Labour Party suspends Jeremy Corbyn from membership

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Jeremy Corbyn has been suspended from the Labour Party for pointing out that the party bureaucracy obstructed attempts to deal with genuine cases of antisemitism, and his political opponents dramatically overstated the scale of antisemitism for factional reasons.

Keir Starmer ? hiding behind the figure of Blairite general secretary David Evans ? has endorsed the decision. The suspension is a political assassination, without a shred of legal or democratic justification.

It is a declaration of war on the left by the man who stood for election on the promise of unifying the party. The united party that Starmer and his backers in the PLP, the media, and on the Tory benches want, is one purged of the hundreds of thousands who joined in the belief that the party had turned its back on New Labour and its support for imperialist wars and Tory austerity.

Jeremy Corbyn?s entire political career stands as a testimony to his active opposition to antisemitism and all other forms of racism. The accusation of antisemitism became a weapon in the hands of all those currents within the Labour Party who opposed Corbyn?s whole programme.

It was also part of the attempt to prevent Labour fulfilling its 2018 and 2019 conference pledges to support the Palestinians? right to return and to a sovereign state. Anti-Zionism is not antisemitism nor is it anti-Jewish. Only real antisemites see opposition to Israel?s remorseless expansion of settlements as opposition to Jewish people as such or the result of some imaginary international conspiracy. We condemn without hesitation all such poisonous nonsense. But those who make false charges of antisemitism alarm and harm Jewish people worldwide.

The publication of the EHRC report merely provided the opportunity for Starmer to take the step that was long planned. In a few months, Starmer, has already made it clear that he intends the Labour Party to once again be a reliable servant of British capital. The suspension of Corbyn is a further signal to Britain?s bosses that, under his leadership, the party knows what they want and will work to deliver it.

Starmer claimed in his campaign for leader that he would not ?oversteer? away from Corbyn?s policies and that he would unite the party. At a time when the Tory government is in increasing disarray over the pandemic, instead of leading the fight against them he chooses to orchestrate a campaign against the party membership.

He has used suspending Corbyn as his defining moment, like Kinnock?s attack on Militant or Blair?s dumping of Clause Four. Labour, he is saying to the establishment, is back in safe hands, and can be trusted with government of their state.
Some members, already disheartened by internal sabotage of the party by Corbyn’s enemies, may regard the suspension as the last straw, the last insult they are going to take and conclude that they cannot support the party a moment longer. Such anger is understandable but misdirected; Starmer and company would like nothing more than the loss of tens or even hundreds of thousands of socialists from the party without a fight.

For the members of the party, who have now been slandered as antisemites by their own leader and his deputy, the time has come to take a stand. Despite the fact that they have been banned from passing resolutions on disciplinary matters, every branch and CLP should flood the NEC with resolutions demanding Corbyn’s immediate and unconditional reinstatement and condemning the actions of Keir Starmer and Angela Rayner. They are plainly unfit to be leaders of the party of the British working class?

Even if, as is rumoured, Corbyn were to be reinstated either by the NEC or the governance and legal unit, without an apology and the right to criticise such decisions established, the very possibility that such actions can occur will remain a sword of Damocles hanging over the membership, stifling democracy in the party.

Those on the left who counsel silence to preserve unity with the right are utterly wrong. Defiance of unjust decisions and rules, not compliance with them, is the only way to defend ourselves. It is the only way to ensure that the party plays a useful role in working class resistance to the pandemic, the rise of mass unemployment and the chaos that Brexit will unleash.

In the affiliated unions, members should insist that no financial support is given to the party until Corbyn is reinstated. We call on the Socialist Campaign Group and Momentum, widely regarded as the main organisations of the Labour Left, to give a lead in opposing the suspension and any attempts to deny the right of party members to disagree with the actions of the leadership. Momentum and Labour left groups should organise meetings across the country to coordinate the fightback, linking up the hundreds of thousands of angry members and campaign for a party in which it is Starmer and Rayner and their allies that have no place!

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