

### **Annex 3**

## **Case notes from Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi JVL media officer, former vice-chair, Chingford and Woodford Green CLP**

Like all my fellow officers and national committee members, I am Jewish, a full JVL member. Both my parents came from East End Jewish immigrant families. Their parents were part of the flight from Eastern Europe at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, steeped in Jewish traditions which were sustained even as the family became largely secular after WWII.

My mother and father were staunch Labour supporters, members of Withington constituency party in south Manchester as well as being active CND members. I have been an active member of the party since September 2015. I was vice-chair of Chingford and Woodford Green CLP at the time of my suspension, having been elected to the post three times. I'm a life member of the NUJ and a retired but still very involved member of the NEU, formerly as a school rep and currently as International Solidarity Officer for the Waltham Forest Association. I've been a committed anti-racist, anti-war campaigner for decades and have taken a leading role in many campaigns for justice for Palestinians, including as a member of Jews for Justice for Palestinians.

Anonymous complaints against me, apparently leaked by someone at a confidential delegate meeting of my CLP last November 30, were [published in the Jewish Chronicle \(JC\)](#) on 1 December 2020. It quoted unnamed complainants accusing me of stating that "Jews" are "gate keepers for what can and can't be discussed in meetings." In another alleged comment, taken from the Zoom chat during the same GC meeting, I am accused of having 'openly praised the speech by another member who had attacked the alleged "weaponisation" of antisemitism claims.'

I was suspended on December 2, and when my charge sheet eventually arrived on January 19, the allegations were the same. Either the same anonymous informant contacted the party directly, or they used the JC as a conduit.

I was presented with the two alleged statements and some quotations from the party's rule book, implying that I had breached the rules in an antisemitic manner, although no argument was offered in evidence. I was invited to justify the statements without knowing what it was about them that my accusers believed to be antisemitic or in some way in breach of the rules.

The first accusation is based on a few words taken completely out of context. The Labour Party clearly took no care to check the evidence.

My spoken words, [available in transcript and on video](#), were: "The idea ... that Jewish people require for their comfort that whole swathes of subjects should not be debated by the membership of this party is insulting to Jewish people...Do we really want us Jewish members to be seen as gatekeepers – as people who prevent others from discussing issues of importance? This is serious stuff comrades."

The misquotation erases my Jewish identity, transforming a remark in which I identified with other Jewish members like me being stigmatised, into a pejorative comment implying hostility to "Jews". What I said expressed regret that an unfavourable impression had been created (by the general secretary in his instructions sent to CLPs at the end of November) about "us Jewish members" – that is, about me and others like me.

My statement in the chat was in support of a non-Jewish comrade: "May I just say there are many Jews in the party, including me, who endorse 100 per cent what P\*\*\* said about the weaponisation. The cynical manipulation of Jewish fears and concerns is unforgivable and undermines all our work against racism of all kinds."

Both my comments reflect my view, shared by many of us, that we are witnessing a dangerous concentration on so-called "new antisemitism", or "left antisemitism," alleging that critical views of Israel and support for Palestine are motivated by hostility towards Jews as Jews. We see alarming evidence that this misplaced emphasis is suppressing legitimate speech and diverting attention away from the true source of the threat we and other racialised communities face - the threat of rising bigotry on the right and far right.

This rise is very disturbing and frightening to me. Like everyone raised in a Jewish family setting, I grew up knowing what antisemitism is in the depth of my being. We all carry the fear of it with us through our lives. The allegations against me ignore this essential background, misrepresenting and decontextualizing what I had said.

Actress Miriam Margolyes has sent the party a supportive statement protesting at my suspension. She said:

Her views on Israel and antisemitism are clear. I SHARE THEM ENTIRELY. To say she is anti-Semite is utter nonsense; her whole life has been spent fighting racism of all kinds and we bring disrepute on the Party if we call such warriors 'anti-Semites'.

Miriam added:

There has been an absurd conflation of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, which has bedevilled the Party & the definition recently adopted has worked against us all. There IS anti-Semitism in the Party, always has been. And it's worse in the Tory Party but to call Naomi names of this sort is foolish and I would say - evil. JUST STOP. Re-instate her and focus on the real fight ahead.

My case has not been settled yet and I am threatened with further action from the Party if I publish this information. But I am not alone in feeling we Jews whose voices are being silenced must defend ourselves vigorously and look for justice outside the Party.