

Manchester “anti-Semitism” protest

Blairites and Tories share platform calling for Corbyn’s removal

By Robert Stevens
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Last Sunday’s rally in Manchester, supposedly a “Jewish community” protest against anti-Semitism, was a gathering of the usual suspects leading the campaign to remove Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the Labour Party. It was noteworthy in that Blairite MPs shared a platform with Conservative MPs and openly discussed how best to split the Labour Party.

Speaking on a stage with a huge British flag as a backdrop was Labour MP Dame Margaret Hodge, who described herself as an “accepted figure of the British establishment,” and other Labourites Dame Louise Ellman, Lucy Powell, James Frith and Kate Green. They spoke alongside Ivan Lewis MP, who recently resigned from the Labour Party, and Tory MPs Chris Green and Mary Robinson, with the Conservative government sending a message of support from Home Secretary Sajid Javid.

The demonstration was dutifully portrayed by the media as representing the views of the majority of Jews in the UK and described by the *Jerusalem Post* as having a “huge turnout.” In reality attendance at a national demo backed by 32 Jewish organisations did not exceed a thousand, despite the Greater Manchester area being home to the largest Jewish population outside of London.

No slander against Corbyn, his supporters and ordinary Labour members was too vile.

Marie van der Zyl, the president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, accused Corbyn of “picking a fight with the Jews. People used to criticise Jeremy Corbyn for his apathy. But now who can deny his own complicity.”

Hodge, who helped initiate the failed 2016 coup against Corbyn and who screamed in his face in

Parliament that he was a “f---ing anti-Semite and a racist,” claimed that the “anti-Semitic abuse” she had suffered as a result was “greater in number and more horrid in content, than what I was subjected to by Nick Griffin and the [fascist] BNP [British National Party] some 10 years ago.”

Hodge said she would never accept anti-Semitism that is “dressed up as something else, the defence of Palestinian rights, when it is the plain, simple hatred of Jews.”

Feeling himself among friends, the Tory Chris Green not only called for Corbyn’s removal, but suggested how the Blairites could defy the democratic will of their own party’s members and strike an independent path in Parliament.

Referring to Corbyn’s supporters as anti-Semites, he said, “We have to ask the question, if [Blairite] Liz Kendall was elected leader of the Labour Party would we be here right now? If [Blairites] Andy Burnham or Yvette Copper became leader of the Labour Party would we be here right now? We are here right now because the Labour membership, not once, but twice overwhelmingly elected Jeremy Corbyn to be the leader of the Labour party.”

“If the Labour members of parliament cannot eject him because he was put in his place by the membership,” then Labour MPs and councillors must “challenge Jeremy Corbyn and eject him.”

With Theresa May’s government tottering on the brink of collapse as tensions deepen over Brexit, with a scheduled exit from the EU less than 200 days away, the ruling elite fear the social and political implications of a Corbyn government coming to power with the support of millions opposed to austerity, militarism and

war. Green gave voice to these fears, warning his audience that at last year's general election, Labour "came within 20,000 votes around the country of being able to form a coalition government and Jeremy Corbyn becoming prime minister.

"I know how fragile our politics are at the moment. We could have a general election this year. We could have a general election next year and with the Conservatives mired in our difficulties, it is entirely believable that the leader of the Labour Party could become prime minister.

"That means if the Labour Party do not deal with Jeremy Corbyn they have to take action now."

If Corbyn could not be removed, due to the widespread hatred of the Blairite coup plotters, then, "we need to have a new party," Green declared.

He said of the Co-Operative Party, which is affiliated to the Labour Party and has 38 overwhelmingly Blairite MPs in Parliament, "They could take the front bench of the SNP" [Scottish National Party as the second main party in opposition to the Tories]. "They could sit challenging the Labour leadership. The time to act is now."

Green was lending public support to a plan initiated by the Blairites and revealed that same day in an article in the pro-Tory *Mail on Sunday*.

"The prospect of an anti-Corbyn split in the Labour Party mounted last night after moderate MPs admitted plotting to form a 'breakaway' faction at Westminster," the *Mail* reported.

The *Mail* reported the "Co-Operative Party ... drew up plans to win the right to sponsor their own Commons debates separately from Labour ... One senior Labour MP said the new party wanted to hit the ground running by immediately replacing the 35-strong Scottish Nationalists [Scottish National Party-SNP] as the second Opposition party behind Labour in the Commons—giving it a leading role in Prime Minister's Questions each week. He said: 'There are various crucial hurdles the rebels have to meet but the first is making sure they launch with more than 35 MPs signed up. That would automatically put them ahead of the SNP and require the Speaker to recognise them as second Opposition party with the right to put two questions to the PM each week'."

The *Mail on Sunday* added: "The move was quietly shelved after the group—which includes arch-Corbyn

critics such as Chris Leslie as well as Jewish MP Luciana Berger, who has slammed Mr. Corbyn for inaction over anti-Semitism—were told they would have to form a whole new party to qualify for the new position."

Green was repeatedly cheered and applauded for his comments—a measure of the right-wing character of the protest itself in a metropolitan area that is a Labour stronghold, with only four Tory MPs.

The Co-Operative Party manoeuvre he cited may have stalled, but the same forces will continue to plot against their own party's membership in alliance with the Tories and various Zionist groups so long as Corbyn and his leadership clique oppose demands that they are driven out of the Labour Party.

Manchester Central MP Lucy Powell supported the 2016 coup against Corbyn. She was among the Labourites who resigned from Corbyn's shadow cabinet en masse in 2016, one of the 172 MPs who passed a motion of no confidence in him and then backed the failed leadership challenge by Owen Smith. As Powell was speaking a section of the crowd started chanting, "Corbyn out!"

She responded to applause, "You don't need to heckle me because I am on your side 100 percent ... Your views ... will send an incredibly strong message ... a message I will take back to Parliament, to the Labour Party and I take everywhere I go."

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