

# **The work of the Labour Party's Governance and Legal Unit in relation to antisemitism, 2014 - 2019**

**The Labour Party  
March 2020**

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# 1. Introduction and Executive Summary

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## 1.1. Executive Summary

The Labour Party exists to champion equality, and fight discrimination and prejudice. These aims are not secondary to any wider goals of the Party - they are fundamental to its purpose.

The decision of the Equality and Human Rights Commission to investigate the Labour Party to determine whether the Party committed unlawful acts in relation to its members is therefore a matter of extreme seriousness to the Party.

The events which led to this investigation, including the Party becoming host to a small number of members holding views which were unarguably hostile to Jewish people and in some cases frankly neo-Nazi in their nature, are deeply disturbing.

This has caused great pain to the Jewish community in this country, including Jewish members of the Labour Party. The Party must take all possible steps to repair this damage, and apologise for failing to take the necessary action to tackle the problem sooner.

This report is a result of the in-depth and extensive investigatory work which the Party has undertaken to comprehensively respond to the Commission's investigation, and aims to provide a full and thorough account of the evolution of the Party's disciplinary processes in relation to dealing with complaints of antisemitism. It sets out the evidence of what has happened, explains the evident shortcomings in the Party's work, and assesses the improvements the Party has made in the last two years in particular. To aid the reader, every section has a "Summary" at the start, which covers



the key topics and findings of each section.

It does not directly address the wider politics of antisemitism or a number of the controversies which have convulsed the Party, since these fall outside the scope of the Commission's investigation, but such matters are inevitably touched upon at points.

This report thoroughly disproves any suggestion that antisemitism is not a problem in the Party, or that it is all a "smear" or a "witch-hunt". The report's findings prove the scale of the problem, and could help end the denialism amongst parts of the Party membership which has further hurt Jewish members and the Jewish community.

This report reveals a litany of mistakes, deficiencies, and missed opportunities to reform, develop and adapt a clearly failing disciplinary system. Since Jennie Formby became General Secretary in 2018, the Party has taken extensive measures to create a

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functioning disciplinary system capable of dealing with antisemitism complaints at considerable volume and in an appropriate manner, with a high standard of investigations and decision-making. However, this report shows that some problems still continued during this period, and so further extensive work was undertaken in 2019 to improve processes and revisit decisions taken in previous years.

As this report demonstrates, significant and wide-ranging measures have been put in place to ensure that the errors and procedural problems that have taken place in the past, which are documented in this report, could not be repeated again today.

The Party welcomes the opportunity which this investigation has given us to further hold a magnifying glass up to the Party's performance in relation to managing this issue over this time period and closely inspect our internal flaws and failings in this regard.

The Commission's investigation spans the time period from 11 March 2016 until the commencement of the investigation on 28 May 2019 (although the Commission has both requested and received evidence from before and after this period). However, the matters under consideration cannot truly be understood without looking at a longer time period. This report reviews material spanning 2014-2020, although in one section, the Party has gone back as far as 2010 in order to better understand the situation.

The situation in 2016 was different to the situation in 2019. These time periods, and all those between, cannot necessarily be analysed and understood through the same lens. In 2016, the problem of antisemitism in the Labour Party could be attributed to a small number of individuals who had long held antisemitic views - some of them new joiners, some long-standing members - as well as individuals who had inadvertently

strayed into antisemitic discourse through apparent ignorance, often linked to passionately-held views on the conflict between Israel and Palestine. In 2019, the problem of antisemitism is more widespread, because a specific discourse has developed around “Labour and antisemitism” which in itself has antisemitic undertones and has aggravated the problem.

In 2015, the membership of the Labour Party was about 200,000 and then suddenly more than doubled, with many of those joining with a desire to elect Jeremy Corbyn following the 2015 General Election defeat. In 2016, it grew again to well over half a million, as many members joined to participate in the 2016 leadership election. At its height Labour Party membership was almost 600,000, or roughly 1% of the British population. This is obviously welcome at a time when widespread political disengagement is assumed to be the norm. However, it meant that the Labour Party

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became more broadly reflective of the problems and prejudices of British society at large.

Dealing with this was complicated by the complacent assumption that to be in the Labour Party was to be automatically free of prejudice. There are in fact a number of instances in the Party's history when it has fallen short of that ideal. In relation to antisemitism there is a lack of understanding as to how it can sometimes be expressed on the left of politics, as well as the right. This had a bearing on the failure to recognise early the problems that could be attached to a very large increase in membership, as well as such prejudices among existing members.

Some of those who joined expressed antisemitic views, sometimes framed in terms of support for the Palestinian people, but incorporating traditional tropes about Jewish power/influence. The explosion of social media has given these (and other) unacceptable views far greater exposure than they would have had fifteen or twenty years ago – what would have been private discussions are now shared publicly. The internet has also contributed to the growth and sharing of conspiratorial theories about a shadowy global elite, often tending towards antisemitism. Ten years of economic and social dislocation have also doubtless contributed to a society much less at ease with itself, and prone to the search for scapegoats.

For all these and other reasons, complaints about antisemitism in the Labour Party began to grow from 2016 onwards. At that time, the Party's disciplinary process was ill-equipped to deal with the impending caseload and, in fact, the disciplinary processes did not adequately deal with even the far fewer number of cases the Party was managing before 2015. The process was drawn out and overly complex, and staff often decided on informal resolutions, including suspending individuals and then lifting their suspensions a few weeks later, without taking the case through to the National Executive Committee (NEC) or the National Constitutional Committee (NCC).<sup>1</sup> At this time, staff regularly consulted with Ed Miliband's office on responses to cases

involving elected representatives at all levels of the Party, as well as high-profile cases that could have a reputational impact on the Labour Party.<sup>2</sup>

When investigations did take place, these were outdated, clunky, time-consuming and required vast staff resources to undertake. These processes were not fit-for-purpose.

Therefore, in 2015 the Governance and Legal Unit (GLU) lacked systems, processes or guidance for managing complaints and disciplinary processes. The need for major reforms to address this was identified by senior staff in GLU and the General

<sup>1</sup>See Section 3.1.

<sup>2</sup>See Section 3.3.

Secretary's Office (GSO) by late 2015.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless by 2018 very little had changed. Subsequently, two rounds of rule changes at Labour's Annual Conferences, and continual reforms and changes to internal processes, have been required to introduce the reforms needed.<sup>4</sup>

In the period until spring 2018, the Labour Party's investigation shows that Labour HQ and GLU failed to:

- develop any consistent system of logging and recording complaints;
- develop any consistent system of logging and recording disciplinary investigations, or tracking their progress;
- develop any consistent system, process or training for investigating and progressing cases;
- develop any general guidance or training for staff on decision-making regarding complaints;
- develop any specific guidance or training for staff on decision-making regarding antisemitism complaints;
- develop any detailed or coherent guidelines for investigating complaints based on social media conduct, including how to identify Labour members from social media accounts and how to treat different forms of social media activity;
- recommend or enact any reforms to the ineffective NEC and NCC disciplinary procedures, to bring in new systems suitable for a mass member party of 500,000 people or more, and capable of dealing with a much enlarged caseload;
- implement the Macpherson principle of logging and investigating complaints of racism as racism.<sup>5</sup>

This investigation has revealed to the Party that in this period, before Jennie Formby

became General Secretary in spring 2018, GLU failed to act on the vast majority of complaints received, including the vast majority of complaints regarding antisemitic conduct. Systematically reviewing all letters sent to members by GLU from 1 November 2016 to 19 February 2018, the Party has found that GLU initiated investigations into just 34 members in relation to antisemitism in this period. More than 300 complaints relating to antisemitism appear to have been received, however. At least half of these warranted action, many of them in relation to very extreme forms of antisemitism, but were ignored. Almost all of these complaints were forwarded from one inbox to another, and many of them were identified as Labour members and sent to the Head of Disputes, Sam Matthews, for action. The Head of

<sup>3</sup>See Section 3.1.

<sup>4</sup>See Section 6.2.

<sup>5</sup>See Sections 3.1, 3.2, 6.2 and 6.4-6.

Disputes rarely replied or took any action, and the vast majority of times where action did occur, it was prompted by other Labour staff directly chasing this themselves.<sup>6</sup>

The complaints system simply did not function, and the inbox to which complaints were forwarded by other GLU staff would apparently go months at a time without any staff member monitoring it.<sup>7</sup> For the failures during this period, the Party must apologise most profusely to Jewish members and the Jewish community.

However, when questioned by the office of the Leader of the Opposition (LOTO) about such matters, as the Party's handling of antisemitism complaints came under unprecedented media and political scrutiny, senior GLU and GSO staff, including the General Secretary Iain McNicol, repeatedly:

- Insisted that all complaints were dealt with promptly.
- Justified delays and claimed that outstanding issues would be dealt with soon.
- Provided timetables for the resolution of cases that were never met.
- Falsely claimed to have processed all antisemitism complaints.
- Falsely claimed that most antisemitism complaints the party received were not about Labour members.
- Provided highly inaccurate statistics of antisemitism complaints.<sup>8</sup>

This situation, best characterised as bureaucratic drift and inertia, compounded by attempts to cover up poor performance (in part by, for a brief period, soliciting the involvement of LOTO staff in decisions properly the responsibility of Party HQ alone), led to several negative consequences. The provision of false and misleading information to both LOTO and the General Secretary (both Lord McNicol and

subsequently Jennie Formby) by GLU when under the management of Sam Matthews, John Stolliday and Emilie Oldknow meant that the scale of the problem was not appreciated.<sup>9</sup> By the time a new General Secretary took over Party HQ in April 2018 there was a backlog of cases that had been ongoing, often for years, with little to no progress, and with information on their status and content scattered across different systems and central and regional offices. Some of these were high-profile cases, awaiting decision at NEC or NCC level. There was, further, a hidden backlog of people reported to GLU for antisemitism, but never dealt with or mishandled, many of whom would be re-reported subsequently, or were picked up in spring 2018 as Iain McNicol was leaving.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup>See Section 3.2.

<sup>7</sup>See Section 3.2.

<sup>8</sup>See Sections 3.3, 4.1-4, and 6.1.

<sup>9</sup>See Section 4.4.

<sup>10</sup>See Sections 3.2, 4.1-4, 6.1 and 6.6.

It should be clarified that there is no suggestion that these shortcomings can be attributed to any antisemitic views on the part of party officials, nor to an unwillingness to oppose their expression. The Party has found no evidence of this. On the contrary, current and former staff members have expressed their disgust at examples of antisemitic attitudes within the party. While this report focuses on complaints concerning antisemitism, complaints concerning other alleged misconduct and prejudices were handled in the same way by GLU in this period.<sup>11</sup>

The problems were not just procedural, however. There is also abundant evidence of a hyper-factional atmosphere prevailing in Party HQ in this period, which appears to have affected the expeditious and resolute handling of disciplinary complaints. While it may not be immediately clear why this is relevant to a report on the party's disciplinary procedures, the way that GLU operated in the past, and the relationship between LOTO and GLU, cannot be understood without understanding the domineering role of factionalism within the Party.

Many staff, including GLU staff and senior staff with responsibility for managing and overseeing GLU, were bitterly opposed to the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn, and seem to have been demotivated, or largely interested in work that could advance a factional agenda. At its extreme, some employees seem to have taken a view that the worse things got for Labour the happier they would be, since this might expedite Jeremy Corbyn's departure from office. Further, there is little evidence of strong management of procedures, workloads, and priorities in HQ, which also impacted GLU's work.

The evidence of Labour HQ and GLU's opposition to LOTO also disproves allegations that Corbyn's office had influence over GLU's work even while Iain McNicol was General Secretary, and was responsible for GLU's failures to act in this period. The Party is aware that such claims have been made to the Commission, and hence an assessment was required of the attitude of staff in HQ towards LOTO, and the relationship between LOTO and Labour HQ. The evidence found demonstrates that staff in HQ, including in GLU and GSO, did not take instruction from LOTO. On the contrary, they often openly worked against the aims and objectives of the leadership of the Party, and in the 2017 general election some key staff even appeared to work against the Party's core objective of winning elections.

Considering this evidence, it becomes clear that the suggestion that GLU staff were being forced by LOTO to follow secret "unwritten guidance" on antisemitism - for which the Party has been unable to find any documentary evidence - did not happen and indeed could not have happened.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> See Section 3.2.

<sup>12</sup> See Sections 2.1-3, and 4.1-4.

These issues were compounded by at times poor judgements from staff on what constitutes antisemitism and on what warrants suspension from the Party, and by staff sometimes seeking "informal resolutions" to even serious evidence of antisemitism, like asking individuals to delete and apologise. The Chakrabarti Report, released on 30 June 2016, and Jeremy Corbyn's speech on the same day, provided guidance on a wide range of conduct that was antisemitic and had no place in the Labour Party. GLU largely failed to use this guidance, however, as well as to develop any more in-depth guidance to assist staff decision-making on complaints of antisemitism.<sup>13</sup>

Such problems – both managerial and procedural – have since been addressed, ensuring that the mistakes of the past could not be repeated now. These new measures include:

- clear guidelines on processing complaints and a consistent and comprehensive system for logging them;
- a prohibition on staff imposing "informal resolutions";
- staff conducting thorough investigations into individuals complained about, rather than simply relying only on the evidence supplied in the complaint; • staff initiating cases themselves by proactively investigating social media comments by Party members;
- the creation of small NEC panels to deal with cases of alleged antisemitism,

- meeting monthly or more rather than quarterly;
- the oversight of antisemitism panels by independent barristers; • doubling of the size of the NCC to enable more cases to be heard faster, and instructions to hear cases on paper rather than in-person;
- restoring power to the NEC to expel members, rather than having to wait for NCC hearings to impose expulsions in egregious cases;
- the provision of expert antisemitism education for members of the NEC, NCC and Labour staff;
- the creation of a detailed decision-making matrix and extensive guidance to direct staff decision-making on antisemitism cases;
- ending the role of untrained Regional staff or CLPs in investigating or adjudicating on antisemitism complaints;
- the adoption of all 11 of the IHRA definition's associated examples; • further proactive initiatives from staff, including conducting audits into cases which were not handled appropriately by former staff, to ensure action is taken, and documenting and reporting antisemitism in Labour-supporting Facebook groups to Facebook and urging that Facebook shut such groups down and take action against individuals.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See Section 3.1.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapters 4-6.

GLU has been professionalised – it now handles disciplinary cases regardless of the political views of either complainants or the members complained about.

Restoring to the NEC the power to expel members, removed from it in the 1980s, has had a significant and extremely positive impact, enabling the Party to expel individuals for gross antisemitism and racism much more speedily, including individuals whose cases had been pending for a long time. There has been a radical increase in the processing of cases, with 63 people expelled for antisemitism since January 2019, compared to 11 in the three years from 2015 through to the end of 2018. New cases can now be handled swiftly - for example in the last quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020, a number of individuals have been expelled within days or weeks of the complaint being submitted to the Party.<sup>15</sup>

There is of course scope for further improvements in processes and rules, and the Party is committed to considering any such proposals, particularly from the Jewish community, and from the EHRC in this regard. GLU has recently conducted a further review of all its processes and practices, and is implementing further reforms to improve efficiency, reduce bottlenecks and bring more cases to swift and robust resolution, and the Party is open to all ideas on how to improve processes.<sup>16</sup>

We hope that an approach of transparency and willingness to self-reflect and self criticise, as demonstrated by this report, can be part of this process to help the Party root out antisemitism and ensure that never again will Labour find itself estranged from a minority community in our country.

<sup>15</sup> See Sections 6.1-2.

<sup>16</sup> See Section 6.6 in particular.

## 1.2. Scope and Sources

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### 1.2.1. The EHRC investigation

The Labour Party has sent the EHRC thousands of pieces of evidence and documentation, and hundreds of pages of information on particular cases and events which the Commission enquired about.

The EHRC requested information and documentation pertaining to 58 individual disciplinary cases, which the Party provided in full. In addition, the EHRC sent “requests for further information” or “RFIs” with hundreds of questions on individual cases and specific issues.

The Party has written 151,771 words to the EHRC responding to these questions in the



last three months, and has provided all relevant documentation.

The Party also volunteered information and documentation on further cases to provide the Commission with a fuller picture of how the disciplinary processes have operated in relation to a wide range of cases.

This work has taken up a considerable amount of staff time, including staff within the Governance and Legal Unit (GLU), as this is the Unit with the relevant knowledge and access to information and is best placed to provide full answers to the Commission's questions. Carrying out this work in response to the Commission has used up the resources of two members of staff on an entirely full-time basis for three months.

It has used up the majority of the time of a further six members of staff, and roughly half of the time of a further five members of staff for the last three months. In total, this investigation has used up roughly 1,183 working days of staff in GLU since December 12 2019. On top of the number of working days, much of the work for the Commission has required extremely late nights and working over the weekends.

The Party has been working with the EHRC and seeking to fully comply with its requests and as quickly as possible.

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## **1.2.2. This report**

The majority of the cases the Commission has asked about were handled by staff prior to 2019. When this investigation commenced in May 2019, the staff who worked on most of the cases in question no longer worked for the Labour Party. However, detailed explanations of their decision-making and rationale on these cases at every step of their progression has been requested, along with every relevant Labour Party email that related to these cases.

Staff therefore had to use Labour's "Subject Access Request" tool - which does a back end search of all Labour Party emails - to find and save relevant emails, and produce chronologies to provide to the Commission in response to their questions on particular cases. This also helped the Labour Party understand what had gone wrong in the past and learn from these cases ourselves so as to further improve our own practices.

As former staff left almost no records when they stopped working for the party, resulting in a lack of institutional memory from this period, a wider investigation was required. For example, when examining the case of Alan Bull, current staff were confused about the former GLU staff's decision-making on this case and why they had issued NOIs instead of a suspension; could not tell what, if any, internal guidance had been used by former staff; and were confused as to why regional staff were so

involved and what their role was in the process.

To answer the questions the Commission had asked, the Party had to conduct an internal investigation which examined how, in general, GLU had handled disciplinary matters, and in particular complaints of antisemitism.

Our investigation was conducted on the basis of primary sources, above all written documentary evidence.

The Party email system includes all emails sent or received by Party staff throughout this period. In total, this includes several million emails. During this investigation, we estimate that up to 100,000 emails were reviewed by staff.

The evidence accompanying this report includes more than 3,000 email chains containing an estimated 10,000 emails. The Party was also able to search thousands of messages exchanged on Labour work accounts, on an internal party messaging service, through the same tool.

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Staff also examined the contents of two staff WhatsApp group chats established by senior management in Labour HQ for work purposes - "SMT Group" and "LP Forward Planning Group", both established on 28 September 2016. The members of "SMT Group" were Iain McNicol (General Secretary), Tracey Allen (Manager, GSO), Julie Lawrence (Director, GSO), Emilie Oldknow (Executive Director - Governance, Membership and Party Services), Patrick Heneghan (Executive Director - Elections, Campaigns and Organisation) and Simon Mills (Executive Director - Finance). These six individuals were also in the "LP Forward Planning Group", which also included John Stolliday (Director, Governance and Legal), Mike Creighton (Director of Audit, Risk and Property), Claire-Frances Fuller (Head of Internal Governance), Simon Jackson (Director of Policy, Research and Messaging, Briefing and Rebuttal), Fiona Stanton (Regional Director, Labour North), Neil Fleming (Acting Head of Press and Broadcasting), Carol Linforth (Director of Conference and Events), Sarah Mulholland (PLP Secretary), Holly Snyman (Director - Human Resources), Greg Cook (Head of Political Strategy), Anna Hutchinson (Regional Director, Labour North West) and Tom Geldard (Director of Digital).

The contents of these WhatsApp chats were made available to the Labour Party by one of the groups' members. They run to over 400,000 words.

Finally, the Party examined a WhatsApp group chat between Iain McNicol, Emilie Oldknow, Karie Murphy (Chief of Staff, LOTO) and Seumas Milne (Executive Director - Strategy and Communication). This was established by McNicol and Oldknow as a work tool to aid communication on 26 January 2017, and the final message was sent on 7 April 2018. It ran to 65,000 words in total. Seumas Milne exported the entire chat so that staff could investigate its contents.

To aid the investigation, some former and current staff were asked for their recollection of certain events, but these are used in the report in only a few instances. This is because, as the investigation reveals throughout, such recollections are inherently unreliable. Even without unconscious bias, memories on an issue that has been extensively covered in the media, often years after the fact, are prone to change over time.

We hope the EHRC will focus on the documentary, primary-source evidence that the Party has made available to it - emails, messages and documents from the time - rather than the personal accounts of staff or former staff.

We hope the EHRC will question the validity of the personal testimonies where these present a narrative which is directly contradicted by available documentary evidence from the time of the events in question. The Party does not cast any aspersions upon

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the honesty or integrity of any former or current staff members, but urges the Commission to rely on the extensive documentary evidence provided to it, which points to the factually-accurate history of the Governance and Legal Unit.

At the start of each section a summary of the contents and findings of that section is provided to enable this report to be more easily navigated and digested.

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## 1.3. Structure

This report has a largely chronological structure, along with some sections that delve into particular topics or themes across time periods. For example, particular high profile cases sometimes span long time periods, and are therefore discussed within the most relevant section.

The Executive Summary in 1.1 has provided an introduction to and overarching remarks on the report.

Perhaps counter-intuitively, the report then begins, in Chapter 2, by examining the role of factionalism in GLU's work. Of all the topics considered in this report, this is the one that may seem the least obviously relevant to an examination of Labour's disciplinary procedures and their handling of complaints of antisemitism. However, as is outlined in the Summary and Introduction to Chapter 2, it became apparent over the course of this investigation that the factional role played by GLU and other senior Labour HQ staff was not incidental to understanding GLU's work in this period - it was fundamental. This is particularly relevant as critical claims have been made about the

relationship between LOTO and GLU in this period. For example, the allegation that GLU was following “unwritten guidance” from LOTO not to act on complaints of antisemitism, or that email exchanges in March-April 2018 prove “LOTO interference” in GLU’s processes on antisemitism. This report investigates those allegations, which requires a fuller picture of the actual relationship between LOTO and Labour HQ.

Chapter 2 therefore examines the factional role of GLU and Labour HQ in this period, with a particular focus on staff who played key roles in GLU, and on areas most relevant to GLU’s work - the “Validation” process during the 2016 leadership election, when thousands of supporters of Jeremy Corbyn were suspended or excluded from the Party, and two case studies that show such factional use of disciplinary processes continuing well into spring 2018. It shows that GLU and Labour HQ were both independent from, and openly hostile towards, LOTO, which was therefore unable to exercise any effective oversight in relation to their work.

In Chapter 3, the report explores how GLU functioned from 2015 to early 2018, the processes and procedures that existed, and the approach taken in relation to antisemitism complaints at the time. It shows how disciplinary procedures, in so much as they existed, were dysfunctional, slow and flexible to the factional requirements of staff. Despite detailed guidance from Shami Chakrabarti and Jeremy Corbyn on different forms of left-wing antisemitism, GLU failed to develop any guidance or training for staff, and made highly inconsistent, and often poor, decisions on

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antisemitism complaints throughout this period. GLU also failed to act on the vast majority of antisemitism complaints submitted in this period, with the energy that applied to the “Validation” process of 2016 not being transferred to the process of creating a functioning disciplinary process for all types of complaints.

Chapter 3 also examines the role of LOTO in disciplinary processes up to 2018, finding that consultation with LOTO on a range of cases was normal conduct under Ed Miliband, but largely stopped when Jeremy Corbyn became leader, apart from some cases involving high profile individuals. Examining ongoing communications on such matters, and prominent cases such as Ken Livingstone and Jackie Walker, shows how LOTO staff increasingly chased action on antisemitism from GLU and Labour HQ, but were often met with a hostile or obstructive response.

Chapter 4 assesses the transition period between General Secretaries Iain McNicol and Jennie Formby in spring 2018. Increased scrutiny in this period on the work GLU was undertaking on antisemitism led to a huge increase in action, including almost twice as many suspensions in a week than had occurred in the previous year. It was in this period that GLU finally began to act on antisemitism complaints, including complaints submitted in the previous year but ignored at the time. The short period of consultation between GLU-GSO and LOTO on antisemitism cases, initiated by GLU’s Head of Disputes, is also examined, as well as the misleading reports and inaccurate

statistics on action that GLU-GSO provided to LOTO at the time. Finally, Chapter 4 looks at GLU's policy towards suspensions until March 2018, and considers claims that LOTO had prevented GLU from suspending people over allegations of antisemitism.

In Chapter 5, the report looks more broadly at action taken, or discussed, by senior staff and Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn in relation to antisemitism throughout the period under investigation. Although this is by no means comprehensive, and does not attempt to offer any assessment of the efficacy or appropriateness of the Party's responses throughout this period, it shows that the Party leadership consistently expressed opposition to antisemitism, spoke out about the ways antisemitism manifests on the left, and proposed and sought a range of actions to address the issue of antisemitism in the Party.

Chapter 6 then returns to disciplinary processes, and examines how these have changed under General Secretary Jennie Formby, from April 2018 onwards. It looks at decision-making processes on antisemitism cases, reforms to the roles of the NEC and NCC that have taken place, and changes to staffing in the GLU team. It shows that major improvements were made from April 2018 onwards, resulting in a huge increase in the number of antisemitism cases being acted on and progressed at every stage of the process, but that this was still a gradual process in many areas. Mistakes

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made in 2018, like mistakes made in 2015-17, have had to be corrected and addressed by new policies in 2019. In particular, the shift to undertaking systematic further social media searches on all cases of antisemitism has had a transformative effect on GLU's handling of antisemitism complaints. The chapter explores the range of problems and challenges GLU has encountered throughout this period, the steps the Party has taken to address them, and the move towards a more proactive approach to the issue of antisemitism in the Labour Party.

Finally, Chapter 7 offers some conclusions to the report as a whole.

Each section in each chapter contains an introductory summary of the contents of the section, to enable the report to be more easily navigated and digested. When quoting from source materials, underlining has been used to add emphasis and point the reader to the most relevant sections. Due to the large volume of materials cited, all source references refer to the evidence folder in which the documentation is contained, followed by its filename; to a specific case folder; or to the case "Final Summaries" provided to the Commission.

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## **2. The work and role of the**

# Governance and Legal Unit in internal Labour Party politics

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## 2.1. The use of the Governance and Legal Unit for factionalism

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### 2.1.1. Summary

The work of GLU and the relationship between LOTO and GSO/GLU in 2015-2018, cannot be understood without understanding the role of Labour Party factionalism. As the Party’s investigation progressed, this became increasingly apparent, and unavoidable. Claims have been made about these relationships that are critical to understanding how the Party addressed complaints of antisemitism in 2015-18 - most notably, the assertion that GLU was forced by LOTO to follow “unwritten guidance” which prevented action on antisemitism - and which required investigation.

This report is not concerned with the rights and wrongs of different political positions espoused by different factions and individuals in the Labour Party in the preceding five years. However, an understanding of the role of Labour staff in this period is

critical to any examination of how the disciplinary process functioned, and to assessing allegations about the role of LOTO in those processes.

Labour Party staff, who are employed by the Party rather than as political advisers to politicians, are expected to act impartially and serve the Party, regardless of the current Leader, much as the civil service is expected to serve the Government under whichever political party is in power. However, this section shows that much of the Labour Party machinery from 2015-18 was openly opposed to Jeremy Corbyn, and worked to directly undermine the elected leadership of the party. The priority of staff in this period appears to have been furthering the aims of a narrow faction aligned to Labour's right rather than fulfilling the organisation's objectives, from winning elections to building a functioning complaints and disciplinary process.

Labour Party staff based at Labour HQ were not obeying secret directives from LOTO. On the contrary, all of the available evidence points to the opposite conclusion - that Labour Party staff based at Labour HQ, including GLU, worked to achieve opposing political ends to the leadership of the Party. This included work to remove supporters of the incumbent leader during the 2016 leadership election, and work to hinder the leader's campaign in the 2017 General Election. The attitude in HQ towards LOTO could be summed up in one comment from a senior staff member, who said "death by fire is too kind for LOTO".

Labour officials, including senior staff, expressed hostility towards Jeremy Corbyn and his staff, towards Labour MPs including Andy Burnham, Ed Miliband, Sadiq Khan, Emily Thornberry, Diane Abbott and Dawn Butler. Staff described "most of the PLP" as "Trots" or called them "totally useless" in 2015 for not having yet launched a coup

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against Corbyn. As one staff member commented, "everyone here considers anyone left of [Gordon] Brown to be a trot."

Staff repeatedly used abusive and inappropriate language about the leader, MPs, Labour members and about other staff. For example, staff discussed "hanging and burning" Jeremy Corbyn, calling Corbyn a "lying little toerag"; said that any Labour MP "who nominates Corbyn 'to widen the debate' deserves to be taken out and shot"; and stated that a staff member who "whooped" during Corbyn's speech "should be shot". Senior staff also said they hoped that one Labour member on the left of the party "dies in a fire". Senior Labour staff used language that was considerably more abusive and inappropriate than that cited as justification for suspending many Labour members who supported Jeremy Corbyn in 2016.

In August 2015 senior staff explored delaying or cancelling the ongoing leadership election when it looked like Jeremy Corbyn was going to win. When Corbyn was elected staff discussed plans for a coup; one staffer said "we need a POLL - that says we're like 20 points behind"; another suggested a silver lining for Remain losing the

2016 European referendum would be that Corbyn could be held responsible; and another hoped that poor performance in the May 2016 local elections would be the catalyst for a coup.

Staff described “working to rule” when Corbyn was elected and “coming into the office & doing nothing for a few months.” During the 2017 general election, staff joked about “hardly working”, and created a chat so they could pretend to work while actually speaking to each other - “tap tap tapping away will make us look v busy”. Senior staff coordinated refusing to share basic information to LOTO during the election, such as candidates’ contact details. Labour HQ operated “a secret key seats team” based in Labour’s London region office in Ergon House, from where a parallel general election campaign was run to support MPs associated with the right-wing of the party. The description of the workload and budget involved in this “secret” operation contrasts with the go slow approach described by other staff regarding work on the official general election campaign which the leadership was running to return a Labour government.

One senior staff member implied that he would support the Conservatives over Labour under Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership, saying “who votes for JC? If it's a choice btwn him & TMay how do WE vote for him?”. Staff sent messages expressing their wish that Labour would perform badly in the 2017 general election, saying “with a bit of luck this speech will show a clear polling decline” and “I CANNOT WAIT to see Andrew Neil rip [Jeremy Corbyn] to pieces over it tonight”. Senior staff commented

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that the huge rallies for Corbyn late in the election made them “feel ill”, and they reacted to the polls narrowing with dismay, rather than optimism.

On election night on 8 June 2017, when the exit poll predicted a hung parliament, General Secretary Iain McNicol, Executive Director for Governance, Membership and Party Services Emilie Oldknow (who was responsible for overseeing GLU) and other senior staff discussed hiding their reactions, saying “everyone needs to smile” and “we have to be upbeat. And not show it”. Oldknow also described Yvette Cooper and other Labour MPs’ support for Corbyn after the election as “grovelling and embarrassing”.

In January 2017, Iain McNicol, Emilie Oldknow and other senior staff discussed preparing for a leadership election if Labour lost the Copeland and Stoke-on-trent by elections, and setting up a “discrete [working group]” to determine the rules and timetable. Iain McNicol discussed this with Tom Watson and told him “to prepare for being interim leader”. During the 2017 general election the Director of GLU John Stolliday then drew up these plans, including a rule change to replace the one member one vote system with an Electoral College system to help ensure that a MP from the party’s left could not win.

GLU staff talked openly with each other about using the party’s resources to further



the aims of their faction. The Director of the Unit John Stolliday described his work in GLU as “political fixing”, and described overhauling selections of parliamentary candidates and overturning CLP AGM results to help the right of the Party. Emilie Oldknow and GLU staff discussed keeping Angela Eagle MP’s CLP suspended, at Eagle’s request, in order to give her team more time to organise against left-wing members before the AGM. Staff also discussed organising NEC Youth Representative elections on a different election cycle to other NEC elections, to ensure a left-wing candidate would not win, and noted that this was signed off by GLU’s Director.

Staff applied the same factional approach to disciplinary processes. One staff member referred to Emilie Oldknow expecting staff to “fabricate a case” against people “she doesn’t like/her friends don’t like” because of their political views. During the 2015 leadership election GLU and other Labour staff described their work as “hunting out 1000s of trots” and a “Trot hunt”, which included excluding people for having “liked” the Greens on Facebook. One prominent GLU staffer, Head of Disputes Katherine Buckingham, admitted that “real work is piling up” while she and other staff were engaged in inappropriate factional work.

Factional loyalty also determined key recruitment decisions, including in GLU, where people were appointed to senior roles with few apparent relevant qualifications. This

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had a severe impact on the Party’s ability to build a functioning disciplinary process over the following years.

This section demonstrates that the party machine was controlled by one faction which worked against Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership and to advance the interests of their faction, and that LOTO did not have authority or influence over GLU or the party machinery more broadly. Factional work appears to have come at the expense of work the staff were being paid to do, including - as will become apparent in Sections 3-6 - building and maintaining a functioning complaints process.

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## **2.1.2. Introduction**

The work of GLU and the relationship between LOTO and GSO/GLU in 2015-2018, cannot be understood without understanding the role of Labour Party factionalism.

The Commission’s investigation has been informed by critical claims regarding these relationships, which require an understanding of the role of factionalism.

For example:

- That GLU were professionals doing their job processing cases of antisemitism

and abuse, but faced interference or criticism from LOTO or left-wing members of the NEC.

- That there was some type of “unwritten guidance” from LOTO which stopped GLU from suspending, or investigating, members accused of antisemitism. - That GLU did not act on complaints of antisemitism in 2015-18 because they feared a negative reaction from LOTO or left-wing members of the NEC. - That after Jennie Formby became General Secretary, pre-existing neutral professionals in GLU were forced to quit.

Some former GLU staff appear to have made such claims to the Commission. Assessing the credibility of these accounts should therefore be essential to the Commission’s investigation. Alternatively, some former LOTO staff have alleged that GLU deliberately failed to act on antisemitism cases in order to damage the Labour Party and Jeremy Corbyn.<sup>17</sup>

For these reasons, it was necessary to examine the role of factionalism in Labour HQ, including in GLU and GSO, in this period.

In particular, we looked at Labour work accounts on an internal party messaging service. Not all staff used this internal messaging service: for example, between October 2015 and April 2018, Iain McNicol had no conversations on this messaging app, Emilie Oldknow just one, Mike Creighton six, and John Stolliday a few dozen, and only a handful of times after 2016. These staff did, however, exchange a number of messages in the two WhatsApp chats used by Labour HQ Senior Management, which were also used for this investigation.

In this examination, particular attention has been paid to staff who played key roles in GLU in 2015-2018, as well as to the overall culture of staff in party headquarters.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/alexwickham/leaked-emails-reveal-labours-compliance-unit-took-months-to>

## **2.1.3. Context**

### **2.1.3.i. Labour factions and “Trots”**

The Labour Party has always been a “broad church” or coalition, with a range of political positions expressed by its members and elected representatives.

From the mid-90s to Tony Blair’s resignation in 2007, “Blairism” was dominant in the structures of the party and the parliamentary party, although there was also a

“Brownite” faction which was perceived as slightly less centrist. After his victory in 2010, Ed Miliband moved the party more to the “soft left” in some respects, though “Brownite” figures remained in key posts, such as Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls.

Meanwhile, there remained a “left” faction in the party, which had considerably more support among members than it did representation in the PLP. This translated into, for example, the “left slate” winning 55% of members’ votes and four of the six members’ seats on the Labour National Executive Committee (NEC) in its 2014 elections.<sup>18</sup> But the “Socialist Campaign Group” of Labour MPs was small in size, with just 15 affiliated MPs in 2015 (6.5% of Labour MPs). The “left” faction largely followed the democratic socialist ideas and proposals of Tony Benn, and were considered “Bennites”.

All these factions had groupings associated with them, to promote their ideas, and to promote their members within party structures. “Labour First”, led by Luke Akehurst, was associated with the pre-Blair, “old right”; “Progress” was associated with the modernising “Blairite” faction; and the “Campaign for Labour Party Democracy”, John McDonnell’s “Labour Representation Committee” (LRC) and Jon Lansman’s blog “Left Futures” with the left. In October 2015, following the 2015 Corbyn leadership campaign, Jon Lansman and activists James Schneider, Adam Klug and Emma Rees founded the new movement “Momentum”, as the main left faction of the party that supported the leadership. In 2016, meanwhile, the “soft left” group “Open Labour” was also founded.

Many of these Labour factions have a history of conflict with “Trotskyists”, often referred to - generally contemptuously - as “Trots”. In the 1980s, there was significant conflict in the party over the presence of the Trotskyist group “Militant”, though it comprised only a small minority of Labour members. “Militant” was ultimately banned and its key members mostly expelled. Members of Trotskyist political parties or organisations that are rivals to the Labour Party, such as the Socialist Workers Party

<sup>18</sup> <https://labourlist.org/2014/08/labour-nec-elections-the-results/> - <https://www.leftfutures.org/2014/08/labour-executive-elections-left-win-best-result-since-1980s-with-55-of-members-votes/>

(SWP), cannot be members of the Labour Party, and any member can be “auto excluded” for supporting such rival political parties.

In the period 2015-2019, however, most of these “Trotskyist” organisations never had more than a few hundred members. In 2016 some of these people, excluded from the Labour Party, did try to organise within local groups of “Momentum”. But in January 2017 Momentum implemented a constitution which excluded anyone who was not a member of the Labour Party, largely eliminating their influence on Momentum as a

national organisation, and in many local groups.

“Trotskyist” or “Trot” can also refer to people who support the Marxist ideas of Leon Trotsky, but are not necessarily affiliated with a rival organisation. This is not against Labour Party rules, and Labour’s “broad church” has always included Marxists. However, such self-professed “Trotskyists” are small in number, and have been throughout 2015-2019.

### **2.1.3.ii. The 2015 leadership election**

In 2015, the Socialist Campaign Group decided to put Jeremy Corbyn MP forward as their candidate for leader. However, all candidates needed nominations from 20% of members of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) or European Parliament (EPLP) to get on the ballot, far in excess of the Campaign Group’s numbers. An intensive campaign of lobbying from Labour members and Corbyn’s campaign team was required to get the nominations, with some MPs, such as Sadiq Khan, agreeing to lend a nomination to “widen the debate”, despite not supporting Jeremy Corbyn. At the last minute, Corbyn secured the required nominations and made it onto the ballot.

In the leadership election that followed, Corbyn would go on to win decisively, with 59.5% of the vote - winning outright on the first round, without counting how many of those who voted for another candidate first had put him as their “second preference”. 19.0% of the electorate voted for Andy Burnham, who had some trade union backing; 17.0% for Yvette Cooper, who had served under Gordon Brown and Ed Miliband; and just 4.5% for Liz Kendall, considered to be from the “Blairite” wing and endorsed by “Progress”.<sup>19</sup>

After the May 2015 general election, Labour’s membership had begun to rise, particularly during the “Corbyn surge” of the summer. For the first time, thanks to party rule changes passed by Ed Miliband, “registered supporters” could also sign up and vote in the leadership election, and more than 100,000 did so. 83.8% of registered

<sup>19</sup> <https://labourlist.org/2015/07/progress-endorse-liz-kendall-and-tessa-jowell/>

supporters put Jeremy Corbyn as their “first preference” - but Corbyn won the support of 49.6% of party members, too (just 5.5% of whom backed Liz Kendall).

The result was seen as a triumph for Jeremy Corbyn, and a rout for the “Blairite” politics of “Progress”, whose candidate acquired just 4.5% of the overall vote. In total, more than 250,000 people voted for Jeremy Corbyn as their “first preference”, including existing Labour members, returning Labour members who had quit over the

2003 invasion of Iraq or Tony Blair's support for policies like Private Finance Initiatives (PFI), and people entirely new to politics, many of them young.

As we shall see, senior figures in Labour HQ did not view these developments positively.

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## **2.1.4. The role of Labour staff**

The Labour Party is a democratic socialist party. Its leadership and policies are decided, at different levels and through different mechanisms, by its members, supporters, affiliated unions and socialist societies, and elected representatives. Labour staff are not supposed to have any political role in the party. Like the civil service, they are there to deliver on decisions of the party's democratically elected leadership, the Leader of the PLP and the NEC.

Labour Party employees are usually engaged in politics and therefore obviously have political views. However, party staff are supposed to operate neutrally with fairness towards all members and affiliates, regardless of their faction or views.

The reality was the opposite. The party's resources - paid for by party members - were often utilised to further the interests of one faction and in some cases were used to undermine the party's objectives. As we shall see, many of the staff members engaging in factional behaviour worked in GLU or went on to work in GLU; held senior Director and Executive Director positions responsible for overseeing GLU's work and managing GLU staff; or held positions in the General Secretary's Office. In some cases the General Secretary himself was directly involved in such activities.

This report is not concerned with the rights and wrongs of factional activities. This evidence is included in the report because the factional attitudes and approach of Party staff during this period is critical to understanding how the disciplinary processes operated, and is crucial to assessing allegations, which have been made to the EHRC, about LOTO's role in disciplinary processes during this period.

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### **2.1.4.ii. Staff views on Labour MPs and the 2015 Leadership Election**

*"Anyone who nominates Corbyn 'to widen the debate' deserves to be taken out and shot"*  
- Jo Green, Labour Head of Broadcasting, 15 June 2015

Senior Labour staff were clear in their opposition to Jeremy Corbyn, and also Andy Burnham, in the 2015 Labour leadership election, as well as to many other Labour MPs not associated with the "Blairite" wing of the party.

On 15 June 2015, for example, Head of Press and Broadcasting Jo Green called Corbyn “that fucking trot” and suggested to Acting Director of Policy and Political Research Simon Jackson that “anyone who nominates corbyn 'to widen the debate' deserves to be taken out and shot”. Jackson agreed: “quite. if the left can't get on the ballot it shows they're moribund... putting them on there only validates the views”.<sup>20</sup>

On 15 June 2015, John Stolliday, then a Senior Media Monitoring Officer, who moved to GLU in late 2015 and became its Director in 2016, discussed the leadership election with Jo Green. Both made clear their opposition to both Corbyn and Burnham:

*John Stolliday 11:58:*

*I bet Ed would vote for Corbyn*

*Jo Green 11:58:*

*ed wants andy to win i am told...*

*John Stolliday 11:58:*

*fucking hell<sup>21</sup>*

On 2 July 2015 Stolliday also referred to the Andy Burnham campaign as “team #failure”.<sup>22</sup>

On 20 July 2015, Head of Political Strategy Greg Cook described a Labour MP as being “such a Trot now”, to which Head of Press and Broadcasting Jo Green responded “yep. like most of the PLP it seems”.<sup>23</sup> Green said to Jackson that Andy Burnham “just panders to what members want. he'll be a total disaster” - “the PLP is a joke now .. full of people unable and unwilling to be sensible”.<sup>24</sup> On 3 August 2015, Greg Cook then commented that Kate Hoey “is better than Corbyn, Abbott, Burnham, Nandy, Lewis and about 150 others”.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150615 Conversation with Jo Green.eml”. Similarly: Political Bias: Trots: “150812 Conversation with Anna Wright.eml”

<sup>21</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150615 Conversation with Jo Green Stolliday.eml”

<sup>22</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150702 Conversation with Anna Wright.eml”

<sup>23</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150720 Conversation with Jo Green.eml”

<sup>24</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150720 Conversation with Jo Green, Jackson.eml”

<sup>25</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150803 Conversation with Hester Waterfield.eml”

On 12 August 2015, Jo Green said he felt “physically sick about JC”.<sup>26</sup>

On 13 August 2015, Jo Greening, Head of International Affairs, and Acting Director of Policy and Political Research Simon Jackson discussed Ed Miliband:

*GREENING, Jo 10:42:  
he is pathetic  
and probably secretly loves jeremy  
Simon Jackson 10:42:  
probably  
GREENING, Jo 10:43:  
I mean wtf  
Simon Jackson 10:43:  
quite a legacy to leave the party with<sup>27</sup>*

Jackson thought the party “could hang in there trying to stay sensible and wait for the storm to pass”, or “it could plunge in to trot hell”, with “NEC pushing Trotism, staff appointments of Trots”.<sup>28</sup> On how Corbyn could appoint a shadow cabinet and who he would get to work for him, Greening said “loads of mad trots”.<sup>29</sup>

On 13 August 2015, as it became clear that Jeremy Corbyn might win the Labour leadership election, Jo Green and Stolliday, was moving into GLU soon, discussed delaying or cancelling the election, by claiming insufficient resources to check new members, or by all the other candidates pulling out. Stolliday considered this a “great idea”:

*John Stolliday 11:44:  
Where do you think Iain & Mike are on delay?  
Jo Green 11:45:  
finely balanced. in the end i think they have to decide on the basis of whether we  
have resource to do the checks.  
rather than a political decision  
also the leadership teams would need to sign off delay  
i am now of the view that the three other candidates could just drop out next week  
and the whole thing would have to be halted.  
John Stolliday 11:45:  
which presumably would risk a huge argument*

<sup>26</sup> Political Bias: Trots: 150812 Conversation with Jo Green.eml

<sup>27</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150813 Conversation with GREENING, Jo.eml”

<sup>28</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150813 Conversation with GREENING, Jo.eml”

<sup>29</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150813 Conversation with GREENING, Jo.eml”

*That would be ace  
Jo Green 11:46:  
it would!*

John Stolliday 11:46:

Great idea

Jo Green 11:46:

unite could disaffiliate

form a new party

John Stolliday 11:47:

I've been assumimng that will be the case anyway within a few years, whoever wins frankly

it would be brilliant for Labour. Financially tough but absolutely great for the party Jo Green 11:51:

i think it will happen yeah

John Stolliday 12:58:

Byron must be fucking loving this

Jo Green 12:59:

well as i understand it he wanted andy to win

not sure even his politics are corbyn levels of madness

but then again he'll be wondering what he can get out of it

hateful twat

John Stolliday 12:59:

the mad ones on the NEC all love him - Jennie Formby & Christine Shawcroft<sup>30</sup>

On 15 September 2015, after his election victory, Jeremy Corbyn visited party headquarters to greet the staff. The day before, Stolliday, who was about to be appointed to a key role in GLU, and Labour press officer Anna Wright discussed Corbyn's planned visit:

John Stolliday 12:31:

we were all amazed that somebody has bought dozens of bottles of prosecco mad

Anna Wright 12:31:

It is ludicrous

I hope the fucking thing is short

Cannot be arsed with small talk

John Stolliday 12:32:

I'm not drinking it, I'm not clapping

I'm going to stay at my desk or leave the office

Anna Wright 12:33:

We need to go up and show face for Team Watson or we'll end up on a list

<sup>30</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150813 Conversation with Jo Green.eml"

Anna Wright 13:00:

Look at that fucker looking statespersonlike



On 15 September, after the visit, Dan Hogan, then a Policy Communications Officer but from late 2016 to mid-2018 an Investigations Officer in GLU, and Amy Fowler from Fundraising, discussed Corbyn's visit. Hogan said that a staff member who "whooped" Corbyn's speech "should be shot". Fowler noted how all the staff in Labour HQ "kind of hate [Corbyn]", and she wasn't sure how Corbyn could address that "massive elephant in the room... without making me hate this more":

*Amy Fowler 16:40:*

*How did you think it went when he was in earlier?*

*Stevie P whooped and is now dead to Carol*

*Dan Hogan 16:42:*

*people were polite. Stevie P should be shot. Jez's speech was a total crock of shit. ...*

*i clapped. but i probably didn't do a very good job of masking what i thought. Amy Fowler 16:44:*

*I clapped but I didn't smile*

*And it takes a conscious effort for me not to smile in those situations*

*Dan Hogan 16:45:*

*i couldn't look at him. my eyes rolled a lot. i probably shook my head*

*Amy Fowler 16:52:*

*I feel like he should have maybe addressed the massive elephant in the room that we all kind of hate him*

*But I'm not sure how he could have done that without making me hate this*

more<sup>32</sup> Later that day, key GLU staff member Katherine Buckingham commented:

*I had some drinks in the office until Jeremy came in. and then all I wanted to do was go home*<sup>33</sup>

In November 2015, Danny Adilypour (Campaigns Officer - Campaign Technology ) referred to Labour MP Rachel Maskell as a "Trot".<sup>34</sup> On 25 May 2017, Catherine Bramwell, South East Regional Communications Officer, described a Labour parliamentary candidate in Brighton as "the trot candidate".<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Political Bias: Trots: 150914 JS on JC visit.eml"

<sup>32</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150915 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml"

<sup>33</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150914 Conversation with Teddy Ryan.eml"

<sup>34</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "151123 Conversation with Danny Adilypour.eml"

<sup>35</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170525 Conversation with Stephanie Driver - Brighton Trot candidate.eml"

Following the 2015 leadership campaign, many staff continued to show their dissatisfaction with MPs who nominated Corbyn, such as Sadiq Khan. On 28 April 2016, a week before the 2016 London Mayoral election, Jo Greening, Head of International Liaison commented that “maybe I will consider voting for [Sadiq Khan] now”, after Khan called for Livingstone to be suspended - “probably not though”.<sup>36</sup> Director of Policy and Research Simon Jackson, meanwhile, said to colleagues regarding a potential snap general election:

*Ultimately though, who votes for JC?  
If it's a choice btwn him & TMay how do WE vote for him??  
I mean we're not fucking mad<sup>37</sup>*

Any Labour member who advocates opposing a Labour candidate, or supporting a rival, can be auto-excluded from the party. Just days after Greening's comments, a Labour member was auto-excluded for saying Sadiq Khan would not be getting their first preference vote for Mayor.<sup>38</sup> Greening's apparent lack of support for Labour mayoral candidate Sadiq Khan, and Jackson's apparent lack of support for the Labour Party, was not reported to the Party.

On 6 October 2015, Acting Director of Policy and Political Research Simon Jackson said that Iain Duncan-Smith was “shit” but “the mad thing is he's better than most of our shadow cabinet”.<sup>39</sup> The shadow cabinet was, then, a broad “unity” shadow cabinet, in which only four MPs were supporters of Corbyn.

Senior staff commented negatively on Dawn Butler MP's appointment to the Shadow Cabinet, apparently suggesting that her accusations of racism within the Labour Party were untrue:

*6/10/2016, 19:16 - Emilie Oldknow: DAWN BUTLER  
06/10/2016, 19:16 - Neil Fleming (Acting Head of Press and Broadcasting): Yep. Plp women will go spare.  
06/10/2016, 19:17 - Emilie Oldknow: Good grief  
06/10/2016, 19:17 - Claire-Frances Fuller: Did she not accuse the LP and its staff of being racist this week? Nice.  
06/10/2016, 19:17 - Emilie Oldknow: Harriet "white privilege" Harman<sup>40</sup>*

<sup>36</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “160428 Conversation with Jo Greening.eml”

<sup>37</sup> 2016: “160727 Jackson conversation on freeze date.eml”

<sup>38</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “160504 khan AE.eml”

<sup>39</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “151006 Conversation with Jo Green - crackers to renationalise rail.eml”

Mulholland as PLP Secretary was the main liaison between MPs and the Labour Party. In February 2017 she said Diane Abbott "literally makes me sick". In the same WhatsApp group senior staff discussed Abbott crying in the toilets and telling Michael Crick, a Channel 4 reporter at the time, where she was:

*08/02/2017, 13:04 - Patrick Heneghan: Abbott found crying in the*

*loos 08/02/2017, 13:27 - Julie Lawrence: 💎💎*

*08/02/2017, 13:27 - Tracey Allen: Abbott memorial cupboard works*

*well 08/02/2017, 15:52 - Patrick Heneghan: Diane in Leon on vic street*

*08/02/2017, 15:52 - Fiona Stanton: Shall we tell michael crick*

*08/02/2017, 15:53 - Patrick Heneghan: Already have 💎💎<sup>41</sup>*

Another senior staff member engaged in what could be considered a classic racist trope, calling Diane Abbott an "angry woman", while his colleague called her "repulsive":

*26/01/2017, 23:10 - Neil Fleming: Watching QT without the sound on. Abbot is a very angry woman.*

*13/06/2017, 22:40 - Greg Cook: Abbott is truly repulsive<sup>42</sup>*

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, senior staff also remarked in this WhatsApp group that Emily Thornberry was "horrendous" and would "pay in the reckoning" following what they expected to be a poor performance for Labour in the 2017 general election.

<sup>41</sup> WhatsApp: "LP Forward Planning"

<sup>42</sup> WhatsApp: "LP Forward Planning"

## 2.1.4.ii. Staff views on Labour policies

*"All [public ownership of rail] looks like is trots doing what trots do".<sup>43</sup>*

Labour staff expressed opposition to the policy programme not just of Jeremy Corbyn, but also of Labour's 2015 manifesto, Ed Miliband and Andy Burnham - all considered to be too far to the "left". Opposition to key Labour policies was expressed by key staff who worked in GLU or who would later work in GLU, and the General Secretary.

On 15 September 2015, Dan Hogan, who later became an Investigations Officer in GLU, commented that a Labour campaign for an EU referendum "makes a change from trident, rail renationalisation and landlord-bashing".<sup>44</sup> He also opposed John McDonnell calling for "corporation tax to go up":

*Dan Hogan 11:42:*

*brace yourself. McDonnell just called for corporation tax to go up*

*Amy Fowler 11:42:*

*you're kidding me*

*....*

*I can't quite believe it<sup>45</sup>*

On 27 April 2016, Collete Collins-Walsh, Education Policy Officer, and James McBride discussed a Conservative Party critique of left-wing economics:<sup>46</sup>

*Colette Collins-Walsh 13:40:*

*<http://www.manchesterconservatives.com/news/contra-corbynomics-why-we-should-be-incredulous-towards-economic-statism>*

*Finally, higher tax rates do not necessarily yield more revenues because they reduce incentives to work. What Corbyn fails to understand is that the UK is actually becoming more equal.*

*James McBride 13:42:*

*indeed*

*very tu*

*true<sup>47</sup>*

On 29 July 2016 Simon Jackson and Head of Policy Development Anouska Gregorek discussed their opposition to the policy platform of Owen Smith, the rival to Jeremy Corbyn in the 2016 leadership election:

<sup>43</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170314 Conversation with Graham Moonie.eml"

- <sup>44</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150915 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml".
- <sup>45</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150915 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml".
- <sup>46</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160427 Conversation with Colette Collins-Walsh.eml""
- <sup>47</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160427 Conversation with Colette Collins-Walsh.eml""

45

*Anouska Gregorek 11:52:*

*I'm hoping its a genius plan to pretend these are his policies and then when enough people have voted for him he just quietly sheds policies as they poll badly Simon*

*Jackson 11:52:*

*well yes, the only thing that matters is winning*

*BUT*

*Anouska Gregorek 11:52:*

*I am holding on to this*

*Simon Jackson 11:52:*

*the thing about Owen is, he thinks he should eb PM*

*he really does*

*he doesn't realise he's shit*

*he'd be another Ed<sup>48</sup>*

On 14 March 2017, Catherine Bramwell, Communications Officer for South East Region, said "i hate the trots, i hate the trots, i hate them x a million", and claimed that the idea of rail nationalisation was not popular in South East England - "all it looks like is trots doing what trots do".<sup>49</sup>

During the 2017 General election, General Secretary Iain McNicol responded to the announcement of a policy of free school meals with ridicule:

*09/04/2017, 13:31 - Iain McNicol: I believe in this policy. Always have but for very different reasons. If you go to a private school. You get school meals. All the teacher's have to sit with the pupils and they are taught how to eat. Etc etc.*

*09/04/2017, 13:32 - Tracey Allen: We should get them all to do their BMI before they go around criticizing 'poor people'!! I agree with policy but 'poor kids' are just as likely to be skinny from bad nutrition and don't grow.*

*09/04/2017, 13:33 - Iain McNicol: Next we will be saying most poor people are criminals. And the best way to reduce future offending is by forced castration.*

*09/04/2017, 13:33 - Iain McNicol: Simon M please don't respond to that policy.<sup>50</sup>*

Separately, on 20 May 2017, senior staff wrote how they could not understand LOTO's decision to oppose the widely-panned "dementia tax."

*20/05/2017, 11:10 - Tracey Allen: I know I am not a strategist or policy person but*

*am I totally missing something here? Why aren't the Trots in favour of rich people paying more towards social care and not getting winter fuel allowance?*

<sup>48</sup> 2016: "160727 Jackson conversation on freeze date.eml"

<sup>49</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170314 Conversation with Graham Moonie.eml"

<sup>50</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

*20/05/2017, 11:11 - Patrick Heneghan: They normally are*

On 24 May 2017, after the Westminster Bridge attack, James McBride, a staff member in Labour's Policy Unit leading on economy and business policy, shared a clip of right wing Islamophobic commentator Douglas Murray on *BBC Daily Politics*, saying that all political parties were refusing to confront the reality that terrorism "comes from the religion" of Islam. McBride commented "find it difficult to disagree with this":

*James McBride 13:13:*

*we can't ignore the fact that while one might be more typically 'terrorist' behaviour they still derive from the same ideology*

*And western liberal ideology is reluctant to take it on*

*And expose its roots*

*Which inevitably involve hard questions- even for so-called moderate islam*

The Muslim Council of Britain, the main representative body of Muslims in the UK, wrote a formal letter of concern to the BBC about this appearance by Murray, "a commentator known for his anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic views." They noted that in a subsequent interview Murray said the UK needed "less Islam"; he had previously said that "conditions for Muslims in Europe must be made harder across the board"; and "Even the Conservative front bench broke off relations with him many years ago".<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/bbc-sunday-politics-show-platforms-activist-calling-for-less-islam-to-counter-terrorism/>

### 2.1.4.iii. Labour staff views of Labour members and activists

*"Fucking Trots"*<sup>52</sup>

*"what sort of person only becomes actively involved in politics after a general election? people who love losing."*<sup>53</sup>

Senior Labour staff, including staff in GLU or staff who later worked in GLU, viewed many Labour members and activists as "Trots". As discussed in Section 2.2, the factional approach to disciplinary action that followed from this has contributed to widespread distrust in the disciplinary process among some Labour members, which has contributed to problems relating to the handling of antisemitism in the Party.

On 3 November 2014, John Stolliday, later Director of GLU, discussed trying to stop "trots" from being selected as Labour's candidate for a parliamentary seat in Scotland, while fellow Labour press officer Anna Wright suggested that Gordon Brown might want someone who "has done some trot nominating" to take his seat:

*John Stolliday [16:03]:*

*We're in special selections period now, but they're going to call a special org sub to pretend we're doing this in a more open way ... there is literally no candidate & while they need someone good to come forward they're desperate to stop the*

Scotland trots from using it to increase power base

...

*it's up for grabs so if you have any friends who would be good get them to go for it Anna Wright [16:08]:*

*And in Edinburgh*

*No one in the frame?*

*Okay, I might subtly suggest to one person in particular*

*John Stolliday [16:09]:*

*Literally no one - they're trying to stop some of Johann's people by the sound of it & want someone good who can keep the seat for ages*

*Plus they're all worried about Gordon's seat - they want to do an AWS there but GB has apparently kicked off & told them they can't - he must have someone in mind*

*Anna Wright [16:10]:*

*Aye it'll be some knobber like Alex Rowley*

*Who I note has done some trot nominating*<sup>54</sup>

On 18 May 2015, before the 2015 leadership election, Cameron Scott, Scottish Labour's Head of Campaigns and Communications and later Regional Director for

<sup>52</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "151008 Simon Jackson Jo Green.eml"

<sup>53</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150722 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml"

<sup>54</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "141103 Conversation with Anna Wright.eml"

Eastern Region, suggested "some raging trot" from "the unions" would probably become deputy leader in Scotland.<sup>55</sup>

On 22 July 2015, Dan Hogan, who later became an Investigations Officer in GLU, suggested that people who joined the party after an election defeat shouldn't be allowed to vote: "what sort of person only becomes actively involved in politics after a general election? people who love losing."<sup>56</sup> On 15 September 2015, Hogan asked "is Labour in the South East just full of trots?", on the grounds that "moderates on the [National Policy Forum] got pretty much wiped out in SE / elsewhere, that didn't happen".<sup>57</sup> Staff also discussed working to prevent "Trots" winning places on the NPF or on Regional Boards, as well as the Scottish and Welsh Executives.<sup>58</sup> In June 2016 Dan Hogan was looking for people who "use your Britain", "and who aren't mad trots".<sup>59</sup>

On 29 July 2015, staff said there would be "rampaging trots" at Labour annual conference, and "stewards [will] need pepper spray" or "body armour".<sup>60</sup>

On 18 August 2015, Danny Adilypour, Campaigns Manager in the Contact Creator,



Targeting & Analysis Team, suggested Chuka Umuna should have run, describing the non-Corbyn candidates' campaigns as "crap" and "dreadful" - "we are where we are. Well and truly fucked."<sup>61</sup> He and Jim Harvey continued using ableist and abusive language regarding Labour members:

*Jim Harvey 14:40:*

*we're totally fucked. the party is about to be taken over by complete nut-jobs*

*Danny Adilypour 14:43:*

*yeah, all the people commenting on twitter, facebook and elsewhere are completely fucking mental*

*We're so fucking screwed*

After retiring in March 2017, Mike Creighton, GLU's Director of Risk and Property until then, tweeted that antisemitism in Labour was a "Direct consequence of [Ed Miliband's] decision to allow the Labour Leader to be selected by Tories and Trots," in reference to the more than 250,000 people who voted for Jeremy Corbyn in 2015.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150518 Conversation with Callum Munro.eml"

<sup>56</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150722 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml"

<sup>57</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150915 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml"

<sup>58</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150914 Conversation with Rob Sherrington.eml"

<sup>59</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160615 Conversation with Dan Hogan - not mad trots.eml"

<sup>60</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150729 Conversation with Andrew Clark.eml"

<sup>61</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150818 Conversation with Jim Harvey.eml"

<sup>62</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170405 Creighton trots.PNG"

On 8 October 2015, Director of Policy and Research Simon Jackson and Head of Planning Jo Green agreed that the PLP "have to get rid of [Corbyn] in the next couple of months or the trots will embed themselves":

*Jo Green 13:48:*

*this is an entryist thing*

*it's been set up by lansman*

*and backed by corbyn*

*to sign people up to CLP meetings*

*shameless*

*Simon Jackson 13:48:*

*yep*

*Jo Green 13:48:*

*using all the membership records they got during the leadership campaign team fucking trots*

*Simon Jackson 13:50:*

*Arseholes*

*no doubt we'll stand by and let it happen*

*Jo Green 14:01:*

*plp won't be pleased but they're totally useless*

*they should be creating a massive fuss about this*

*Simon Jackson 14:02:*

*i'm fairly settled now on the view that they have to get rid of him in the next couple of months or the trots will embed themselves*

*that means someone sacrificing themselves*

*Jo Green 14:02:*

*it has to be done by next summer at the latest. can't see them doing it before May.*

*yep, but they're useless*

*Simon Jackson 14:03:*

*they'll have changed the rules to get him back on the ballot paper by*

*then Jo Green 14:03:*

*Yep<sup>63</sup>*

On 29 July 2016, similarly, Simon Jackson, Director of Policy and Political Research, commented that Corbyn, who he expected to be returned as leader with an increased majority, "has to go, even if it must be forced".<sup>64</sup>

In May 2017, during the general election, the Manager of the General Secretary's Office described how a colleague enjoyed "Trot bashing" more than "Tory bashing",

<sup>63</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "151008 Simon Jackson Jo Green.eml"

<sup>64</sup> 2016: "160727 Jackson conversation on freeze date.eml"

suggesting greater opposition to members on the left of the Party than opposition to the Conservative Party:

*03/05/2017, 09:51 - Tracey Allen: Josh loves Tory bashing second only to Trot bashing*

On 10 April 2017, Laura Repton, Regional Administrator and Lee Gingell discussed discovering a colleague was "a massive trot" - because she and her mother had applied for tickets to hear the leader of the Labour Party speak:<sup>65</sup>

*Laura Repton 12:03:*

*omg*

*its solved*

*maria is a massive trot*

Lee Gingell 12:03:

really?!

how do you know?

what did you find out?

Fuck sakes man get them out of my face

Laura Repton 12:03:

she has applied for a ticket

with her mum

we would love to hear JC speak, please put us down for the ballot

Lee Gingell 12:04:

wtf

she hears members say all night that they don't like JC how can she still

support Laura Repton 12:04:

baffling<sup>66</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170410 Conversation with Lee Gingell - massive trot for supporting JC.eml"

<sup>66</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170410 Conversation with Lee Gingell - massive trot for supporting JC.eml"

#### **2.1.4.iv. Abusive and inappropriate language**

*"hanging and burning [Jeremy Corbyn] does seem like overkill"*<sup>67</sup>

Senior staff, including Executive Directors, Directors, staff in GLU and staff in the General Secretary's Office used abusive or inappropriate language. Although this was similar to the language used by Labour members who were suspended by GLU during the leadership election in 2016, no action was taken against GLU staff or other staff who had used such language. The perceived hypocrisy that underlay much of the disciplinary action GLU took in 2016 was, as discussed further in Section 2.2, key to undermining faith in Labour members in the Party's disciplinary processes.

When Corbyn appointed his first shadow cabinet in September 2015, it was the first

frontbench team in British history to be majority women. However, some criticised the fact that what they claimed were the four “top” posts, such as shadow Home Secretary, were held by men.<sup>68</sup>

On 15 September 2015, Greg Cook sent Jo Greening a spoof video of Jeremy Corbyn as Adolf Hitler discussing this issue, being overtly sexist and homophobic, while someone says “Dan Jarvis will save us”. “Love this”, Greening responded.<sup>69</sup> Other staff, such as Dan Hogan, who later worked in GLU, were also watching and sharing the video.<sup>70</sup>

It was deeply inappropriate, offensive and against Labour’s code of conduct for staff to share materials, using Party resources in office hours, likening the newly elected leader of the Labour Party to Adolf Hitler.

On 15 June 2015, Head of Press and Broadcasting Jo Green suggested to Acting Director of Policy and Political Research Simon Jackson that “anyone who nominates Corbyn ‘to widen the debate’ deserves to be taken out and shot”. Jackson agreed: “quite.”<sup>71</sup> On 15 September 2015, similarly, Dan Hogan said that a staff member who had “whooped” Corbyn’s speech “should be shot”.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150813 Conversation with Ali Moussavi.eml”

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/jeremy-corbyn-more-women-appointed-to-shadow-cabinet-than-men-for-first-time-10500032.html>

<sup>69</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150915 Hitler, Jack Smith a Trot.eml”

<sup>70</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150915 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml”. “150916 Conversation with Ellie Miller.eml”. “150915 Conversation with Rob Sherrington.eml”. “150915 Conversation with Carol Linforth.eml”

<sup>71</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150615 Conversation with Jo Green.eml”

<sup>72</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150915 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml”

On 13 August 2015, meanwhile, Ali Moussavi, Economic Advisor in the Leader’s Office and Sarah Brown (Press Officer) discussed “hanging and burning” Jeremy Corbyn:

*Ali Moussavi 13:10:*

*Jeremy Corbyn could end up being like Savonarola*

*A fanatic priest who deposed the Medicis in a wave of theocratic populism who was then shortly after deposed himself for making Florence a boring place*

*Jeremy might last even fewer days than Savonarola did*

*man jez is savonarola in so many ways!~*

*But we need to finish him*

*Sarah Brown 13:17:*

hanging and burning does seem like overkill  
*i am going to go read about savonarola*  
Ali Moussavi 13:17:  
we can figuratively do that but not literally

After Brown commented “you don’t get my joke”, Moussavi responded “I didn't think it was a joke”.<sup>73</sup>

On 17 September 2015, shortly after Labour members and supporters voted for Jeremy Corbyn to be leader of the Labour Party, Anna Wright and John Stolliday, who was then moving into a key role in GLU, discussed saying the word “cunt more in the last 48hrs than you have in your life up until that point”, and Wright noted “yesterday I called the Leader of the Labour Party a sexist cunt”.<sup>74</sup> She subsequently noted this may have been “uncomradely” to Corbyn, but Stolliday assured her “It's not your job to be comradely to the leader”:

*John Stolliday 09:51:*

*It's not your job to be comradely to the leader, it's your job to protect and present the ongoing functions of the Labour Party, which will exist long after any incumbent leader*

*Anna Wright 09:51:*

*Yeah but I have slagged him too much*

*John Stolliday 09:51:*

*That;s what Japes is for*

*Anna Wright 09:51:*

*Yes*

*I think calling him a sexist fucking cunt was too much though<sup>75</sup>*

<sup>73</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150813 Conversation with Ali Moussavi.eml”

<sup>74</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “150917 Conversation with Anna Wright.eml”

<sup>75</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “150922 Conversation with Anna Wright.eml”

Stolliday also used mental health slurs about LOTO Executive Director of Communications Seumas Milne, describing him as a “total mentalist” and “nutter” who he had previously told to “cock off”.<sup>76</sup> Head of Policy Simon Jackson, similarly, referred to new Labour members who supported Jeremy Corbyn as “nutters” who had “Invaded” the Party, while Head of Policy Development Anouska Gregorek joked about them getting “F U JC” - “Fuck you Jeremy Corbyn” - tattooed on their foreheads.<sup>77</sup> On 10 April 2017, the Manager of Iain McNicol’s office also used a mental health slur to mock people who were joining the Party at the time:

*10/04/2017, 11:36 - Simon Mills: Dropped 634 paying members last week. 392*

*joined. Who are these people...?*

*10/04/2017, 11:37 - Tracey Allen: Mentalists?*

On 9 May 2017, GLU's Head of Disputes Sam Matthews and Teddy Ryan, Regional Organiser, used offensive language about a Labour MP:

*Sam Matthews 10:39:*

*Fuck 'em. Someone's got to stand up to these progressive alliance wankers*

*Teddy Ryan 10:40:*

*tell me about it*

*...*

*clive lewis is the biggest cunt out of the lot*

*Sam Matthews 10:40:*

*it's like outlook-whack-a-mole*

*yes. yes he is.<sup>78</sup>*

On 9 March 2017 a number of senior Labour staff made lewd comments on a WhatsApp chat about the clothing of women Political Advisors, naming individual staff and mocking their appearance:

*09/03/2017, 16:36 - Sarah Mulholland: Simon apparently the PADs have stopped wearing bras.*

*09/03/2017, 16:36 - Sarah Mulholland: Hi Tom G! Sorry, this isn't meant to be for chat about undies. But there are nipples out at the PADs meeting and not a single tie.*

*09/03/2017, 16:37 - Tracey Allen: Even the female ones!! Very retrograde demonstration technique. Will they be burning them next ? ♦♦*

*09/03/2017, 16:37 - Julie Lawrence: Thank god this doesn't happen in Southside*

<sup>76</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "151012 Stolliday Conversation with Kieren Walters.eml"

<sup>77</sup> 2016: "160727 Jackson conversation on freeze date.eml"

<sup>78</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170509 Conversation with Teddy Ryan.eml"

*09/03/2017, 16:38 - Sarah Mulholland: Sarah Vine is wearing a see through, flesh coloured, skin tight top and no bra. No wonder Trickett speaks so highly of her.*

*09/03/2017, 16:38 - Sarah Mulholland: \*Pine not Vine<sup>79</sup>*

During the 2017 General Election, Executive Director for Governance, Membership and Party Services Emilie Oldknow made sexist and derogatory comments about Laura Murray, a young female member of staff in LOTO, following a negative story about her in the media:

21/05/2017, 06:44 - Tracey Allen:

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/807191/Corbyn-Labour-aide-children-save-money-inheritance-tax>

21/05/2017, 07:40 - Emilie Oldknow: You'd think with all that money she could afford to buy a jacket and a bra<sup>80</sup>

Senior staff including Emilie Oldknow, Julie Lawrence and Tracey Allen shared abusive messages regarding LOTO chief of staff Karie Murphy. Oldknow and other staff often called Murphy "Medusa", Julie Lawrence called her "crazy" and said her face "would make a good dartboard" and Patrick Henegan called her a "bitch face cow":

08/03/2017, 17:43 - Iain McNicol: KM wants any savings from KROW to fund community organising. Does she not realise we haven't even funded the campaigns. 08/03/2017, 17:45 - Simon Mills: What a fuckwit. We don't have the money to pay Krow so cutting it does not create cash for COs<sup>81</sup>

...

08/03/2017, 18:20 - Emilie Oldknow: I got told today that when Karie found out about Gorton, she was throwing things round the office...

08/03/2017, 18:21 - Julie Lawrence: Ha! Crazy woman.

08/03/2017, 18:21 - Emilie Oldknow: I laughed out loud

08/03/2017, 18:22 - Julie Lawrence: Keep poking the bear 🐻🐻

08/03/2017, 18:22 - Tracey Allen: Definitely crazy snake head lady rather than plucky Scottish heroine<sup>82</sup>

...

26/04/2017, 19:31 - Emilie Oldknow: <Media omitted>

26/04/2017, 19:31 - Patrick Heneghan: Bitch face cow

26/04/2017, 19:33 - Julie Lawrence: That would make a good

dartboard 26/04/2017, 19:36 - Tracey Allen: Medusa Monster<sup>83</sup>

<sup>79</sup> WhatsApp: "LP Forward Planning"

<sup>80</sup> WhatsApp: "LP Forward Planning"

<sup>81</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

<sup>82</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

<sup>83</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

Senior staff, including the Executive Director for Governance, Membership and Party Services Emilie Oldknow, made further derogatory and abusive comments about LOTO Chief of STAFF Karie Murphy and LOTO Political Secretary Katy Clark. For example:

22/11/2016, 11:27 - Emilie Oldknow: Fuck off pube head  
22/11/2016, 11:28 - Emilie Oldknow: I'm too busy slagging you off  
22/11/2016, 11:28 - Mike Creighton: Can I just point out from my sick-bed there is too much disparaging talk about old folk on this timeline. Salt of the earth dontcherknow.  
22/11/2016, 11:28 - Tracey Allen: Who is pube head?  
22/11/2016, 11:28 - Emilie Oldknow: To talk to you about Jon Trickett's diary  
22/11/2016, 11:28 - Emilie Oldknow: Katy

....

24/03/2017, 20:18 - Emilie Oldknow: Katy had the exact same clothes on yesterday  
24/03/2017, 20:18 - Emilie Oldknow: Smelly cow  
24/03/2017, 20:19 - Tracey Allen: Didn't she do that at conference too?  
24/03/2017, 20:19 - Emilie Oldknow: Yes. Same clothes. Four days  
24/03/2017, 20:19 - Patrick Heneghan: Probably slept in them  
24/03/2017, 20:19 - Patrick Heneghan: Disgusting  
24/03/2017, 20:19 - Emilie Oldknow: Karie is actually fat too  
24/03/2017, 20:19 - Emilie Oldknow: There's a good old role in that photo  
24/03/2017, 20:20 - Emilie Oldknow: Roll

Many of the above conversations involved key GLU staff, such as Stolliday and Creighton, and Oldknow, who was responsible for overseeing and managing GLU, and Iain McNicol. The language used in many of these conversations was deeply inappropriate for Labour members, let alone Labour staff, and more serious than many of the comments for which Labour members were suspended in the 2016 leadership election.

The Party is not aware of any of these individuals being reported or investigated for this abusive language.

Senior staff in Labour HQ also openly insulted a Young Labour member and Corbyn supporter who was suffering from mental health problems. Senior staff including Mike Creighton were aware of these problems but said on WhatsApp that they would like to see him "die in a fire" or "wouldn't piss on him to put him out":

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27/02/2017, 22:38 - Patrick Heneghan: Take a look at @maxshanly's Tweet:  
<https://twitter.com/maxshanly/status/836344334572216320?s=08>  
27/02/2017, 22:38 - Patrick Heneghan: Outrageous  
28/02/2017, 06:55 - Emilie Oldknow: That's funny



28/02/2017, 06:55 - Emilie Oldknow: He's got mental health issues

28/02/2017, 07:00 - Patrick Heneghan: Still outrageous.<sup>84</sup>

26/04/2017, 18:47 - Sarah Mulholland: And ps. I hope Max Shanly dies in a fire. 26/04/2017, 18:48 - Julie Lawrence: 💎💎

26/04/2017, 18:48 - Mike Creighton: That's a very bad wish Sarah. But if he does I wouldn't piss on him to put him out.

26/04/2017, 18:53 - Sarah Mulholland: Wish there was a petrol can emoji<sup>85</sup>

18/06/2017, 00:17 - Patrick Heneghan: Take a look at @maxshanly's Tweet:  
<https://twitter.com/maxshanly/status/876205863668678661?s=08>

18/06/2017, 00:17 - Patrick Heneghan: What a dick

18/06/2017, 09:59 - Tracey Allen: Couldn't find suitable emoji for him!<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

<sup>85</sup> WhatsApp: "LP Forward Planning"

<sup>86</sup> WhatsApp: "LP Forward Planning"

## 2.1.5. Labour staff approach to work under Jeremy Corbyn

*"tap tap tapping away will make us look v busy"*<sup>87</sup>

*"with a bit of luck this speech will show a clear polling decline"*<sup>88</sup>

Some staff in LOTO believed that some staff in Labour HQ, including senior staff and staff in GLU and GSO:

- Engaged in factional behaviour.
- Were obstructive.
- Adopted a "go slow" attitude towards work.
- Regularly made negative briefings to the press about the Labour Party. -
- Wanted to depose Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader.
- Did not want the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership to be electorally successful.

On 11 September 2015, John Stolliday discussed his moving into GLU with Tom Hamilton, Head of Briefing and Rebuttal. Stolliday saw his new role as being "on the barricades for the resistance" against Corbyn, suggesting he saw GLU as a unit which can be used to further factional interests, against the interests of the leader:<sup>89</sup>

*John Stolliday 17:19:*

*Bit of a gear change but should be fun*

*Tom Hamilton 17:20:*

*you'll be JC's enforcer*

*John Stolliday 17:20:*

*(fun=horrific)*

*er no - i'll be on the barricades for the resistance*<sup>90</sup>

On 12 August 2015 Sarah Brown noted that a colleague "might just do a work to rule type thing or take extended holiday".<sup>91</sup>

*Jo Green 12:54:*

*i feel physically sick about JC*

<sup>87</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170501 Conversation with Ben Murphy, Katy Dillon, Neil Fleming, Paul Ovenden, Stephanie Driver.eml"

<sup>88</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170526 Conversation with Jo Greening.eml"

<sup>89</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150911 JS new job.eml"

<sup>90</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150911 JS new job.eml"

<sup>91</sup> Political Bias: Trots: 150812 Conversation with Jo Green.eml

*also divided on what to do -on the one hand don't want to just walk away, but on*

*the other, how can i do my job?*

*Sarah Brown 12:55:*

*yes*

*i feel the same*

*Jo Green 12:55:*

*i think all of us must feel the same really. Paddy will just go, i know that. Sarah Brown 12:56:*

*but i also think, a) he won't be here long, and if nobody good is left when that happens we will be in deep trouble b) if we stay, we might be able to have some positive influence*

*yes Paddy will go*

*but*

*i pointed out to him that it might be a short period of time JC is here for so he might just do a work to rule type thing or take extended holiday<sup>92</sup>*

On 18 August 2015, Danny Adilypour and Jim Harvey discussed the party being “fucked” and “taken over by complete nut-jobs”, but they should “stay and fight”:

*Danny Adilypour 14:43:*

*We're so fucking screwed*

*Jim Harvey 14:44:*

*yes, i'm now leaning towards irrevocably fucked rather than just utterly fucked*

*Danny Adilypour 14:44:*

*yup*

*Jim Harvey 14:44:*

*SDP?*

*Danny Adilypour 14:46:*

*Ha, nah we all have to stay and fight. It's gonna be brutal and take forever, but it's the only option<sup>93</sup>*

On 14 September 2015, Stolliday, who was in Media Monitoring but about to move to GLU, and Press Officer Anna Wright discussed that if LOTO announced a Shadow Welsh Secretary before Corybn spoke with Welsh First Minister Carwyn Jones, Jones would “go on broadcast and slag JC”:<sup>94</sup>

*Anna Wright 11:28:*

*if they annc Shad Welsh Secy before they speak, Carwyn is going to go on broadcast and slag JC*

<sup>92</sup> Political Bias: Trots: 150812 Conversation with Jo Green.eml

<sup>93</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150818 Conversation with Jim Harvey.eml”

<sup>94</sup> Political Bias: Trots: 150914 JS on JC visit.eml”

*John Stolliday 11:29:*

*good*

*Anna Wright 11:29:*

*Yeah I hope it happens*<sup>95</sup>

On 22 September 2015, Stolliday and Jo Green discussed the result, including the fact that the party had “already been fucked for the last 7 years” - since Tony Blair resigned, and Gordon Brown became Prime Minister. Stolliday also advised Green to try to get a redundancy payout rather than resign, “even if it means coming into the office & doing nothing for a few months”:<sup>96</sup>

*Jo Green 11:40:*

*this organisation is a fucking dying brand.*

*we're fucked*

*...*

*John Stolliday 11:42:*

*We've already been fucked for the last 7 years. Not sure how much more I can*

*take Jo Green 11:43:*

*yes indeed. i am praying for redundo next year. i think it's likely.*

*i'm not sure i can last until May though and my guess is they will happen next summer.*

*we'll see*

*hard to walk away from 11 years service. it's basically a year salary.*

*John Stolliday 11:46:*

*You'll be entitled to a decent chunk. Worth staying for it even if it means coming into the office & doing nothing for a few months*

*Jo Green 11:50:*

*i think that is quite likely.*<sup>97</sup>

On 23 September 2015, eleven days after Corbyn was elected leader, Stolliday discussed “how long” Corbyn had “left”, and suggested that there would be “some sort of plot post Xmas” but he would “limp on until we get wiped out” in May 2016 elections (though expressing “fear” that the PLP would be “too deferential” to remove Corbyn):<sup>98</sup>

*Kieren Walters 14:08:*

*how long left do you reckon?*

*John Stolliday 14:08:*

<sup>95</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150914 JS on JC visit.eml”

<sup>96</sup> 2016: Trots: “50922 stolliday.eml”

<sup>97</sup> 2016: Trots: "50922 stolliday.eml"

<sup>98</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150923 Stolliday on plans remove corbyn.eml"

*for whom?*

*Kieren Walters 14:08:*

*JC*

*John Stolliday 14:08:*

*I think May elections will be the start of his downfall*

*Kieren Walters 14:08:*

*yes*

*think so*

*John Stolliday 14:09:*

*Hopefully new leader in place at conference 2016*

*Kieren Walters 14:09:*

*or immediately after Christmas*

*that is often when things kick off*

*John Stolliday 14:09:*

*I reckon there will be some sort of plot post Xmas, but he will have enough support to limp on until we get wiped out in Wales & Scotland & local elections*

*Kieren Walters 14:10:*

*good analysis I think*

*John Stolliday 14:11:*

*We'll see*

*My fear is the PLP are too bloody deferential and don't take action*<sup>99</sup>

On 15 September, similarly, Jo Green and Sarah Waite discussed Corbyn's election:<sup>100</sup>

*Jo Green 14:28:*

*the more madness the quicker it ends*

*Sarah Waite 14:29:*

*god what if it doesn't*

*what if all this talk of members joining just goes on*

*and everyone is like ok, well we must be doing ok*

*we need a POLL*

*that says we're like 20 points behind*

*Jo Green 14:36:*

*yes but he will have a little honeymoon*

*won't last long*<sup>101</sup>

On 15 September 2015, in working hours and with staff systems, Dan Hogan, who later worked for GLU as an Investigations Officer, encouraged Amy Fowler to join the "Labour First" mailing list:

<sup>99</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150923 Stolliday on plans remove corbyn.eml"

<sup>100</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150915 Conversation with Jo Green.eml"

<sup>101</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150915 Conversation with Jo Green.eml"

*Dan Hogan 11:04:*

*what's your non-party email address?*

*Amy Fowler 11:05:*

*fowler.amy@gmail.com*

*Dan Hogan 11:06:*

*are you on the Labour First mailing list?*

*Amy Fowler 11:06:*

*no*

*but I should be*

*Dan Hogan 11:07:*

*<http://eepurl.com/Nzh75> [a link to the "Labour First" sign-up page]*

*Amy Fowler 11:07:*

*Thanks*

*Amy Fowler 11:11:*

*are you going to be a key contact in your clp?*

*Dan Hogan 11:12:*

*yeah. i've also said i'll help set up a group in Wandsworth once I'm out of OBG<sup>102</sup>*

Hogan advised that "(if you email him, drop my name in :) )" - probably a reference to "Labour First" national organiser Luke Akehurst - to which Fowler said: "I will email him. Though I don't know how much help I'll ever be from my clp."<sup>103</sup>

On 20 October 2015, Jo Green commented, in terms of leaks to the press, that "this place is like a sieve".<sup>104</sup> Later, in January 2018, when Hogan was working in GLU, fellow Disputes Officer Louise Withers-Green commented that Hogan was "a leaky cauldron".<sup>105</sup>

On 8 October 2015, Director of Policy and Research Simon Jackson and Head of Planning Jo Green discussed getting "rid" of Corbyn, with someone "sacrificing themselves":

*Simon Jackson 14:02:*

*i'm fairly settled now on the view that they have to get rid of him in the next couple of months or the trots will embed themselves*

*that means someone sacrificing themselves*

*Jo Green 14:02:*

<sup>102</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150915 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml". "150915 Labour First mailing list.PNG".

<sup>103</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150915 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml".

<sup>104</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "151020 Conversation with Jo Green - Heggie trot busting, place a sieve.eml"

<sup>105</sup> 2016: Trots: "180126 Hogan leaky cauldron.eml"

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it has to be done by next summer at the latest.<sup>106</sup>

In December 2015, the Oldham by-election took place, viewed as the first "electoral test" of Labour under Jeremy Corbyn. Labour won with an increased majority, sending Labour MP Jim McMahon to parliament. Katy Dillon, Press Officer and later Labour's Broadcast Manager, described Labour's victory as "bittersweet", while Lisa Forsyth expressed hope that the May 2016 elections would lead to "the boot" for Corbyn:

*Katy Dillon 15:52:*

*the result on thursday was bittersweet  
could not believe it*

*Lisa Forsyth 15:53:*

*It's in spite of him tho. Hopfully May will be the boot..*

*Katy Dillon 15:53:*

*course it is  
but all his little dsiciples dont know that*

*Lisa Forsyth 15:54:*

*Cos they are bats\*t crazy*

*Total nutters*<sup>107</sup>

In April 2016 Francis Grove-White, Labour International Policy Officer, met Luke Akehurst from "Labour First", and commented to Greening that it was "very encouraging to hear how organised they are regarding conference".<sup>108</sup>

On 29 April 2016, Ben Murphy, Local Government Officer, and Hollie Ridley, Eastern Region, discussed prospects of Corbyn being removed:<sup>109</sup>

*Ben Murphy 11:43:*

*I think he still has solid support in the membership - just have to hope bad performances and all of this weakens him*

*Hollie Ridley 11:43:*

*and they all lapse there membership*

*Ben Murphy 11:43:*

*aye*<sup>110</sup>

On 13 June 2016, Greg Cook and Jo Greening discussed if Remain lost in the EU Referendum, at least Corbyn could be “seen to be responsible”:

<sup>106</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “151008 Simon Jackson Jo Green.eml”

<sup>107</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “151207 Conversation with Katy Dillon.eml”

<sup>108</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “160428 Conversation with Jo Greening.eml”

<sup>109</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “160429 Conversation with Ben Murphy.eml”

<sup>110</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “160429 Conversation with Ben Murphy.eml”

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*Jo Greening 14:23:*

*so greg*

*what the hell is going to happen in this referendum?!!!!*

*Greg Cook 14:23:*

*I still think Remain will win*

*Jo Greening 14:23:*

*pheew*

*Greg Cook 14:24:*

*But at least if not, Corbyn will clearly be seen to be responsible*

*Jo Greening 14:24:*

*yes <sup>111</sup>*

On 4 November 2016, Policy Officer Dan Hogan, who was about to move to GLU, asked a colleague:

*how do we make the NPF Brexit session as difficult and unhelpful to McDonnell and Corbyn as possible?<sup>112</sup>*

Senior staff in “SMT Group” spoke openly with one another about hoping that the Liberal Democrats “can do it” in the Manchester Gorton by-election:

*27/02/2017, 16:53 - Patrick Heneghan: Just had discussion at strategy meeting We will meet Steve and Andy next Monday - we are looking at all 3 in May but select in Gorton within 4 weeks*

*Katy will speak to you/Iain*

*27/02/2017, 16:53 - Patrick Heneghan: From karie*

*27/02/2017, 16:54 - Patrick Heneghan: They didn't include us in the discussion.*

*27/02/2017, 16:54 - Patrick Heneghan: Well let's hope the lib dems can do it... <sup>113</sup>*

On 28 February 2017 senior staff including Iain McNicol discussed using their



positions to delay the change to One Member One Vote (OMOV) which could widen the franchise in Labour Party youth elections, apparently to advantage their favoured faction: "Delay. Procrastinate. John Mann did 2 years as Nols Chair in 80s to keep Trots at bay. Worked then":

*28/02/2017, 18:18 - Iain McNicol: How many student members do we have. Has a check been done on those to see how many are actually students.*

<sup>111</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160613 if not win Remain, Corbyn will be blamed.eml"

<sup>112</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "161104 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml"

<sup>113</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

*28/02/2017, 18:24 - Patrick Heneghan: Turns out the membership system only stores those who pay student rate. About 29k*

*28/02/2017, 18:24 - Patrick Heneghan: Labour students not paying that rate are not tagged in membership system*

*28/02/2017, 18:25 - Patrick Heneghan: Half labour students national cmte pay different rate*

*28/02/2017, 18:25 - Patrick Heneghan: Balloting on that basis would not be robust*

*28/02/2017, 18:25 - Patrick Heneghan: Potentially open to challenge*

*28/02/2017, 18:26 - Patrick Heneghan: What a shame but they will need more time*

*28/02/2017, 18:26 - Patrick Heneghan: They will write to you to ask for help in understanding how to sort this within membership system*

*28/02/2017, 18:26 - Patrick Heneghan: Ol*

*28/02/2017, 18:26 - Patrick Heneghan: Ok*

*28/02/2017, 18:33 - Tracey Allen: And what is his reply?*

*28/02/2017, 18:34 - Patrick Heneghan: Whose reply?*

*28/02/2017, 19:00 - Iain McNicol: Mine. That's fine.*

*28/02/2017, 19:13 - Patrick Heneghan: We can draft that too. But let's not reply too fast.*

*28/02/2017, 19:15 - Tracey Allen: I only meant in brief. Not actual draft*

*28/02/2017, 19:16 - Tracey Allen: I understand we're playing politics here but wondered what next stage of strategy is*

*28/02/2017, 19:16 - Patrick Heneghan: We look at the issues*

*28/02/2017, 19:17 - Patrick Heneghan: They appear to large to resolve this year*

*28/02/2017, 19:17 - Patrick Heneghan: Ask party for a plan to change way system works*

*28/02/2017, 19:17 - Patrick Heneghan: Delay omov*

*28/02/2017, 19:18 - Tracey Allen: Delay. Procrastinate. John Mann did 2 years as Nols Chair in 80s to keep Trots at bay. Worked then*<sup>114</sup>

Later in March, Emilie Oldknow, Executive Director of Governance, Membership and Party Services, discussed with other staff in the General Secretary's Office how she would ensure only her allies had a majority on the Manchester Gorton selection panel, giving a blow-by-blow account of her actions in undermining the wishes of the Leader's Office:

*06/03/2017, 09:56 - Julie Lawrence: Em, do we need TW on officers?*

*06/03/2017, 09:57 - Tracey Allen: I'll go and spk to her.*

*06/03/2017, 09:57 - Emilie Oldknow: Yes. He's coming. Lucy is sorting*

*06/03/2017, 09:57 - Julie Lawrence: Fab*

<sup>114</sup>WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

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*06/03/2017, 13:36 - Emilie Oldknow: FYI Glenis isn't going to remove RLB from panel so we will probably end up with 6...*

*06/03/2017, 13:36 - Emilie Oldknow: Lucy thinks she will*

*06/03/2017, 13:37 - Julie Lawrence: Largest panel ever 💎💎*

*06/03/2017, 13:41 - Emilie Oldknow: Yes. Which I think Ann will push against but let's see where we get to*

*06/03/2017, 14:41 - Iain McNicol: Hilarious*

*06/03/2017, 14:45 - Julie Lawrence: Ann just told me she's doing it*

*06/03/2017, 14:57 - Emilie Oldknow: Yep...*

*06/03/2017, 15:10 - Emilie Oldknow: TW getting twitchy and Diana not on. Can we get on with this and Gorton?*

*06/03/2017, 15:16 - Julie Lawrence: Next item*

*06/03/2017, 15:18 - Emilie Oldknow: We have to get on with this!!!*

*06/03/2017, 15:18 - Emilie Oldknow: Tom needs to go*

*06/03/2017, 15:22 - Emilie Oldknow: I'm literally hiding in my office*

*06/03/2017, 15:22 - Emilie Oldknow: On my own*

*06/03/2017, 15:22 - Emilie Oldknow: .....*

*06/03/2017, 15:23 - Emilie Oldknow: Oh my god*

*06/03/2017, 15:23 - Emilie Oldknow: I'm dying!!!!*

*06/03/2017, 15:23 - Patrick Heneghan: What's happening?*

*06/03/2017, 15:24 - Emilie Oldknow: Trying to remove RLB*

*06/03/2017, 15:24 - Emilie Oldknow: Eeeeeek*

*06/03/2017, 15:29 - Emilie Oldknow: Say proposal to remove RLB*

*06/03/2017, 15:29 - Emilie Oldknow: And that need to be voted on*

*06/03/2017, 15:29 - Emilie Oldknow: Iain*

*06/03/2017, 15:30 - Emilie Oldknow: Nancy should not speak!!!*

*06/03/2017, 15:33 - Emilie Oldknow: John will need vote to remove*

RLB 06/03/2017, 15:33 - Emilie Oldknow: He will push that  
06/03/2017, 15:35 - Emilie Oldknow: Iain - don't take Katy  
06/03/2017, 15:37 - Emilie Oldknow: Nancy is a fucking idiot  
06/03/2017, 15:48 - Emilie Oldknow: Hahahaha  
06/03/2017, 15:48 - Emilie Oldknow: Oh my god. Tin hat time  
06/03/2017, 15:48 - Emilie Oldknow: I'm scared  
06/03/2017, 15:48 - Emilie Oldknow: Eeeeeek  
06/03/2017, 16:08 - Julie Lawrence: Nancy spitting feathers<sup>115</sup>

Senior staff also spoke of facilitating Deputy Leader Tom Watson leaking confidential Party documents:

13/04/2017, 13:37 - Emilie Oldknow: I think this needs to be cc'd to  
TW 13/04/2017, 13:37 - Patrick Heneghan: He will leak it

<sup>115</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

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13/04/2017, 13:37 - Emilie Oldknow: In addition, the George S meeting wasn't any worse than any of the other meetings we did  
13/04/2017, 13:37 - Tracey Allen: Oh awful - for her too. And just think you could be in Jamie's with me and your team 💎💎  
13/04/2017, 13:37 - Emilie Oldknow: He won't leak it as it criticises Sion  
13/04/2017, 13:38 - Tracey Allen: Good  
13/04/2017, 13:38 - Emilie Oldknow: 💎💎💎💎  
13/04/2017, 13:38 - Patrick Heneghan: I think we ask for meeting with tw and jc  
13/04/2017, 13:38 - Julie Lawrence: He can leak it after elections if its useful  
13/04/2017, 13:38 - Patrick Heneghan: Cover for tw to be ccd<sup>116</sup>

<sup>116</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"

## **2.1.6. Regional staff**

*"most of what we do is behind the scenes"*<sup>117</sup>

As will be discussed in Section 3.1 and elsewhere in the report, in this period regional staff played a critical role in disciplinary procedures, both in initiating cases and proposing decisions on cases, and in then investigating and progressing cases that had begun.

Many on the left of the Party believed that staff in Labour's Regions played a factional

role, however, which further engendered mistrust in the disciplinary process.

On 17 August 2015, Danny Adilypour and Regional Organiser Teddy Ryan, both Labour staff members, discussed CLP nominations:

*Danny Adilypour 16:24:*

*It was scary how many Trots turned up for the Streatham meeting last*

*week Teddy Ryan 16:24:*

*how close was it*

*Danny Adilypour 16:24:*

*Liz beat Corbyn by 2*

*Teddy Ryan 16:36:*

*christ. That's unreal*

*Danny Adilypour 16:37:*

*Yeah it's terrifying*

*That's oart of the reason we're nervous about Vauxhall*

*Teddy Ryan 16:38:*

*surely vauxhall will be fine*

*Danny Adilypour 16:38:*

*I think it will be, but you just can't take anything for granted at the moment*<sup>118</sup>

On 14 September 2015 (two days after Jeremy Corbyn's election as leader), Regional Organisers Ellie Buck and Rob Sherrington discussed staff at Labour HQ's view of Corbyn:

*Ellie Buck 11:59:*

*if he hasnt gone within a few months a lot of staff will leave*

*Rob Sherrington 12:00:*

*John McDonald will be the catalyst for the plp to get rid of him.*

*Ellie Buck 12:18:*

<sup>117</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "171023 Conversation with Teddy Ryan.eml"

<sup>118</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150817 Conversation with Teddy Ryan.eml"

*Hopefully*<sup>119</sup>

On 18 January 2016 South East regional staff member Ellie Buck joked her role was "fighting tories and trots by day, criminals by night",<sup>120</sup> while in December 2016 Fraser Welsh, Deputy General Secretary for Wales, explained part of his work as involving "not conceding CLPs to Corbynite bullies".<sup>121</sup>

In November 2015, Welsh regional staff discussed "putting together a list of trots who

want to come to the corbyn event tomorrow”, referring to Labour Party members who had emailed asking to attend, and expressed disappointment that they couldn’t refuse entry.<sup>122</sup> And in January 2016 regional organisers Rob Sherrington and Ellie Buck discussed organising an event for Labour Party members, where they wanted the “audience to be hand picked (no trots basically)” - for which they had “to find 130 sensible people”:

*Rob Sherrington 13:52:  
bloody hell, that's a task.  
Ellie Buck 13:57:  
innit*<sup>123</sup>

In October 2017, two Regional staff discussed Momentum’s job adverts for “regional organiser” positions, noting they will try “to fuck up regions”, though “they’re not going to be good enough”, describing it as “very badly paid” but “basically doing our job but motivated”:

*I think they will they will do the groundwork we cannot be arsed doing and they will engage the members in a way we cannot be fucked with. They are going to be so motivated*

They continued:

*Teddy Ryan 15:19:  
i simply don't have the time  
Ciaran Tully 15:20:  
I know that's the issue most of what we do is behind the scenes  
Teddy Ryan 15:20:*

<sup>119</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150914 Conversation with Rob Sherrington.eml”

<sup>120</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “160118 Ellie Buck fighting Tories and Trots by day.eml” <sup>121</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “161124 Conversation with Fraser Welsh - concede CLPs to corbynite bullies.eml”

<sup>122</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “151118 Conversation with Ellie Buck.eml”

<sup>123</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “160111 Conversation with Ellie Buck.eml”

<sup>124</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "171023 Conversation with Teddy Ryan.eml"

## 2.1.6. The 2015 leadership election -

### **“Validation”** *“priority right now is trot hunting”.*<sup>125</sup>

After the May 2015 election, and continuing into the summer as the Corbyn leadership campaign got underway, there was a surge of people joining the Labour Party, as full members, or as “registered supporters” who had a vote in the leadership election.

With the help of other staff across the Party, including staff such as Dan Hogan who would later join GLU, in the summer of 2015 GLU launched a process of checking new members and supporters, particularly on social media, to remove them from the process. Staff described “stalking” people on social media to find people who are “trotty” or a “twat”, despite acknowledging:

*really makes you think about what you put on social media  
really worried if i was to be stalked i would sound like a twat.*<sup>126</sup>

Numerous staff were involved in this, both senior and junior. Staff discussed “hunting out 1000s of trots”,<sup>127</sup> and described this as “trot busting” work,<sup>128</sup> “bashing trots”,<sup>129</sup> “trot spotting”,<sup>130</sup> “the trot hunt”,<sup>131</sup> and “trot hunting”.<sup>132</sup> Simon Jackson, Acting Director of Policy and Political Research, would reportedly “go on about trot busting”;<sup>133</sup> another staff member was “celebrating every time he finds a trot”;<sup>134</sup> and Danny Adilypour (Campaigns Manager Contact Creator, Targeting & Analysis Team) discussed being “trot smasher in chief”.<sup>135</sup> As Cameron Scott, Eastern Regional Director, said on 19 August 2015: “priority right now is trot hunting”.<sup>136</sup> On 14 August 2015 Research Officer Dominic Murphy suggested they “call the purge 'trot or not'”

<sup>125</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150819 Conversation with Teddy Ryan.eml”

<sup>126</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150825 Conversation with Rob Sherrington.eml”

<sup>127</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150731 Conversation with Josh Carrington.eml”

<sup>128</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150821 Conversation with Jo Green.eml”

<sup>129</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150820 Conversation with Alec James, Michael Rubin.eml”

<sup>130</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150814 Conversation with Jo Greening.eml”

<sup>131</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150811 Conversation with Josh Carrington.eml”

<sup>132</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150804 Conversation with Josh Carrington.eml”, “150804 Conversation with Ali Moussavi.eml”

<sup>133</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150813 Conversation with Ali Moussavi.eml”

<sup>134</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150818 Conversation with Frankie O'Byrne.eml”



<sup>135</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150820 Conversation with Finn McGoldrick.eml"

<sup>136</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150819 Conversation with Teddy Ryan.eml"

now",<sup>137</sup> while he and Katherine Buckingham, GLU's Head of Disputes, discussed the fact they were "playing trot or not" while "real work is piling up".<sup>138</sup>

Conversely, on 22 July 2015, despite arguing that people who joined the party after an election shouldn't be allowed a vote, Dan Hogan (who later moved to GLU) nevertheless said that:

*for what it's worth, anyone who writes in [to the policy team] who doesn't sound like a trot-lodite, i'm giving to the membership team to see if they can convince them to sign up as a supporter [and get a vote].<sup>139</sup>*

On 5 August 2015, meanwhile, Acting Director of Policy and Political Research Simon Jackson said Guardian journalist Owen Jones is "an arsehole", and wanted him taken off the panel of a Young Labour conference event. Sarah Mulholland suggested that a row would lead to him being reinstated by McNicol, "because us thinking he's an arse isn't a legitimate reason to remove him from a panel":

*Simon Jackson 10:35:*

*it seems to be reason for disallowing people a vote in the leadership election*

*Sarah Mulholland 10:35:*

*that is for the saving of the Labour Party!*

*not a vendetta against a mad person*

*Simon Jackson 10:37:*

*Young Labour need to not be trots, that is not a vendetta*

*Sarah Mulholland 10:37:*

*if only they weren't, my life would be so much jollier*

*Rosie is going to speak to you about trot purge<sup>140</sup>*

Jackson and Mulholland thus confirmed that Labour staff thinking someone such as Owen Jones was an "arsehole", was then enough of a reason to disallow them a vote in the leadership election.

On 10 September 2015, Dan Hogan and Amy Fowler discussed "purging" someone for having "liked" some Facebook pages, while Hogan described "perusing the Stop The Labour Purge FB page" and "getting even by just purging everyone who shared it". Fowler expressed concern for his mental health and him "fixating" on this - "Can you

<sup>137</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150814 Conversation with Dominic Murphy 2.eml"

<sup>138</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150814 Conversation with Dominic Murphy.eml"

<sup>139</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150722 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml"

<sup>140</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150805 Conversation with Sarah Mulholland.eml"

maybe just try to let it go?"<sup>141</sup> Elsewhere, Hogan discussed "hunting through all the anarchists and trots who shared it to purge them too".<sup>142</sup>

As discussed in Section 3.2, the Labour Party has identified that in 2017 there were at least 170 Labour members reported to GLU for antisemitism with clear evidence of their membership, who were not acted against. (This does not include numerous complaints not sent up to GLU from Regions, or many other complaints where members were less clearly identifiable.) Hogan was then one of two Disputes officers, employed by the party to deal with these complaints. The Governance and Legal Unit's lack of action on complaints is detailed later. Comparing this to the extensive work on so-called "Trot busting" suggests that staff were far less motivated to tackle complaints, including antisemitism and other abuse, than they were to suspend members because of their left-wing political views.

In this period, staff "Trot busting" included flagging people simply for having "liked" a Facebook page, or having retweeted the Green Party on an issue they agreed with. On 12 August 2015, NEC member Alice Perry expressed her concern about some of the people staff had flagged:

*Tony Smart - donating to the People's Assembly is not an anti-Labour activity!*

*Caroline King - her Facebook likes are fine, very similar to lots of members of the Labour Party. We can't block people just because they like the people's assembly and UK uncut. I wouldn't consider these to be far left either (and I've spent the last few weeks looking at proper far left left unity/TUSC tweets and blogs)*<sup>143</sup>

People were rejected as members or supporters in 2015 for retweets, including single retweets. A 21 August 2015 list of 238 rejected members, for example, included someone who "Retweeted Class War"; "Retweets the [National Health Action] party and appears to have been a supporter of them"; someone with a "Pattern of retweeting Green Party material and expressing support"; and someone who retweeted a Mark Thomas tweet saying "Dear Labour... get fucked" after many Labour MPs' abstained on the welfare bill, which was opposed by many Labour members. It also included members rejected with the note "green party supporter -likes on facebook", and "likes a lotta greens on FB".<sup>144</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150910 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml"

<sup>142</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150909 Conversation with Dan Hogan.eml"

<sup>143</sup> Pre-2016: "150812 Re Supporter Update 12 08 5pm.eml"

<sup>144</sup> Pre-2016: "150815 Member Rejections.eml"

Later, in 2016, GLU's Head of Disputes Katherine Buckingham recalled that "there were so many mistakes last year that the NEC essentially told us that everyone should get an appeal".<sup>145</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "160831 so many errors all appeal in 2015.eml"

## **2.1.7. Staff appointments and culture**

*"[E]veryone [at Labour HQ] considers anyone left of Brown to be a trot."*<sup>146</sup> Many staff at Labour HQ had a background in "Labour Students".

"Labour Students" was an organisation historically, and then, run by people from the "right" of the party, as opposed to the "left" and "soft left". They appear to have had an internal culture of calling people to their left "Trots".

Staff discussed jobs being "stitched up" for Labour students. For example, in January 2016 Sam Matthews, who later became GLU's Head of Disputes and then Acting Director of GLU as a whole, and was then an employee of "Oasis" and formerly in Labour's print team, enquired about a Labour vacancy - "Campaigns Officer – Campaign Materials and Direct Mail". He was encouraged to apply by a Labour staff member, , but Matthews expressed concern that "I'm mediocre (at best) at copywriting :/ - and got rejected from that job the last time I went for it".

Matthews was reminded that the team "know you" and:

*all of the other people who apply will probably be internal Labour hacks with not that much legit copywriting experience outside of producing campaign materials or stuff for Labour students.*

Matthews asked, however:

*Won't it be a stitch up for a Labour Student though?*

The response was: "Maybe under the Sarah regime, but now we're under Tom management". Matthews said he would apply for a role, but added:

*As an aside, could you give me a heads up if it does end up being a stitch up for someone? I'll probably go through with it anyway to pop back up on their radar that I want back in, but it would be useful to know.*

The Labour staff member said: "I've not seen any evidence of it to be honest, but that might be because Tom is less blatant about such things."<sup>147</sup>

A 17 February 2015 conversation between Executive Director for Governance, Membership and Party Services Emilie Oldknow and Emma Meehan regarding a job in

<sup>146</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160517 Conversation with Josh Carrington.eml"

<sup>147</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "160119 heads up if is stitch up.eml"

the Compliance unit, could give an indication of how hiring processes worked at the time:

*Emilie Oldknow [09:27]:*

*Sarah tells me that your sister is looking for a job?*

*Emma Meehan [09:27]:*

*Yeah she is*

*Emilie Oldknow [09:27]:*

*We have an admin role coming up in the compliance unit*

*It is a bit boring, helping Margaret with donation reports etc but it gets her in the door and gives her some experience?*

*Do you think she would be interested?*

*Emma Meehan [09:28]:*

*Yes she definitely would, shes been looking for admin work in*

*London shes pretty new to the party*

*Emilie Oldknow [09:28]:*

*Okay great. That means she will be completely malleable....*

*Emma Meehan [09:28]:*

*but it would be really good experience for her*

*Emilie Oldknow [09:28]:*

*Mwah ha ha ha<sup>148</sup>*

On 6 July 2015, two staff members discussed the fact “these labour students” working in the office all supported Liz Kendall, who gained 4.5% of the vote in the 2015 leadership election.<sup>149</sup> In July 2016, as discussed later, ten people from “Labour Students” were recruited to work on suspending and excluding Labour members and supporters in the 2016 leadership election.<sup>150</sup>

On 17 May 2016, Campaigns Analyst Josh Carrington, seeing a press officer talking openly of “smashing Trots” and “mad Trots”, commented that a newer colleague was going through the same process he had in “Head Office”, where you:

*slowly realise that everyone, everyone else is much more right-wing and considers anyone left of brown to be a trot.<sup>151</sup>*

Numerous staff privately messaged each other that Joshua Carrington himself was “a trot”, reminding each other to be careful of what they said in his presence. On 12 June 2017, for example, four days after the general election, Anna Phillips messaged Ellie

<sup>148</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150217 Conversation with Emilie Oldknow.eml”

<sup>149</sup> Political Bias: Trots: “150706 Conversation with Josh Carrington.eml”

<sup>150</sup> 2016: "160630 Conversation with Richard Shakespeare.eml"

<sup>151</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160517 Conversation with Josh Carrington.eml"

Miller, Campaign and Shadow Cabinet Visits Manager, "remember josh is a trot" - "he seemed happy with the result this morn".<sup>152</sup>

However, Joshua Carrington himself took part in the 2015 "Trot hunt", referred to left wing staff associated with LOTO during the 2017 general election as "Fucking Trots" and enjoyed "[making] fun of the leadership" to its supporters.<sup>153</sup> He appears not to have been a supporter of Liz Kendall, however.<sup>154</sup> This may have been why other staff referred to him as a "Trot".

Ben Nolan from Digital was also described as "troty" - "he sees our increase in membership as a good thing which is always worrying".<sup>155</sup> Some staff referred to the digital team as "trot corner",<sup>156</sup> specifying Ben Nolan and Joshua Carrington.<sup>157</sup>

In summer 2015, meanwhile, staff warned that Jack Smith was a "Trot" - "that little Trot", as Jo Green put it.<sup>158</sup> On 22 June 2015, Sarah Mulholland, then Head of Campaigns and Stakeholders, said:

*that Jack Smith is a right trot  
and he's pals with all the young labour trots. So we need to be reallly careful*<sup>159</sup>

On 17 July 2015, Campaigns Officer Stephen Donnelly warned colleagues that Jack Smith "is a big 'ol trot and dead pally with al the [Young Labour] trots". Sarah Mullholland asked "hows he been allowed to work here", to which the answer was TULO, the Trade Union Liaison Organisation. Donnelly commented "lovely guy, but the enemy as far as these chats are concerned". Michael Rubin said: "Annoying he's here" - "viper in the nest".<sup>160</sup>

When Smith was positioned near staff working on the "Trot hunt", Patrick Heneghan, Executive Director of Elections, Campaigns and Organisation, reportedly advised "we just have to work secretly and stop broadcasting", which the staff struggled with: "I

<sup>152</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170612 Conversation with Ellie Miller - remember Josh is a Trot.eml"

<sup>153</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170505 Conversation with Joshua Carrington.eml"

<sup>154</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150706 Conversation with Josh Carrington.eml"

<sup>155</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170612 Conversation with Ellie Miller - remember Josh is a Trot.eml"

<sup>156</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170612 Conversation with Ellie Miller - remember Josh is a Trot.eml"

<sup>157</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160517 Conversation with Stephen Pattison - Trot corner.eml" <sup>158</sup>  
Political Bias - Trots: "151006 Conversation with Jo Green - crackers to renationalise rail.eml" <sup>159</sup>  
Political Bias: Trots: "150618 Conversation with Sarah Mulholland.eml"  
<sup>160</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150717 Conversation with Michael Rubin, Stephen Donnelly.eml"

christened myself the Trot Catcher this morning, and then I remembered..."<sup>161</sup> They referred to this as "operation 'don't let jack smith know we're kicking out trots'".<sup>162</sup>

Ben Soffa, meanwhile, had been working for the TSSA union and in 2015 was head of Digital on the Jeremy Corbyn leadership election. After the election, he got a job as head of Digital in Labour HQ - the only such appointment that happened at the time. Other senior staff would refer to him as a "Trot". On 7 December 2015, for example, Director of Policy and Research Simon Jackson and Head of Planning Jo Green discussed Ben Soffa:

*Jo Green 13:48:*

*getting second hand reports from the trot in digital not exactly joined up thinking. Simon Jackson 13:48:*

*quite*<sup>163</sup>

On 13 May 2016, Greg Cook commented that "You can see who all the Trots are in the building. They all want Ben's postcards", to which Executive Director for Elections, Campaigns and Organisation Patrick Heneghan responded "too many."<sup>164</sup>

Whether or not staff considered applicants for job vacancies to be "Trots" appears to have influenced hiring decisions.

In October 2015, for example, Simon Jackson explained to Jo Green how he had appointed a new "International Officer", from a thinktank:

*Jo Green 12:42:*

*that's good. so not a trot either presumably*

*Simon Jackson 12:42:*

*no, good politics*<sup>165</sup>

In January 2016, Greg Cook and Stephen Pattison discussed how applicants for a vacancy so far were "Trots" - so "If i can get away with it, I won't employ anyone for the [role]."<sup>166</sup>

On 14 February 2017 Fraser Welsh, who later moved to GLU, on the other hand, suggested a different approach regarding a director job, but apparently with similar



<sup>161</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150803 Conversation with Sarah Mulholland.eml"

<sup>162</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "150803 Conversation with Emma Meehan.eml"

<sup>163</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "151207 Conversation with Jo Green.eml"

<sup>164</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160513 Conversation with Patrick Heneghan.eml"

<sup>165</sup> Political Bias: Trots: "151020 new employee not a Trot.eml"

<sup>166</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160117 Conversation with Stephen Pattison.eml"

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motivations: "it may be sensible politics to give responsibility of mobilising all the trots to someone who is a bit troty, so that when the trots don't do anything, and we lose badly, it's a trot that gets thrown under a bus".<sup>167</sup>

Staff expressed an expectation that their colleagues would be hostile to supporters of Jeremy Corbyn, even mocking the idea of "chatting" with "Corbynite mates".<sup>168</sup> On 4 August 2015, staff spoke about a colleague defending Corbyn on her personal Facebook, and John Stolliday, who would soon be moving to GLU, asked for screenshots in order to get her "sacked":

*Sarah Brown 13:59:*

*so did you just hear KS*

*Sarah Brown 13:59:*

*saying a corbyn leadership will make it easier to recruit a new digital team*

*John Stolliday 13:59:*

*No? Really???*

*Paul Ovenden 13:59:*

*brilliant*

*John Stolliday 14:00:*

*she must love corbyn*

*She is a green after all*

*Paul Ovenden 14:00:*

*she does - I saw her on Facebook mounting a passionate defence of him.*

*John Stolliday 14:00:*

*Find me screenshots & I'll have her sacked for breaching staff code of conduct*<sup>169</sup>

On 5 January 2017, discussing a move to a job in the third sector, Hester Waterfield discussed it being "so awks" that she would now be working with "a corbynite":

*Hester Waterfield 11:41:*

*the other person i [will be] managing is def a corbynite*

*Hayley Sothinathan 11:42:*

*that is going to be so awks*

*Hester Waterfield 11:43:*

*i am just going to have to learn to have a professional persona*<sup>170</sup>

Iain McNicol complained openly about LOTO's efforts to appoint staff, who he described as "fellow trot travellers", calling LOTO "fucking twats":

<sup>167</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170214 Conversation with Fraser Welsh - Trots under bus.eml"

<sup>168</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "160113 Conversation with Anouska Gregorek.eml"

<sup>169</sup> 2016: Trots: "150804 stolliday sack for supporting JC.eml"

<sup>170</sup> Political Bias - Trots: "170105 Conversation with Hayley Sothinathan.eml"

*09/04/2017, 02:33 - Iain McNicol: The irony if them complaining about recruit process. It is actually beyond irony. Family, friends, friends of family and fellow trot travellers come get a job. No interview. Infact you don't even need to fill an application in. Fucking twats. Don't do the meeting next week as I want to be in it. Maybe you could start by asking loto what qualifications any of them have.*

*09/04/2017, 03:05 - Iain McNicol: Of*

*09/04/2017, 07:41 - Emilie Oldknow: Hahaha*

*09/04/2017, 07:41 - Emilie Oldknow: Brilliant Iain<sup>171</sup>*

In the 2017 general election, LOTO staff moved to Labour HQ to work on the election. After the election, some of these people stayed on for a bit, and LOTO was subsequently able to ensure that a handful of LOTO staff, or left-wing staff, were able to fill vacancies in Labour HQ, mainly in the press team.

Many existing Labour HQ staff referred to all these people as "Trots".

In March 2017, for example, Neil Fleming, Acting Head of Press and Broadcasting, and Katy Dillon, Broadcast Manager, described future Labour press officer Sophie Nazemi as "Sophie the Trot" and "trot sophie".<sup>172</sup>

In July 2017, Ellie Miller, Head of Business Relations, referred to "all stupid trots" in Labour HQ,<sup>173</sup> while Labour Press Officer Ben Murphy referred to LOTO as a "gang of trots".<sup>174</sup> In August 2017 Neil Fleming commented on "the entirety of LOTO Comms" being "in Southside today":

*Awful*

*I'm coming in to see Iain next week I'll have a go at him about it. They don't need to be there, its not up to the party to give them desks when parliament has already given them one.<sup>175</sup>*

In October 2017, Colette Collins-Walsh, Education Policy Officer, called her colleague Georgie Robertson from the press team "Georgie the Trot Princess."<sup>176</sup> She noted that

with Robertson, Sophie Nazemi and others joining the press office would soon be filled with “trots”.<sup>177</sup>

<sup>171</sup> WhatsApp: “SMT Group”

<sup>172</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “170329 Conversation with Katy Dillon - Sophie Trot.eml”

<sup>173</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “170711 Conversation with Megan Wikeley.eml”

<sup>174</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “170726 Conversation with Ben Murphy.eml”

<sup>175</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “170804 shouldnt let LOTO have southside desks.eml”

<sup>176</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “171005 Conversation with Dominic Murphy.eml”

<sup>177</sup> Political Bias - Trots: “171002 Conversation with Dominic Murphy.eml”

## 2.1.8. The LOTO - Labour HQ relationship

Throughout this period, relationships between LOTO and Labour HQ, including GSO and GLU, were extremely strained. This evidence demonstrates that, contrary to what has been claimed by some to the EHRC, LOTO was not able to instruct GLU, GSO or other parts of HQ, which were, on the contrary, openly hostile to LOTO.

In December 2016, Tracey Allen suggested keeping LOTO staff away from Head Office by “burn[ing] incense... to ward off Trots”:

*23/12/2016, 16:09 - Tracey Allen: Ah yes. Now it's coming back to me. Maybe we can burn incense in the office to ward off Trots.*

*23/12/2016, 16:11 - Julie Lawrence: We've tried everything else so why not. 23/12/2016, 16:15 - Tracey Allen: Ha ha ha<sup>178</sup>*

In February 2017, after a leak of private Party polling, Emilie Oldknow advised to contact the polling company specifically to prevent LOTO staff from discovering the source of the leak:

*11/02/2017, 14:10 - Iain McNicol: Patrick do you have Michael at BMG mobile number. It looks like drop box has leaked. I need to call him urgently. Also can you do me a list of who has access. Ta*

*11/02/2017, 14:11 - Tracey Allen: 07545 818 949*

*11/02/2017, 14:12 - Patrick Heneghan: Top of my head*

*11/02/2017, 14:13 - Patrick Heneghan: Me.*

*11/02/2017, 14:13 - Patrick Heneghan: Isabel*

*11/02/2017, 14:13 - Patrick Heneghan: But Loto do not know that*

*11/02/2017, 14:13 - Patrick Heneghan: Loto staff. Simon and jack I*

*think 11/02/2017, 14:13 - Patrick Heneghan: Staff in trickett offices*

*11/02/2017, 14:13 - Patrick Heneghan: Again don't know who*

*11/02/2017, 14:14 - Patrick Heneghan: Tricket told them not to give his*

*access 11/02/2017, 14:14 - Patrick Heneghan: Us access*

*11/02/2017, 14:16 - Patrick Heneghan: I got email from bmg saying access to it ends today*

*11/02/2017, 14:16 - Patrick Heneghan: That will be about contract ending*

*11/02/2017, 14:28 - Patrick Heneghan: Basically access was tricketts decision and only he or Leah will know the full list of people he allowed access*

*11/02/2017, 14:28 - Patrick Heneghan: I'm guessing Simon and Jack*

*11/02/2017, 14:28 - Patrick Heneghan: Cos I heard something about Karie getting angry they had access*

<sup>178</sup> WhatsApp: "SMT Group"