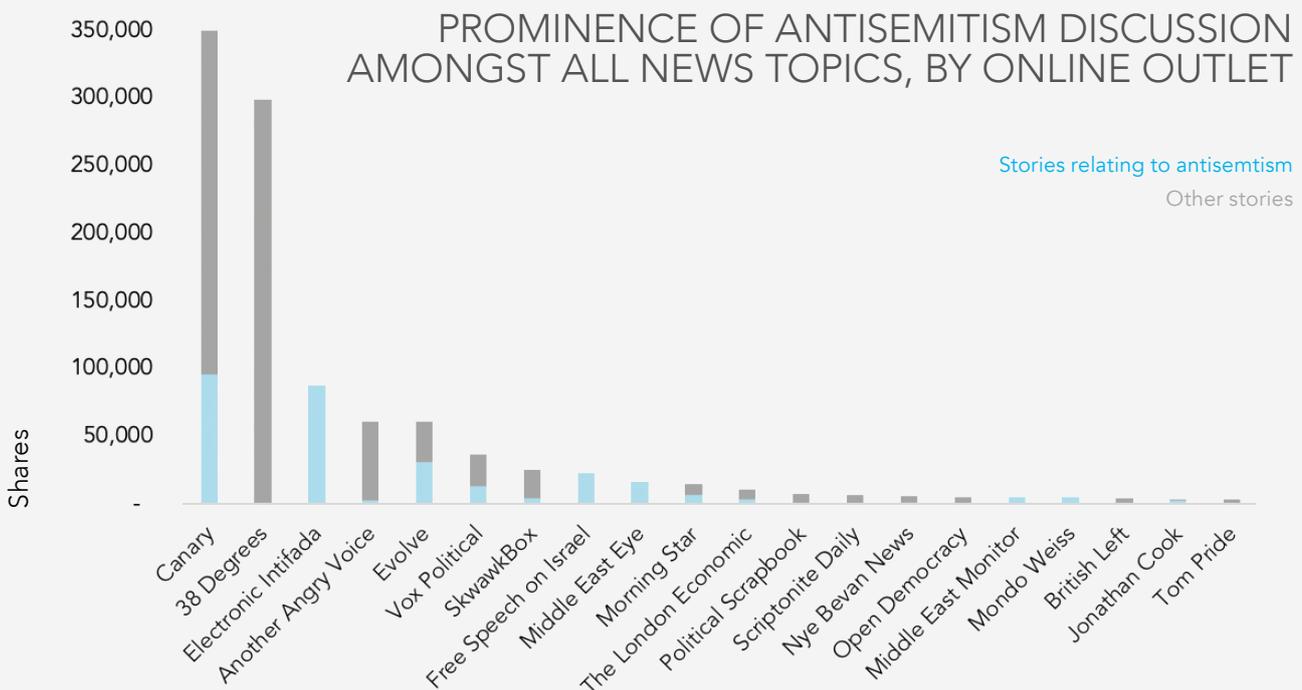
websites. This suggests that these websites play an important role in driving the wider popularity of this particular narrative amongst the variety of claims that Corbyn and Labour are the victims of smears from their opponents.



Prominence of antisemitism discussion amongst all news topics, by online outlet⁵⁵

This graph shows the popularity of stories in this dataset relating to antisemitism and Israel amongst all other news topics for different websites. It shows that for some websites, such as Electronic Intifada or Free Speech on Israel, their entire shared output in relation to smears and lobbies is focused on allegations of antisemitism, or claims that Israel is behind a smear campaign to damage Jeremy Corbyn. For other pro-Corbyn websites, such as The Canary, Evolve or the Morning Star, this issue comprises a significant proportion of the shares attracted by their output, outweighing other policy issues and topics that might be expected to be of more interest to their readers.

⁵⁵ Based on previously identified domains supporting 'smear' narratives

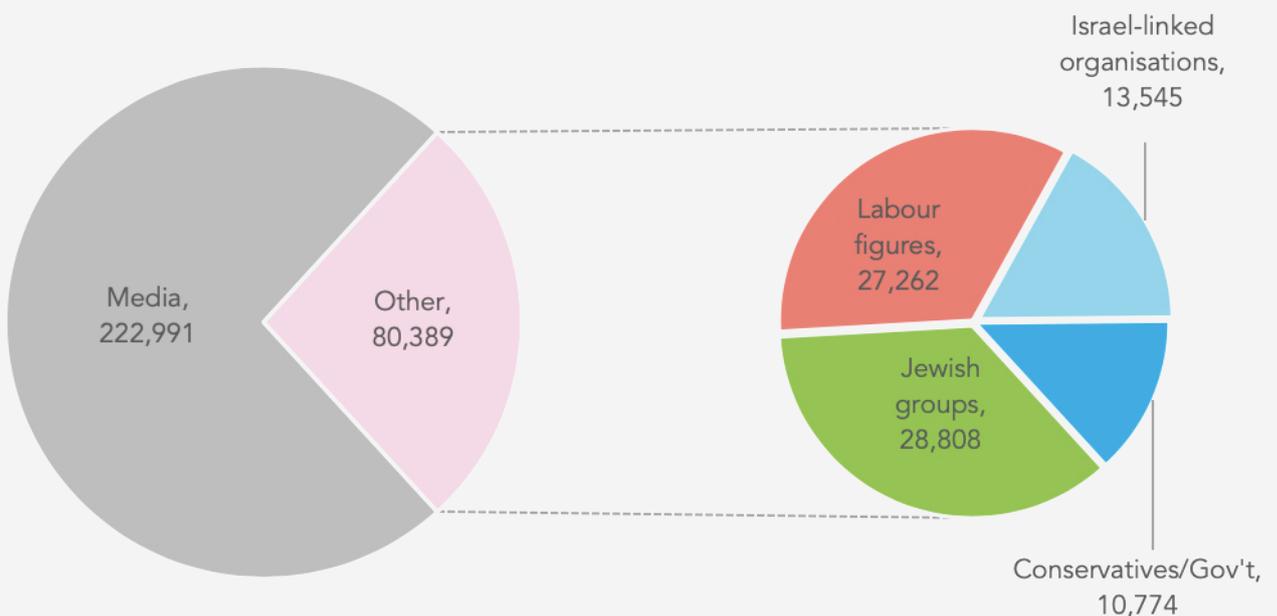


Who is blamed for the antisemitism smear?

An important question is who these articles blame for the alleged smear campaign against Jeremy Corbyn in relation to antisemitism. This chart shows that articles claiming such a smear campaign exists blame five main sources: the media; other Labour Party figures; Israel-linked organisations; Jewish groups; and the Conservative Party/government.

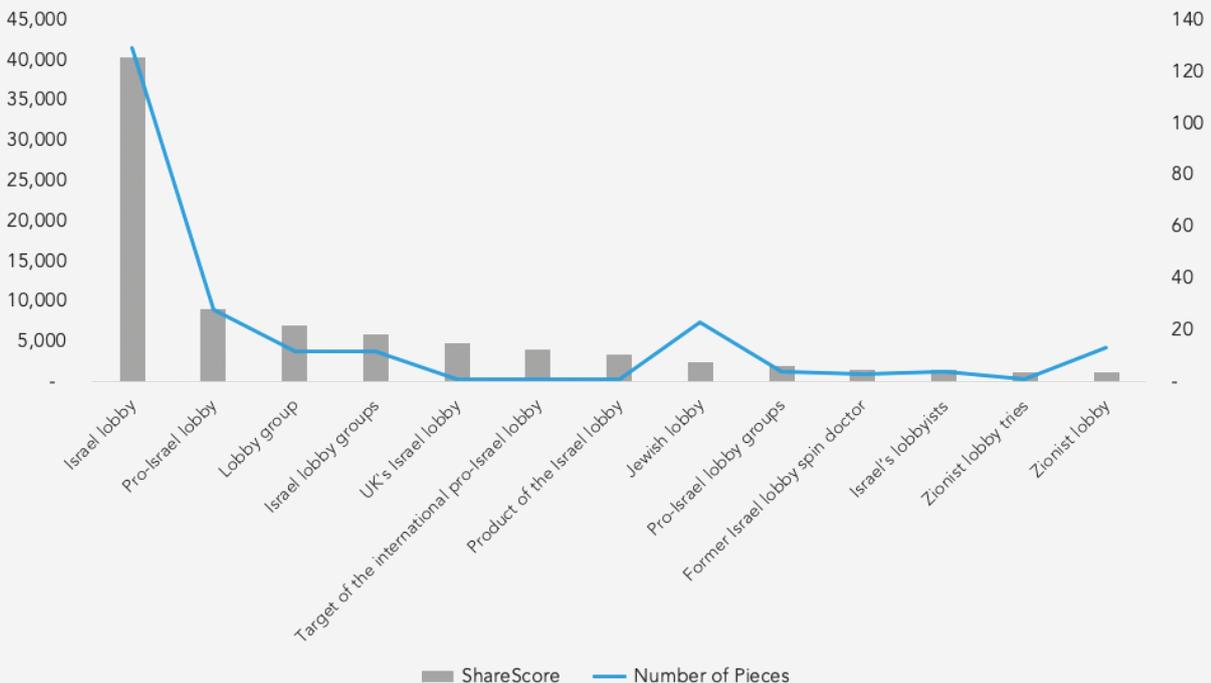
As these results show, articles blaming the media for this perceived smear campaign are the most popular, comprising 74 per cent of all article shares. Amongst the other four alleged sources of an antisemitism smear campaign, articles claiming that Jewish groups are smearing Corbyn and Labour as antisemitic are more popular than articles blaming Corbyn's internal Labour opponents or those blaming the Conservative Party or government. Articles blaming Jewish groups are twice as popular as articles blaming Israel-linked organisations; which suggests that the narrative of a smear campaign against Corbyn over antisemitism influences or reflects how Corbyn's online

supporters view British Jews, more than it influences or reflects how they view Israel. Organisations identified in articles in this dataset include UK Jewish organisations such as CST, The Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Jewish Chronicle and the Jewish Labour Movement, while Israel-linked organisations that are identified include Labour Friends of Israel and BICOM (Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre).



'LOBBIES'

In the context of online discussions of antisemitism, assertions about the actions of lobby groups deliberately fabricating antisemitism accusations, described variously by the labels 'Israel lobby', 'Jewish lobby', 'Zionist lobby' or derivatives of those terms, can be indicative of narratives that combine the idea of a smear campaign against Labour, with echoes of older antisemitic conspiracy tropes about shadowy influence and political power. As this table shows, the most-frequently used keyword (or phrase) containing 'lobby' in this dataset (measured by number of articles on the right-hand side, and articles shares on the left) is 'Israel lobby', which appears in 129 articles. Indeed, this dataset is dominated by articles about an 'Israel lobby', 'pro-Israel lobby', 'Israel lobby groups', 'UK's Israel lobby', 'international pro-Israel lobby' and so on. Twenty-three articles include explicit statements about a 'Jewish lobby'. Articles mentioning a 'Jewish lobby' were more popular than articles mentioning a 'Zionist lobby'.



EPILOGUE: Panorama

On 10 July 2019, while this report was in its final stages of preparation, BBC1 broadcast an episode of its flagship current affairs programme, Panorama, on the subject of "Is Labour Antisemitic?" According to the preview on the Panorama website, the episode promised: "Panorama goes inside the anti-Semitism crisis gripping Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party. With exclusive interviews from key insiders and access to confidential communications and documents, this is the story of how the crises developed. Reporter John Ware reveals the evasions and contradictions at the heart of the political party which leader Jeremy Corbyn says has anti-racism at its very core."⁵⁶

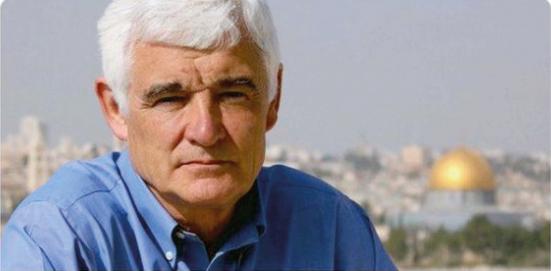
The response to this from the Engine Room accounts identified in this report was striking in its consistency and its coordination. Several different accounts began to attack Panorama, the BBC and the programme's presenter, John Ware. They retweeted each other and developed related hashtags, even discussing the use of Twitterstorms to try to dominate the online conversation about the programme. Lines of attack included questioning the BBC's political neutrality and Ware's personal views. The narrative that allegations of antisemitism are a smear was prominent, as were references to other tropes and narratives outlined in this report. An alt-left media site, Skwawkbox, provided an article about Ware for the accounts to share online as source material. It was a case study demonstrating exactly the same online behaviour identified in this research and described in this report. Below are some of the tweets put out by Engine Room accounts in relation to Panorama.

⁵⁶ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0006p8c/panorama-is-labour-antisemitic>



JmRoyle #GTO @MyArrse Follow

The background of the man behind the Panorama 'hatchet job' on The Labour Party. John Ware: A Pro-Israel former Sun Journalist and maker of Islamophobia.



The background of the man behind the Panorama 'hatchet job' – or 'jobs' – o...
John Ware: pro-Israel former Sun journalist and maker of libellous output condemned as Islamophobe and already subject of complaint by Labour over earlier 'hatchet j...
skwawkbox.org

9:35 am - 7 Jul 2019

Rachael Swindon #EL4C @Rachael_Swindon Follow

Missed our programme? Highlights include testimonies from several Corbyn haters, one that threatened to beat up a Jewish Labour member and another that sat next to Joan Ryan while she welcomed the £1m 'investment', edited emails, made up quotes, we've got the lot. [#BBCHatchetJob](#)

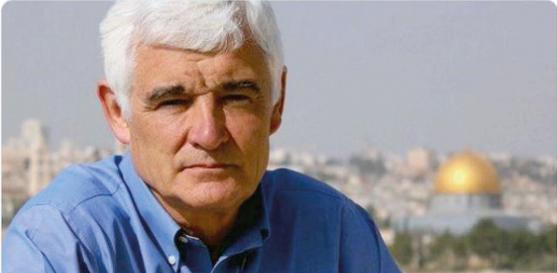


Panorama @BBCPanorama
Missed our programme, 'Is Labour Anti-Semitic?' tonight?
If so, watch our social video below and don't forget to share 📢 ...

10:34 am - 11 Jul 2019

Chuka Umunna's Flip Flops @WarmongerHodges Follow

Murdoch man behind Panorama's "exposé" of antisemitism in the Labour Party, John Ware, has faced numerous accusations of Islamophobia and once described ultra-Orthodox anti-Zionist Jews as "marooned on Judaism's farthest fringe". [#HatchetJob](#) [skwawkbox.org/2019/07/07/the](#) ... via [@skwawkbox](#)



The background of the man behind the Panorama 'hatchet job' – or 'jobs' – o...
John Ware: pro-Israel former Sun journalist and maker of libellous output condemned as Islamophobe and already subject of complaint by Labour over earlier 'hatchet j...
skwawkbox.org

9:30 am - 7 Jul 2019

Tom London @TomLondon6 Follow

Let's be clear - the issue of the Panorama program, added to many other examples of systemic anti-Corbyn bias on [@BBCNews](#), goes to the very heart of the crisis of *democracy* in the UK.

11:23 pm - 10 Jul 2019

Chuka Umunna's Flip Flops @WarmongerHodges Follow

Watching [#Panorama](#) last night, it struck me that John Ware must be a fan of Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels. From the laughably biased narrative and brazen disregard for facts, to the reliance on unsubstantiated allegations and use of portentous music, the influence is obvious.

11:18 am - 11 Jul 2019

George Galloway @georgegalloway Follow

The leaked Labour line to take on Panorama is almost the precise opposite of the line which should have been taken from the start. This program is a state-sponsored smear. There is no "anti-Semitism crisis" in Labour. Anti-Zionism is NOT anti-Semitism. There, I fixed it for you.

6:44 pm - 10 Jul 2019

 **Damian from Brighton**
@damian_from

Follow

Tonight, after the [#Panorama](#) [#BBCHatchetJob](#), the reputation and the credibility of the [@BBC](#) lie in tatters.

It is also worth remembering that this is an organisation which broadcast the Eurovision Song Contest from an apartheid state.

11:52 pm - 10 Jul 2019

 **Evolve Politics**
@evolvepolitics

Follow

Replying to [@mrwtch](#)

The [#Panorama](#) documentary contained literal lies and outright distortions. It's very hard for people not to get angry about "smears" when such tactics are being used by our supposedly impartial public broadcaster. It completely undermines the fight against racism - on all sides.

10:28 pm - 10 Jul 2019

 **Bevan Boy**
@mac123_m

Follow

The full Labour party rebuttal of the Panorama program.

Please RT.
[#Panorama](#)
[#BBCHatchetJob](#)



Full text: Labour complaint letter to BBC about Panorama antisemitism episo...
Ahead of Panorama's episode of Labour antisemitism, which airs tonight at 9pm, Labour submitted a complaint to the...
labourlist.org

Spartacus @Livlonanprspcr · 17 Aug 2016

Why does Rachael care what happens in Labour it's not her party & never has been

 **Rachael** @Rachael_Swindon · Jun 27
[@janemerrick23](#) Please do explain the relevance, I'm not a Labour member nor would I want to be.

1 3

 **Chelley Ryan** [#RJC0B](#) @chellern99 · 17 Aug 2016
best you ask [@Rachael_Swindon](#) herself.

1 1

 **Nadeem Ahmed**
@Muqadaam

Follow

These antisemitic smears are just ridiculous and need to stop. Criticising Israel for butcher of Palestinians is not racism.

We must understand this and not wrongly accuse critics.

[#Panorama](#)

8:58 pm - 10 Jul 2019

 **Peter #DangerousHero**
@petergloss

Follow

Replying to [@Elise_Editing](#) [@zokko10](#) and 2 others

[#Panorama](#) [#boycotthebbc](#)

8:05 pm - 10 Jul 2019



ABOUT SIGNIFY

Signify is a data science company. Focusing on data ethics, Signify delivers machine-learning driven insight solutions and works on Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) investigations. Past projects include investigating social media death threats targeting UK MPs due to their stance on Brexit; analysing disinformation campaigns that target sexual health clinics; and mapping the use of social platforms in the dissemination of material inciting anti-Muslim hatred.



CST'S MISSION

- To work at all times for the physical protection and defence of British Jews.
- To represent British Jews on issues of racism, antisemitism, extremism, policing and security.
- To promote good relations between British Jews and the rest of British society by working towards the elimination of racism, and antisemitism in particular.
- To facilitate Jewish life by protecting Jews from the dangers of antisemitism, and antisemitic terrorism in particular.
- To help those who are victims of antisemitic hatred, harassment or bias.
- To promote research into racism, antisemitism and extremism; and to use this research for the benefit of both the Jewish community and society in general.
- To speak responsibly at all times, without exaggeration or political favour, on antisemitism and associated issues.



Signify ((o))



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Community Security Trust



CSTmedia



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London (Head Office) **020 8457 9999**

Manchester (Northern Regional Office) **0161 792 6666**