

ADELAIDE INSTITUTE

PO Box 3300
Adelaide 5067

Australia

Mob: 61+401692057

Email: info@adelaideinstitute.org

Web: <http://www.adelaideinstitute.org>

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Chuck Norris: Obama's US Assassination Program?

August 26, 2010 "Human Events" -- Sound too conspiratorial to be true? Like the cover-up ops of spy novels? Well, it's reality. And it is possibly the most bizarre, inhumane and abusive way that the White House is expanding its power over the American people.

It's not an extremist belief or theory of the far right. It's a fact that has been confirmed by The New York Times, The Washington Post and MSNBC and even documented by the far-left online magazine Salon.com.

And it's the gravest nightmare of U.S. citizens and abandonment of our Constitution to date: a presidential assassination program in which U.S. citizens are in the literal scopes of the executive branch based upon nothing more than allegations of terrorism involvement as the branch defines it. Of course, the CIA has executed covert assassinations of foreigners for decades. But tragically, Obama is expanding this program to include American, non-Islamic, stateside, homegrown terrorists.

It all started in January, when The Washington Post reported: "As part of the operations, Obama approved a Dec. 24 strike against a (Yemeni) compound where a U.S. citizen, Anwar al-Aulaqi, was thought to be meeting with other regional al-Qaeda leaders. Although he was not the focus of the strike and was not killed, he has since been added to a shortlist of U.S. citizens specifically targeted for killing or capture. A shortlist of U.S. citizens specifically targeted for killing"?

That's right. No arrest. No Miranda rights. No due process. No trial. Just a bullet. While the Obama administration continues its Bush-blaming for the economy, it is mega-morphing Bush policy in covert ops overseas, which was, according to the Post, "to kill U.S. citizens abroad if strong evidence existed that an American was involved in organizing or carrying out terrorist actions against the United States or U.S. interests."

Well, in recent weeks, the Obama administration has taken this overseas killing op to a new low: stateside assassinations. A former director of national intelligence, Adm. Dennis Blair, confessed before Congress: "We take direct actions against terrorists in the intelligence community. If we think that direct action will involve killing an American, we get specific permission to do that."

If you are wondering who the "we" are to whom Adm. Blair refers, they are Smith, Wesson and the White House.

Now we know what deputy national security adviser John Brennan meant when he admitted in May, "And under President Obama, we have built upon the work of the previous administration and have accelerated efforts in many areas." (Remember when Bush's eavesdropping on U.S. citizens seemed harsh?)

Brennan further explained then that the problem of homegrown terrorists ranks as a top priority because of the

increasing number of U.S. individuals who have become "captivated by extremist ideology or causes." He went on to say, "There are ... dozens of U.S. persons who are in different parts of the world and ... are very concerning to us." Do you think "different parts of the world" doesn't include their country of origin?

Conveniently, the Obama administration also is integrating a pervasive plan to ensure the termination of radicals as the feds deem them abroad and domestic, too, with the resurrection of the Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007, introduced by Rep. Jane Harman, D-Calif. Also known as H.R. 1955, it was passed in the House by the Democratic majority but was rejected by the Senate.

Everyone thought that legislation was dead until the Obama administration resurrected its tenets in its 52-page "National Security Strategy," released in May. So alarming is the feds' potential abuse of power that officials from London to the Kremlin are recognizing the threat to U.S. citizens.

The European Union Times reported, "Foreign Ministry reports circulating in the Kremlin today are warning that an already explosive situation in the United States is about to get a whole lot worse as a new law put forth by President Obama is said capable of seeing up to 500,000 American citizens jailed for the crime of opposing their government."

Woodrow Wilson, during his reign as president, incarcerated more than 2,000 U.S. citizens for speaking out against the government. And now for the first time since, a U.S. president is highlighting the threats of homegrown terror and literally hunting U.S. citizens as terrorists. One senior administration official said, "For the first time since 9/11, the (national security strategy) integrates homeland security and national security." And what type of "integration" does that entail?

President Obama explained in an often overlooked statement within the "National Security Strategy": "We are now moving beyond traditional distinctions between homeland and national security. ... This includes a determination to prevent terrorist attacks against the American people by fully coordinating the actions that we take abroad with the actions and precautions that we take at home." Could it be any clearer? Right out of the horse's mouth. Or do I need to spell out what "fully coordinating the actions that we take abroad with the actions and precautions that we take at home" means?

Remember the words "a shortlist of U.S. citizens specifically targeted for killing"? That's right. No arrest. No Miranda rights. No due process. No trial. Just a bullet.

<http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?print=yes&id=38266>

'The New Anti-Semitism' And The Media: Melanie Phillips

Posted on April 28, 2010 by richardhutton

<http://richardhutton.wordpress.com/2010/04/28/1-1-the-new-anti-semitism-and-the-media-melanie-phillips/>

As noted, the putative 'New Anti-Semitism' centres primarily on left-wing journalists or media entities and their analyses of events in the middle east. The cause of the supposed trend of left-wing anti-Semitism has been attributed specifically to liberal British newspapers such as *The Guardian*, or to the ostensibly liberal BBC; and in particular has been ascribed to criticism of Israel's government and its policies towards Palestinians. It is herein that the proponents of 'the New Anti-Semitism' focus their energies and condemnation, and adduce a number of examples which supposedly confirm the existence of liberal anti-Semitism. Moreover, it is media coverage which the various parties herein contend is responsible for anti-Semitic incidents occurring in Britain.

The actual data indicates something quite different however; and the documented instances of anti-Semitic episodes in Britain put the matter beyond any reasonable doubt. More to the point, however, the examples adduced in support of their claims by journalists such as Melanie Phillips, or by media groups such as Just Journalism in Britain, or the Anti-Defamation League in America, consist of misrepresentation. To begin with, the most obvious falsehood of all – moreover, the one which is the most easily disproved. In 2007, the British commentator Melanie Phillips accused *The Guardian* writer Geoffrey Wheatcroft of propagating anti-Semitism in an article of his. She alleged the following, and her charge is perfectly clear:

"Wheatcroft's final charge, that British foreign policy is based on the interest of 'another country – by which he presumably meant Israel – is simply contemptible. Once again, it is astonishing that this kind of sub-Protocols of the Elders of Zion racial libel about the Jews being a sinister conspiracy to subvert the foreign policy of Britain against the national interest is published in a mainstream British newspaper"^[1].

This is what Wheatcroft actually wrote:

"In most European countries there is a party of the right whose basic definition is its attachment to the national interest of that country. Only here is there a Conservative party, and Tory press, largely in the hands of people whose basic commitment is to the national interest of another country, or countries. There was once a vigorous high Tory tradition of independence from – if not hostility to – America. It was found in *The Morning Post* before the war, and it continued down to Enoch Powell and Alan Clark. But now members of the shadow cabinet, such as George Osborne (whom even Cameron is said to tease as a neocon), vie in fealty to Washington – and this when US policy is driven by neocon thinktanks and evangelical fundamentalists, with whom Toryism should have nothing in common"^[2].

The divergence is clear; and it would be insensible to mistake Wheatcroft's charge here for a reference to Israel, let alone Jews or 'Jewish conspiracy' – it is clearly centred on America and the administration of President Bush^[3]. Significantly, Phillips herself provides a hyperlink to this article within her own; and it goes without saying that following it leads to the disproof of her own misrepresentation – which of course indicates quite what Phillips' assessment of her own readership's intellectual and critical standards really is.

Equally revealing of Phillips' methodology is her misrepresentation of the putatively anti-Semitic incident concerning Ken Livingstone and the journalist Oliver Finegold in 2006; following which a number of commentators – including Phillips herself and the Simon Wiesenthal Centre^[4] – accused Livingstone of having made anti-Semitic remarks. The full transcript of this *mêlée* is available by courtesy of *The Guardian*^[5]; the key section, however, is the following:

Oliver Finegold: "Mr Livingstone, *Evening Standard*. How did it ..."

Ken Livingstone: "Oh, how awful for you."

Finegold: "How did tonight go?"

Livingstone: "Have you thought of having treatment?"

Finegold: "How did tonight go?"

Livingstone: "Have you thought of having treatment?"^[6]

Finegold: "Was it a good party? What does it mean for you?"

Livingstone: "What did you do before? Were you a German war criminal?"

Finegold: "No, I'm Jewish. I wasn't a German war criminal."

Livingstone: "Ah ... right."

Finegold: "I'm actually quite offended by that. So, how did tonight go?"

Livingstone: "Well you might be, but actually you are just like a concentration camp guard. You're just doing it 'cause you're paid to, aren't you?"

Finegold: "Great. I've you on record for that. So how did tonight go?"

Livingstone: "It's nothing to do with you because your paper is a load of scumbags."

Finegold: "How did tonight go?"

Livingstone: "It's reactionary bigots ..."

The import of this is clear: Livingstone was drunk. He was also, of course, being unpleasant to a journalist because he worked for *The Evening Standard*, a subsidiary of the aggressive right-wing *Daily Mail*, who – as it happens – are one of Phillips' many employers. Livingstone was evidently not making a reference to Finegold's personal identity; and

this is clear to anyone who takes the trouble to read the transcript itself; instead he was clearly making a reference to the paper's leanings, specifically its owners' historical support for National Socialism and fascism – the irony of which is obvious in relation to Finegold working for them^[7].

Phillips however omits mention of Livingstone's rationale:

"at a publicly-funded party he threw to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Labour MP Chris Smith coming out as gay, Livingstone was door-stepped by a reporter for the London *Evening Standard*, Oliver Finegold. The Mayor responded by asking whether he had previously been a German war criminal. When Finegold protested that he was Jewish, Livingstone observed: 'Arrr, right, well you might be Jewish but actually you are just like a concentration camp guard, you are just doing it because you are paid to, aren't you?' It is bad enough to call anyone a German war criminal. Likening Finegold to a concentration camp guard when Livingstone knew he was a Jew was unforgivable"^[8].

However, Phillips took her insinuation much further still, bemoaning "the Holocaust denial implicit in Livingstone's deeply offensive comparison between the *Standard* journalist Oliver Finegold and a concentration camp guard"^[9]. Needless to say, this does not have any basis in fact – Phillips merely misrepresented the incident in order to impugn Livingstone personally; and quite where Livingstone contended that the Holocaust did not happen is a matter of considerable mystery.

Significantly, Phillips' own attitude towards actual Holocaust denial is strikingly devoid of scruple. In 2006 she wrote that it is an "incitement of racial hatred [...] an active incitement to hatred of the Jews"^[10]; in 2008 however, she averred that "odious as it is, it is an interpretation of history – and one which in any event defies easy categorisation"^[11]. You can't have your cake and eat it. Either Holocaust denial is propaganda which has no value whatsoever as historicism, or it is an explanation of a phenomenon which needs to be given due consideration. Phillips was defending the Holocaust denier Fredrick Toben in this article: not out of compassion for him, nor due to any genuine or legitimate disagreement with legal matters, but in order to attack the European Union for her own political reasons:

"It is not bigots like Fredrick Toben who pose the biggest threat to our freedom, but the EU and its incendiary doctrine of nation-denial"^[12].

She also notes regarding David Irving and the libel suit he brought against Deborah Lipstadt in 1999-2000:

"what was more effective was surely the destruction of his ideas in a British courtroom when he chose to bring a libel action – which rebounded against him by discrediting his claim to be a 'historian' and ending with his denunciation by the trial judge as a 'pro-Nazi polemicist'. That is the British way of doing things"^[13].

This is clearly not the case, of course. Lipstadt was an American historian, Irving was British, and the trial took

place in a British courtroom with Irving taking advantage of an unfairly weighted British law, which effectively meant that Lipstadt and her publishers were presumed guilty and had to prove themselves innocent of Irving's charges. There was no guarantee that his libel suit would fail; and it was at least a possibility that Lipstadt and her publishers Penguin Books could have had *Denying the Holocaust* censored and withdrawn from the public arena when its account of Irving's falsification of the historical record was evidently truthful and legitimate. In other words, it was an injustice that the trial occurred in the first place; and it does not reflect well on Britain's legal system that those accused of libel are still fraught with the burden of proof.

However, Phillips evidently does not actually believe what she purports to here. In her earlier piece regarding Irving, she made her sentiments clear:

"the issue raised by the Irving case is not one of freedom of speech [...] Irving's utterances are the handmaiden of fascism and an attempt to incite racial hatred ...It would be far better to prosecute the Irvings of this world under the much clearer laws against incitement to racial hatred and incitement to violence. Unfortunately, such laws are rarely used in Britain because of the supine nature of the prosecuting authorities – but that is another story"^[14].

Phillips' unscrupulousness is easy to establish; but it requires a fair quantity of secondary reading to disprove her fabrications.

Nevertheless, though Phillips is undoubtedly the most vigorous of all the commentators to be discussed herein, she is also the most revealing. While Phillips takes great pains to obfuscate the nature of Israel's polity towards Palestinians in the occupied territories of Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank^[15], her true concerns in citing 'the New Anti-Semitism' consist of two principle elements: the first is to attack left-wing – or specifically 'liberal' – political beliefs; and the second is to justify discriminating against Muslims^[16]. This latter point consists primarily of exhorting her readers to adopt ethnocentric and nationalist views, with a supposed preponderance of Islamic anti-Semitism being the pretext for chauvinistic attitudes towards Muslims; whilst the former claim rests upon implying that criticism of Israel is intrinsically prejudicial and rooted in historical antipathy towards Jews – an antipathy which has recently 'mutated' and come to centre on vilifying 'the Jewish people' via the metonym of Israel.

Both of these points are exemplified by an article published in *City Journal* on 5th November 2007^[17], which can perhaps be considered Phillips' magnum opus on the subject of 'The New Anti-Semitism'^[18]. This was an extremely lengthy article^[19], and while most of Phillips' claims herein are too nebulous and sweeping to be assessed properly^[20], her citations of incidents and examples are highly revealing of the methodology underscoring such misrepresentations.

Phillips begins her article by describing a particularly violent attack on a young girl in London:

"In August 2006, as the war in Lebanon raged, a gang of teenage girls confronted 12-year-old Jasmine Kranat and a friend on a London bus. 'Are you Jewish?' they demanded. They didn't hurt the friend, who was wearing a crucifix. But they subjected Jasmine, a Jew, to a brutal beating – stomping on her head and chest, fracturing her eye socket, and knocking her unconscious"^[21].

This certainly was horrific; but one incident is not representative of a widespread trend, particularly within a nation of 60 million people. However, Phillips cites this assault in conjunction with the claim that:

"according to the Community Security Trust, the defence organization of Britain's 300,000-strong Jewish community, last year saw nearly 600 anti-Semitic assaults, incidents of vandalism, cases of abuse, and threats against Jewish individuals and institutions – double the 2001 number"^[22].

Phillips ascribes the perpetration of these incidents primarily to Muslims, contending that^[23]:

"Anti-Semitism is rife within Britain's Muslim community. Islamic bookshops sell copies of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and the notorious Czarist forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*; as an undercover TV documentary revealed in January, Imams routinely preach anti-Jewish sermons. Opinion polls show that nearly two-fifths of Britain's Muslims believe that the Jewish community in Britain is a legitimate target "as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East"; that more than half believe that British Jews have "too much influence over the direction of UK foreign policy"; and that no fewer than 46 percent think that the Jewish community is "in league with Freemasons to control the media and politics"^[24].

However, Philips attributes the cause of this supposed incidence of a 'New Anti-Semitism' to mainstream British society: namely therein the liberal media – be it *The Guardian*, *The New Statesman*, *The Independent* or the ostensibly left-wing BBC.

Let's begin with the premise, however. Phillips' rendering of the Community Security Trust's report obfuscates the data somewhat. The number of anti-Semitic incidents reported by the Community Security Trust (CST) was 594 in 2006; and according to the CST, 134 of these occurred during the 34 days of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah, whilst 54 – presumably separate – incidents included a specific reference to the war in Lebanon (p. 4)^[25]. Assuming as Phillips does that the Lebanon war was the impetus for anti-Semitic incidents, the data indicates that the conflict was of low significance either as a context or as a point of reference, given that 406 incidents occurred outside of this time-frame or were devoid of allusion to the war^[26]. In other words, c. 32% of these incidents appear to have arisen in response to events in the middle east; c. 68% therefore did not. This

makes it clear from the outset that the Lebanon war was of relatively minor significance herein.

Moreover, the number of anti-Semitic incidents reported by the CST are roughly the same every year. Per annum, the incidence breaks down as follows:

Year: Anti-semitic incidents:

2004	532 (p. 4) ^[27] .
2005	455 (p. 4) ^[28] .
2006	594 (p. 4) ^[29] .
2007	547 (p. 4) ^[30] .
2008	541 (p. 4) ^[31] .

With a mean average therefore of ^[32] 534 incidents annually. Specifically, violent incidents are tabulated by the Community Security Trust as follows:

Year: Violent incidents:

2004	83 with 4 cases of extreme violence (p. 4) ^[33] .
2005	82 with 2 cases of extreme violence (p. 4; p. 6) ^[34] .
2006	112 with 4 cases of extreme violence (p. 4) ^[35] .
2007	114 with 1 case of extreme violence (p. 4) ^[36] – in the report from 2008, this number is put at 117 (p.4) ^[37] .
2008	88 with 1 case of extreme violence (p. 4) ^[38] .

With a mean average of 96 violent incidents and 2 cases of extreme violence per year.

However, within the overall figure of racially or religiously motivated incidents throughout Britain during these periods, these numbers are extremely minimal. Covering the years 2004/05 and 2005/06, the UK Ministry of Justice reports that:

"the overall number of racist incidents recorded by the police in England and Wales rose by 4% from 57,978 in 2004/5 to 60,407 in 2005/6" (p. 10)^[39].

This included 2,327 homicides within a three-year period ending in 2005/06; and as the report notes:

"ten per cent of homicides in 2005/06 were of Black people, 7% of Asian people and 4% of 'Other' minority ethnic groups. Black victims (28%) were more likely to be shot compared with Asian (10%) and White (5%) victims. Twenty-three homicides were recorded as being racially motivated over the three year period" (p. X)^[40].

The numbers were similar during 2007-8; in which 57,055 racist incidents were recorded by the police^[41]. The average number of reported incidents between 2004-2008 was therefore 58,480 racially/religiously motivated incidents per annum; meaning that the average number of anti-Semitic incidents each year comprised c. 0.9% of the total.

However, the Ministry of Justice report notes that the 2005/6 British Crime Survey:

"found that the risk of becoming a victim of a racially motivated crime was low across all ethnic groups. Less than one per cent of the White population had been victims of racially motivated crimes compared with two per cent of people from Asian, Black and Chinese and Other ethnic backgrounds, and one per cent among people from Mixed ethnic backgrounds. The risk of becoming a victim of a racially motivated crime showed no change for any ethnic groups between 2004/05 and 2005/06" (p. 11)^[42].

Moreover, the number of anti-Semitic incidents reported by the Community Security Trust also represents a minimal portion of the overall figure for racially or religiously aggravated offences recorded during 2005, 2006, and 2007 – that is, incidents which were actually criminal, as opposed to verbal abuse, for example. The Ministry of Justice Report notes that:

"for England and Wales, the police recorded 41,382 racially or religiously aggravated offences in 2005/6. This represents a 12% increase from the previous year (37,028 in 2004/5). Of this total, 62% were for harassment, 14% less serious wounding, 14% criminal damage, and 9% common assault. This is a similar pattern to that recorded for the previous year" (p. 11)^[43].

These levels were similar during 2006-2007 in which there were 42,551 racially or religiously aggravated offences recorded (p. 🤔^[44]; whilst during 2007-8 the Ministry of Justice report that 38,327 racially or religiously aggravated offences occurred^[45].

It is clear therefore that for Phillips to contend anti-Semitic incidents represented a significant phenomenon is a considerable exaggeration. Within the overall remit of racially or religiously motivated incidents/offences, those affecting Jews were minimal in number. This hardly attenuates the distress caused to victims; but it evidently does not portend the pattern implied by Phillips. On the contrary, given that whites were the least numerous victims of racially or religiously motivated/aggravated incidents, it would indicate that between ethnic minority groups in Britain, Jews were the among the most unlikely to be affected by racist or religiously motivated incidents/offences. Nevertheless, it was the motivation behind these incidents which Phillips had primarily focused upon. Phillips had contended – in a decidedly long-winded manner – that the motive was a 'new anti-Semitism', itself a recent permutation of historical antipathy towards Jews; and that the main proponents of this were Liberals and Muslims^[46].

In fact Phillips' article is replete with invective levelled at "the predations of the left", "leftists", "the academic left", "left-wing Jews", and "the radical left" who – Phillips charges – "set out to destroy the fundamentals of Western morality" after the Second World War had finished. These are invariably alluded to as anonymous entities; nonetheless Phillips does cite several specific examples of the supposed

upturn of anti-Semitism within "British public discourse". The only citations herein are drawn from articles written by left-wing journalists or published in left-wing newspapers or magazines, however; and these various pieces Phillips contends are evidence that "hatred of Israel is the latest mutation of anti-Semitism" as it "resurrects the libel of the world Jewish conspiracy, a defining anti-Semitic motif that went underground after the Holocaust"^[47].

Herein, Phillips' alleges that the term 'neo-Conservatives' "has become code for the Jews who have supposedly suborned America in Israel's interests"^[48]. In support of this claim, Phillips repeats her lie about Geoffrey Wheatcroft^[49]:

"In *The Guardian*, Geoffrey Wheatcroft lamented the fact that Conservative Party leader David Cameron had fallen under the spell of neoconservatives' 'ardent support for the Iraq war, for the US and for Israel,' and urged Cameron to ensure that British foreign policy was no longer based on the interest of 'another country' – Israel"^[50].

And introduces another allusion in the same vein to the moderately left-wing journalist, Simon Jenkins:

"In *The Times*, Simon Jenkins supported the notion that 'a small group of neo-conservatives contrived to take the greatest nation on Earth to war and kill thousands of people' and that these 'traitors to the American conservative tradition,' whose 'first commitment was to the defence of Israel,' had achieved a 'seizure of Washington (and London) after 9/11'. According to this familiar thesis, the Jews covertly exercise their extraordinary power to advance their own interests and harm the rest of mankind"^[51].

Phillips is, of course contending here that Jenkins employed the term "neo-conservatives" as a euphemism for Jews; and that he subsequently implied Jews had conspired successfully to draw America into attacking Iraq. The reality could not be further from Phillips' account of matters, however. Jenkins does not himself suggest that "a small group of neo-conservatives contrived to take the greatest nation on Earth to war and kill thousands of people"; nor does he state that these were "traitors to the American conservative tradition," – Jenkins was in fact discussing a book written by "two conservative historians, Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke" entitled *America Alone*, which Jenkins notes "tells how a small group of neoconservatives contrived to take the greatest nation on Earth to war and kill thousands of people". In other words, Jenkins was outlining the premise of the book in question. Jenkins evidently finds this credible as a thesis; but to suggest as Phillips does that he believes "Jews covertly exercise their extraordinary power to advance their own interests and harm the rest of mankind" is clearly false. There is nothing in Jenkins' article which supports this rendering in any sense; and the two authors in question were conservative Americans, not British liberals.

Jenkins continues, however, making Phillips' misrepresentation stark:

"The war^[52] had more to do with neocon support for Israel, of which Moore^[53] makes no mention, and with the nature of Saddam 's regime, which he also ignores. Halper and Clarke's *America Alone* yields nothing in anger to Michael Moore...Their Iraq war is not about oil but about the agenda of a small group of Washington ideologues, whom they hold as traitors to the American conservative tradition. This group's seizure of Washington (and London) after 9/11 makes a fascinating study in power. Known colloquially as the Vulcans, they embraced Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle and the Pentagon architect of the Iraq occupation, Douglas Feith. Dick Cheney, Rumsfeld and Bush were their front men. Their first commitment was to the defence of Israel^[54]. The neocons were prominent advisers to the right-wing Israeli Binyamin Netanyahu, and opposed all Middle East 'peace processes'. Having distrusted Nixon as soft on communism they distrusted Reagan as soft on Israel"^[55].

While this is a problematic theory in its own right, it hardly represents a discussion of 'Jewish conspiracy': it is a brief – if decidedly haughty – discussion of a right-wing book, which itself discourses on the supposed machinations of neo-conservative ideologues as they were deemed to have transpired in the middle east; and who the book's authors evidently contend supported aggressive Israeli political ambitions. Jenkins' discussion of matters here is hardly oblique; and nowhere does he allude to Judaism, nor to anything which could reasonably be construed as a euphemism – this is a figment of Phillips' imagination.

Phillips' adduces several other examples in the same manner; and one in particular has been cited recurrently by several authors. As Phillips contends, in 2002 "*The New Statesman* took a more straightforward approach" to anti-Semitic conspiracy theories via:

"printing an investigation into the power of the 'Zionist' lobby in Britain, which it dubbed the 'Kosher Conspiracy' and illustrated on its cover with a gold Star of David piercing the Union Jack. The image conveyed at a glance the message that rich Jews were stabbing British interests through the national heart"^[56].

Again, however, Phillips is distorting matters: appearance and reality are two different things. What the article in question – written by Dennis Sewell – actually contended was that whatever 'Israeli lobby' does exist in Britain is essentially shabby and feeble^[57]; and Sewell ends his article asserting that "the truth is that the 'Zionist lobby' does exist, but is a clueless bunch". This is hardly a virulent anti-Semitic position – quite the opposite: it centres specifically on aggressive, nationalist political groups, and dismisses them as ineffectual and devoid; not as a controlling clique of global influence. The fact that the picture on *The New Statesman's* front cover was crass is irrelevant to the subject matter of the article – unless people are expected to judge magazines by their covers rather than their content.

More to the point, however, the article was critical of the supposed view – attributed to inevitably nameless left-wing opinion: "that there is a Zionist lobby and that it is rich, potent and effective". This view – Sewell contends – "goes largely unquestioned on the left"; and to this effect "big Jewry, like big tobacco, is seen as one of life's givens. According to this view, Israel has the British media pretty well sewn up"^[58]. Quite who suggests this remains inscrutable, needless to say. Names are adduced as scantily in Sewell's article as in Phillips' own; nevertheless the vein of irony is clear. However, Sewell's article goes on to contend that "a tendency to equate anti-Zionism – indeed, any criticism of Israel – with anti-Semitism is a persistent vice of Zionist campaigners". This inclination is evidently borne out by Phillips' own point of misrepresentation here^[59].

Continuing on the theme of anti-Semitic caricatures, however, Phillips suggests that a cartoon appearing in *The Independent* which "showed a monstrous Ariel Sharon biting the head off a Palestinian baby" had "employed the imagery of the blood libel" – that is "the medieval European calumny that sparked many massacres of Jews by claiming that they murdered Gentile children and used their blood for religious rituals". This, needless to say, is Phillips personal inference. The cartoonist in question – Dave Brown – explained his reasoning, however; and his explanation was both erudite and reasonable:

"I based this cartoon on Goya's *Saturn Devouring his Children*, which was based on a prophecy in Greek myth that Saturn's children would grow up to supplant his power, so he decides to eat them. Instead of Saturn, I drew a naked Ariel Sharon holding a body with various forms of destruction in the background. The following day, the Israeli Embassy complained and sent the image round to Jewish groups in America. It elicited a huge response, not all of which was bad"^[60].

The resemblance to Goya's painting is unmistakable; and drawing upon classical Greek myth stands somewhat at odds with supposed allusions to ancient anti-Semitic stereotypes. Moreover, Brown's cartoon clearly imputes violence to the Likud party and to Sharon, not to Jews or Israelis^[61]. Sharon was a major political figure, and his actions had an international significance during this period. More to the point, however, there is nothing in the picture which resembles 'blood libel' imagery in any way^[62]: Sharon is eating a baby instead of kissing it in the hackneyed vein of populist politicians – the point of irony is clear; whilst the background is a depiction of warfare and military assault, and this clearly refers to Israel's polity and the violence therein.

However, Phillips also levels essentially the same charge at the BBC and *The Guardian*; in the first instance contending that "the BBC, despite its claims of fairness and honesty" is marked by "hatred of Israel", and is particularly influential therein; and that *The Guardian* publishes tendentious

accounts of Israel's polity towards Arabs and Palestinians. Both of these charges rest upon misrepresentation, however^[63].

The BBC's supposed "hatred of Israel" was apparently evinced in its reporting on Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 2006. According to Phillips: "it reported the Lebanon war by focusing almost entirely on the Israeli assault upon Lebanon, with scarcely a nod at the Hezbollah rocket barrage against Israel". This claim can be disproved easily enough by recourse to the BBC's coverage of the 2006 conflict – both contemporary and more recent. For example, from 2008:

"After eight Israeli soldiers had been killed and two captured by the Lebanese group Hezbollah, Israel and Hezbollah engaged in a 33-day war in which Hezbollah fired a hail of rockets into Israel and the Israelis bombed Lebanese towns, villages and infrastructure but made little headway in ground operations"^[64].

The contemporary reporting also covered Hezbollah's attacks on Israeli military personnel and civilians. For instance, one article published in July 2006 quotes Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, who "promised 'open war' against Israel, in an address broadcast shortly after his Beirut offices were bombed by Israel"; and the article continues, citing an unnamed Israeli spokesperson stating that four soldiers were missing after a naval ship had been damaged by a Hezbollah explosive drone. The BBC's article also notes that:

"Israel says a Hezbollah rocket aimed at one of its ships early on Saturday missed, and hit a civilian ship instead [...] Hezbollah has continued rocket attacks on northern Israel – 70 were fired on Friday alone. A mother and daughter died in an attack on the town of Meron. Two Israelis died in attacks on Thursday"^[65].

An article published 4 days later notes likewise:

"Israeli strikes continue for a seventh day, again hitting southern Beirut and also the southern coastal city of Tyre. Eleven Lebanese soldiers die under air attack in the east of Beirut, while six bodies are pulled from the rubble of a building in the town of Aitaroun. Hezbollah rockets continue to target the Israeli port city of Haifa, although there are no reports of injuries"^[66].

This material clearly disproves Phillips' claim. Moreover, it would not have been altogether incongruous if the BBC had focused "almost entirely on the Israeli assault upon Lebanon", given the vastly different levels of firepower and destruction resulting from the respective parties' violence; and given the fact that Israel initiated the warfare. The BBC estimated the impact of Israel and Hezbollah's conflict as follows:

Number of fatalities

Israel: 116 soldiers; 43 Civilians

Lebanon: c. 530 Hezbollah militants; c. 250 Amal militants; 28 soldiers (not in conflict with Israel); 1,109 civilians.

Injured

Israel: 32 serious; 44 moderate; 614 light; 1,985 treated for shock.

Lebanon: 915,762 (c. 25% of overall population – nature of wounding not specified).

Damage

Israel: over 300 buildings including houses/factories

Lebanon: 15,000 houses/apartments; 900 factories/markets/farms etc; 32 airports; 25 fuel stations; 78 bridges; 630km of roads; and c. £34 million worth of environmental clean-up caused by a vast oil spill following the Israeli bombing of a power plant.

Ordnance

Israel: 3,699 Hezbollah rockets landed in Israel

Lebanon: 7,000 air strike targets hit

Financial Impact

Israel: 70% of businesses closed in northern Israel; c. \$230 million lost in tourism; total cost of war including military spending and lost gross domestic product = c. \$4.8 billion; direct and indirect damage = \$1.1 billion.

Lebanon: repairs to buildings/infrastructure = c. \$4 billion; c. \$2.5 billion lost in tourism^[67].

However, Phillips had also made more concrete claims herein. Thus she contends that the BBC's "reporters blame Israel even for Palestinians' killing of other Palestinians"; citing the following:

"last December, in a briefing for other BBC staff, Middle East editor Jeremy Bowen wrote of the incipient Palestinian civil war in Gaza: 'The reason is the death of hope, caused by a cocktail of Israel's military activities, land expropriation and settlement building – and the financial sanctions imposed on the Hamas led government'"^[68].

In reality, this was not a briefing; it was a short memo which had been culled and propagated in a characteristically sleazy fashion by Stephen Pollard^[69]. More to the point, what Bowen had actually written differed markedly in import from Phillips' and Pollard's respective insinuations:

"what is new in the last year, and will be one of the big stories in the coming twelve months, is the way that Palestinian society, which used to draw strength from resistance to the occupation, is now fragmenting. The reason is the death of hope, caused by a cocktail of Israel's military activities, land expropriation and settlement building and the financial sanctions imposed on the Hamas led government which are destroying Palestinian institutions that were anyway flawed and fragile. The result is that internecine violence between Hamas and Fatah is getting worse. On Thursday six people were killed in clashes between them in Gaza. The death of a major figure on either side would spark something much more serious"^[70].

In other words, Bowen was discussing the impact of Israel's policies upon Palestinians in Gaza. Quite how this represents disdain of Jews as opposed to a brief analysis of Israel's polity and its consequences is positively mystifying. Neither

Phillips nor Pollard explain their interpretations of prejudice; and Phillips' truncation of the words "which are destroying Palestinian institutions that were anyway flawed and fragile" – along with her omission of the memo's point concerning the consequences of Israel's blockade thereof – is clearly designed to impugn Bowen personally and thereby undermine the impression such information generates.

However, a more flagrant misrepresentation concerns an article published by *The Guardian* and written by Patrick Seale^[72], who Phillips contends:

"portrayed Israel's incursions into Gaza as a 'destructive rampage'. Dismissing or ignoring the rocket attacks, hostage-taking, and terrorism that those incursions were trying to stop, Seale concluded instead that Israel 'deliberately inflicts inhumane hardships on the Palestinians in order to radicalise them and drive the moderates from the scene'"^[72].

The actual import of the Seale's article differs somewhat:

"It would seem that there are two broad reasons for Israel's destructive rampage in Gaza. Neither reason has much to do with the young Franco-Israeli corporal, Gilad Shalit, captured during a cross-border operation by Palestinian guerrillas against an Israeli military post. One reason for Israel's assault is military. Israel has been desperate to put an end to the homemade rockets launched from northern Gaza at the Israeli town of Sderot, which lies a kilometre from the Gaza strip in the north-west Negev desert [...] These rockets have so far been responsible for 13 deaths. The city's municipality is up in arms at the state's inability to offer adequate protection. In response to the rockets, Israeli shelling and air strikes have in recent months killed some 50 Palestinians, including several children, and wounded more than 200"^[73].

It is clear therefore, that rather than "dismissing or ignoring the rocket attacks, hostage-taking, and terrorism" Seale posits that these are among the primary reasons for the incursion; however, he also notes the casualties which Israeli shelling bore, of which Phillips omits mention.

Nonetheless, Phillips is quite correct to note that Seale concludes Israel "deliberately inflicts inhumane hardships on the Palestinians in order to radicalise them and drive the moderates from the scene". His actual imputation differs, however:

"Israel will do everything to avoid a negotiation. Hence, it deliberately inflicts inhumane hardships on the Palestinians in order to radicalise them and drive the moderates from the scene. Moderates, who are prepared to talk, are Israel's real enemies"^[74].

Phillips, of course, omits the first and last sentences, thereby excluding Seale's rationale. As with Bowen's memo, Seale was clearly discussing specific policies of Israel's government; and his article is equally devoid of any aspect which could reasonably be construed as derogatory towards Jews or Israelis in the main. Not only is Phillips' inference of

anti-Semitism in both cases therefore false, it also rests upon fabrication and has clearly been imposed by Phillips herself upon the excerpts in question.

In fact the only citations within Phillips' article which do not centre on ostensibly left-wing entities are drawn from the British Catholic/Anglican Churches – which hardly constitute liberal edifices; and which therefore stand unwittingly at odds with Phillips' contention that 'a new anti-Semitism' is emanating from predacious liberals. However, this particular charge raises another paradox in light of Phillips' jerrybuilt history of anti-Semitism throughout the ages – from Christian theology to the racial fantasies of national socialism:

"another force propagating the new anti-Semitism is the institution at the heart of the old theological version: the Church, which has reverted to blaming Jews for their own suffering and accusing them once again of a diabolical conspiracy against the innocent. Although Britain is in many ways a post-religious society, it still sees the churches as custodians of high-minded conscience and truth. And those churches are viscerally prejudiced against Israel"^[75].

Quite how Britain can be in many ways 'post-religious' and yet still continue to venerate the church as a safeguard Phillips does not say; nonetheless, what evidence does Phillips adduce to support the charge that "those churches are viscerally prejudiced against Israel"? In regard to the Anglican church, Phillips contends that: "the Church of England is especially unfriendly; one might say that it is the Guardian^[76] at prayer". In fact, what follows is a decidedly gossipy litany of criticisms supposedly levelled at Israel by clergymen; and one which is devoid of any viable references for Phillips' part^[77].

Nonetheless, Phillips does make one relatively concrete claim here:

"Christian aid societies regularly represent Israel as a malevolent occupying power, distorting Jews' historical claims to the land and making scant reference to the sustained campaign of Arab terrorism against them. A 2005 report by the Anglican Peace and Justice Network – which underpinned a short-lived move to 'divest' from companies supporting Israel^[78] – compared Israel's security barrier^[79] with 'the barbed-wire fence of the Buchenwald camp'. Jews were apparently like Nazis – and because of a measure aimed at preventing a second Jewish Holocaust"^[80]. Phillips does not provide an actual reference for this, typically enough; but the report in question was presumably 'Anglican Peace and Justice Network: A Report of its Deliberations in Jerusalem – September 14-22, 2004'^[81] which was the only Anglican Peace and Justice Network report published in 2005^[82]. Again, however, Phillips is distorting matters. The actual sentence in question falls within the following paragraph:

"the separation wall also provoked many responses as comparisons were made with other walls, actual and

metaphorical: walls of class and income; walls of racial and gender discrimination; tariff walls; walls of intolerance. 'We don't have concrete walls,' said a member from the Congo, 'but we have walls of hatred'. And this post-meeting reflection came from a member who travelled direct to Germany from Israel: 'The concrete walls of Palestine, the barbed-wire fence of the Buchenwald camp and the 155 mile borderline between North and South Korea, on these three walls I am still looking for my way'^[83].

Therefore, far from imputing the iniquities of the West Bank wall to Israelis alone – and less still Jews – the speakers were discussing the universal import of its injustices, how these were mirrored by events in their own countries, and the spiritual quandaries engendered thereby. Aspersions cannot be both universal and singular, suffice to say.

This, however, is not the most striking paradox broached by Phillips' discussion of the Christian Church; nor is it the most revealing. Whilst claiming that the church is one of the bastions of traditional morality, Phillips also alleges that it is the bastion of traditional anti-Semitism^[84]; and this paradox is extended to Britain as a whole – on the one hand, Phillips alleges that anti-Semitism is a new phenomenon in Britain:

"why has this poison seeped into the British bloodstream? Why has the country that was once the cradle of the Enlightenment values of tolerance, objectivity, and reason departed so precipitately from its own tradition?"^[85].

and on the other, she claims that "Britain has always had an ambivalent relationship with the Jews". Needless to say, it can't be both a modern development and an anachronism^[86].

However, while the actual argument here lacks sense, the imputation is much clearer^[87]. As posited by Phillips, one of the reasons for Britain's supposed "embrace of the new anti-Semitism" – or the continuation of its antipathy towards Jews, depending on which claim Phillips is making at any given time – is that "after the Second World War, the radical Left set out to destroy the fundamentals of Western morality". A brief history of Britain follows here:

"exhausted by two world wars, shattered by the loss of empire, and hollowed out by the failure of the Church of England or a substantial body of intellectuals and elites to hold the line, Britain was uniquely vulnerable to the predations of the Left. The institutions that underpinned truth and morality – the traditional family and an education system that transmitted the national culture – collapsed"^[88].

As noted, the Church of England – according to Phillips – has remained widely admired as a custodian "of high-minded conscience and truth"; and Britain's putative national culture apparently incorporated an "ambivalent relationship with the Jews" and "a measure of social anti-Semitism" which supposedly "persisted until the Holocaust". The passing of this era should therefore have reduced anti-Semitism, not resulted in its increase. However, Phillips continues in the same vein:

"Britain's monolithic intelligentsia soon embraced postmodernism, multiculturalism, victim culture, and a morally inverted hegemony of ideas in which the values of marginalized or transgressive groups replaced the values of the purportedly racist, oppressive West"^[89].

Quite how this holds together is highly questionable. Sympathy for marginalized and victimised people would tend to indicate that people opposed the victimisation of Jews and therefore discounted prejudice. It is nonetheless perfectly clear that Phillips' contentions here are centred on attacking 'the left'.

In this regard – and more convoluted still – is Phillips' claim that as a result of the radical left's depredations:

"people across the political spectrum became increasingly unable to make moral distinctions based on behaviour. This erasing of the line between right and wrong produced a tendency to equate, and then invert, the roles of terrorists and of their victims, and to regard self-defence as aggression and the original violence as understandable and even justified. That attitude is, of course, inherently antagonistic to Israel, which was founded on the determination never to allow another genocide of Jews, to defend itself when attacked, and to destroy those who would destroy it. But for the Left, powerlessness is virtue; better for Jews to die than to kill, because only as dead victims can they be moral"^[90].

This – according to Phillips – constitutes a "general endorsement of surrender" which:

"feeds straight into a subterranean but potent resentment simmering in Europe. For over 60 years, a major tendency in European thought has sought to distance itself from moral responsibility for the Holocaust. The only way to do so, however, was somehow to blame the Jews for their own destruction; and that monstrous reasoning was inconceivable while the dominant narrative was of Jews as victims"^[91].

As ever with such claims, no names, examples, evidence, or citations are adduced to support these wild and sweeping aspersions; and Phillips' various contentions here swiftly develop into a quagmire of self-contradiction. Quite how the ambivalence between right and wrong can lead to condemnation of one party and not the other is left unexplained by Phillips; as is the macabre claim that "only as dead victims" can Israelis be viewed sympathetically, and yet as victims of terrorism be viewed unsympathetically, whilst simultaneously being both venerated and despised as victims of Nazism.

Needless to say, what this nonsense is really centred on is an attempt to put Israel's abuses of Palestinian human rights and its violations of international law therein beyond criticism:

"the misrepresentation of Israeli self-defence as belligerence, suggesting that Jews are not victims but aggressors, implicitly provides Europeans with the means to blame the destruction of European Jewry on its own misdeeds"^[92].

In other words, according to Phillips, a supposed misrepresentation of Israel's policies towards Palestinians permits Europeans to distance themselves from the victims of the Holocaust, and subsequently blame Hitler's victims for their own demise. Exceptionally, Phillips does provide a citation for this claim, which can be assessed on its own striking merits:

"as one influential left-wing editor said to me: 'The Holocaust meant that for decades the Jews were untouchable. It's such a relief that Israel means we don't have to worry about that any more'".

There is of course only Phillips' word for this; and there is more than enough reason to doubt her integrity. More to the point, one conveniently anonymous – and inevitably left-wing – individual hardly constitutes proof of Phillips' sweeping indictment of Europeans.

However, whilst Phillips' imputations here are clearly intended to put Israel's government and its policies beyond criticism, her castigation is not limited to liberals, the radical left, the church, nor even influential left-wing editors; one of her more aggressive veins of contention centres on the presence of Muslims in Britain, and it is this which marks an important distinction between commentators such as Phillips^[93] as opposed to conservatives in the main. Phillips is not merely concerned with maintaining a supposed status quo – either in the middle east or in Britain; on the contrary, her contentions belie a far more aggressive agenda.

As with the other elements of Phillips' jeremiad, her allegations against Muslims incorporate several concrete assertions amidst an overall context of indistinct claims and apocryphal vagaries. For example:

"like the media and the churches, Britain's political and academic Left is making common cause with Islamist radicalism^[94]. The Islamists oppose the Left's most deeply held causes, such as gay rights and equality for women^[95]. Yet leftists and Islamists now march together under such slogans as 'We are all Hezbollah now' during rallies protesting the Lebanon war, and even 'Death to the Jews' outside a debate over whether Manchester University's Jewish Society should be banned"^[96].

Needless to say, neither names nor references are provided for these claims; and quite which members of the church, media, 'leftists' or of 'the academic left' support reactionary religious goals therefore remains both mysterious and paradoxical: one cannot support progressive and conservative policies concurrently.

Nonetheless, Phillips does level relatively specific charges at British Muslims themselves. As noted previously, Phillips contends that:

"anti-Semitism is rife within Britain's Muslim community. Islamic bookshops sell copies of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and the notorious czarist forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*; as an undercover TV documentary revealed in January, Imams routinely preach anti-Jewish sermons"^[97].

In the latter instance, Phillips' claim is true to a degree; however, the Imams in question were Saudi Arabian extremists, not mainstream community/prayer leaders; and their aversion to Jews was one element of their overall antipathy to others – be they women, homosexuals, Christians or other non-Wahabi Muslims. Moreover, their primary point of contempt was precisely for the secular and liberal nature of societies in countries such as Britain^[98]. These were therefore hardly representative of Muslims en masse; and their extremism was of a piece with that of extremist Christians, Jews, and Hindus – or extremism among any other ideological adherents, for that matter^[99].

However, the two books are a separate issue. While bookshops owned by Muslims – which is presumably what Phillips means by 'Islamic bookshops' – may well sell *Mein Kampf*, most good bookshops sell it, including the decidedly bland Waterstones chain, which has stores in all major cities, and which could hardly be called a hub of Islamic extremism. Hitler's political testament is a primary historical source, which – despite its grotesqueness – remains invaluable to any student of the Third Reich. *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* differs markedly, however. It certainly is an unsavoury piece of propaganda; but what is Phillips' proof that its reception is widespread within Britain's supposed Muslim community? Phillips doesn't say; however another author writing in the same vein has previously levelled the same charge. In an article entitled 'The Dark Corner of A Muslim Bookshop', *The Telegraph's* Damian Thompson mentions his visit to "a Muslim bookshop" and relays that:

"On the way out of the shop, a thought struck me. I asked: 'Do you have a copy of...?' and I named one of the best-selling books in the Arab world. 'Oh, no, we don't stock that,' replied the amiable young guy behind the counter. I looked disappointed. 'I was sure you had it. I only need it for reference purposes'. The guy looked at me suspiciously for a second, then relented. 'OK, just a moment,' he said, and headed for a dark corner of the shop where there was a pile of slim red paperbacks. He handed me a copy. 'That'll be six quid, please'. The title of the book? You may have guessed by now: *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*".

Quite why Thompson's readers would have presupposed this is not particularly clear.

Needless to say, Thompson doesn't provide the name of the shop; nor would it be particularly sensible to infer from one apocryphal instance that all Muslims – or Arabs, who are a minority among the world's Muslims – take *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to heart^[100]. Moreover, there is of course a distinct irony in Thompson – a conservative Catholic – citing anti-Semitism in order to impugn a religious group. *The Protocols of The Elders of Zion* were themselves created by a Christian Russian^[101]; and were first translated into Arabic by Lebanese Christian priest named Antun Yamin^[102].

A more unsavoury effort in this manner appears to have transpired elsewhere, however. The right-wing Think-Tank Policy Exchange also reported on the presence of extremist literature in Muslim Bookshops in 2007^[103]; and appears to have made an accurate claim – to a degree. One of the bookshops discussed – The Muslim Education Centre in High Wycombe – evidently did contain at least one of the seven books as alleged by Policy Exchange; however, Policy Exchange seem to have fabricated material in support of their overall claims. An investigation by the BBC television programme *Newsnight* claimed to have uncovered evidence that several receipts for the books said to have been bought around Britain by Policy Exchange’s researchers were forged. *The Ealing Times* reporting on this notes:

“*Newsnight* investigators claim five out of the 25 receipts gathered from mosques and other centres by the think tank, and then supplied to the show, were forged. This included a receipt from the education centre and during the show it was claimed it had been produced at the same time as one taken from a mosque in Parsons Green, London – 40 miles away”^[104].

This allegation was denied by Policy Exchange, however; which – despite its pettish tone – leaves the matter controversial^[105].

This is beside the point, however. Such material is undoubtedly odious, and clearly merits criticism; but Phillips’ imputation that this is representative of Britain’s Muslims in the main is evidently false, even judging by the dubious anecdote of Thompson, or the contentious report by Policy Exchange – if books are kept surreptitiously in dark corners of shops, or are sold under the counter, then the proprietors are evidently not confident that their customers will view such sales sympathetically, and such material is therefore clearly not in mass circulation^[106]. Moreover – however questionably – Policy Exchange had discussed extremist literature as a whole, and this encompassed “violent, misogynistic and homophobic”^[107] material; it was not limited to anti-Semitic propaganda. To impute such characteristics to “Britain’s Muslim community” in its entirety is a claim left unsupported by available evidence, if not obliquely contradicted by the aforementioned sources.

However, Phillips’ had made a more substantial claim here, which does touch upon more problematic issues:

“opinion polls show that nearly two-fifths of Britain’s Muslims believe that the Jewish community in Britain is a legitimate target ‘as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East’; that more than half believe that British Jews have ‘too much influence over the direction of UK foreign policy’; and that no fewer than 46 percent think that the Jewish community is ‘in league with Freemasons to control the media and politics’”^[108].

Quite which opinion polls Phillips does not say; her source is revealed in another article of hers on the same subject,

however^[109], and the data therein certainly is noteworthy in several respects.

Phillips is quite correct to suggest that “nearly two-fifths of Britain’s Muslims believe that the Jewish community in Britain is a legitimate target ‘as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East’”. The number of respondents ‘Very Much/Somewhat Agreeing’ with this view was 37%; however 35% ‘Very Much/Somewhat Disagreed’ with it – data for which Phillips makes neither mention nor takes account. More to the point, quite what ‘legitimate target’ meant here is questionable: it could mean legitimate target for violence; it could also mean legitimate target of criticism^[110].

This incidence of discreet omission follows in Phillips’ other contentions here. “More than half” of respondents did ‘Very Much/Somewhat Agree’ that the Jewish community in Britain has “too much influence over the direction of UK foreign policy” (53%); however, 19% ‘Very Much/Somewhat Disagreed’ with the notion, and quite what the question itself means specifically is not particularly clear. ‘Too much influence’ could imply conspiracy; it could also suggest a belief that the UK government holds Israel and other middle eastern countries to separate standards due to supposed Israeli/Jewish lobbying.

Similarly, 46% of respondents did ‘Very Much/Somewhat Agree’ that the Jewish community is “in league with Freemasons to control the media and politics”; but this equals less than half from the outset, and the number specifically ‘Very Much/Somewhat Disagreeing’ with this notion was 22%. However problematic such views may be among those who hold them, there is evidently a strong divergence among British Muslims; and Phillips’ omissions are clearly designed to impress upon her readers a notion of homogeneity which has no basis in fact^[111].

This broad divergence of views among British Muslims was replicated in regard to the following question:

“The Muslim Council of Britain refuses to support National Holocaust Memorial day, which commemorates the murder of Jews and others who suffered under Nazi persecution as well as recent genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?”^[112].

Whilst 56% thought that “The Muslim community should not participate in Holocaust Memorial Day”, 31% thought that it should. This disparity is even more marked in regard to more contemporary subjects, however. For example, in response to “Do you think the state of Israel has a right to exist?”, 52% answered yes, and 30% answered no^[113]. More pertinent still were answers to questions concerning suicide bombing. The responses to “Are there any circumstances under which you think that suicide bombings can ever be justified in the following places?” break down as follows:

UK: Yes = 7% No = 77%
Don’t Know/Refused = 16%

Israel: Yes = 16% No = 66%
Don't Know/Refused = 18%

Chechnya: Yes = 13% No = 68%
Don't Know/Refused = 19%

Iraq: Yes = 15% No = 69%
Don't Know/Refused = 16%

Whilst in answer to "Are there any circumstances under which you think that suicide bombings can ever be justified against these following types of people?" the responses were as follows:

Civilians: Yes = 7% No = 75%
Don't Know/Refused = 18%

Military: Yes = 21% No = 59%
Don't Know/Refused = 19%

Police: Yes = 11% No = 69%
Don't Know/Refused = 19%

Government buildings Yes = 9% No = 72%
Don't Know/Refused = 19%

/Workers:

Needless to say, Phillips omits mention of such data; and it plainly contradicts her overall imputations^[114].

This pattern of widely disparate views was confirmed in another instance, however. In response to the question "How far would you say you agree with the general statements or teachings of the following Muslim leaders?", by a wide margin of at least 22%^[115], the most popular figure was Yusuf Islam – previously known as the soft-rocking musician Cat Stevens – and extremist figures were evidently held in low regard by contrast^[116].

However, in contrast to Phillips, *The Times'* poll did not treat British Muslims as a homogeneous mass; the survey conducted on its behalf by Populus notes that:

"Populus interviewed a random sample of 500 adults aged 18+ by telephone between 9th December 2005 and 19th December 2005. Interviews were conducted across England and the results have been weighted to be representative of all English adults"^[117].

The fact that the respondents were selected randomly obviously casts such data in an ambiguous light, and therefore requires that deductions be inferred circumspectly. Moreover, in a separate 'Muslim Poll' conducted shortly afterwards in 2006, Populus delineated their respondents' sex, age, social class, region, and – perhaps imperatively – voting intention^[118]; and this broke down as follows:

Published Voting Intention Figures – January 2006^[119]:

Conservative:	36%
Labour:	39%
Liberal Democrat/Liberal:	16%
Scottish National Party:	2%
Plaid Cymru:	1%
Other:	5%

In other words, as with the rest of British society, British Muslims in the main are roughly split between left and right-wing; and there does not appear to be any way of knowing

with certainty whether the more reactionary opinions were held by conservatives or liberals. Common sense will have to suffice if one is to speculate.

Nonetheless, it is clear that Phillips left unmentioned the data which contradicted her claims; more to the point, none of the various excerpts and apocryphal anecdotes which were cited by Phillips here indicates who was responsible for the anti-Semitic incidents occurring in 2006. Phillips had contended that liberals, ordinary Britons, and Muslims were culpable for these attacks; that they had arisen as a result of a supposed demonisation of Israel in the left-wing media; and she had cited both the Community Security Trust report of 2006 and the report published by the All-Party Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism Inquiry conducted during the same year as evidence of her insinuations:

"anti-Semitism has also become respectable in mainstream British society. 'Anti-Jewish themes and remarks are gaining acceptability in some quarters in public and private discourse in Britain and there is a danger that this trend will become more and more mainstream,' reported a Parliamentary inquiry last year^[120]. 'It is this phenomenon that has contributed to an atmosphere where Jews have become more anxious and more vulnerable to abuse and attack than at any other time for a generation or longer'"^[121].

Thus Phillips contends:

"At the heart of this ugly development is a new variety of anti-Semitism, aimed primarily not at the Jewish religion, and not at a purported Jewish race, but at the Jewish state. Zionism is now a dirty word in Britain, and opposition to Israel has become a fig leaf for a resurgence of the oldest hatred"^[122].

Quite how a new variant of anti-Semitism is equitable with a resurgent anachronism is left unexplained by Phillips. Nonetheless, by contrast it is perfectly clear that according to Phillips – and for that matter the Parliamentary Inquiry – British Jews were attacked by members of "mainstream British society", and had been motivated by supposed media misrepresentations of the middle east conflict which cast Israel in an unfair light. Phillips is more explicit on this point elsewhere in her article:

"whenever Middle East violence surges, as in the 2006 Lebanon war or at the height of the second *Intifada*, physical attacks on British Jews surge, too. Since violence in the Middle East invariably consists of attacks on Israel to which it is forced to respond, the appalling conclusion is that the more Jews are murdered in Israel, the more Jews are attacked in Britain"^[123].

If this is so, and attacks on Jews correlate to conflict and violence in the middle east, then why does this occur specifically within Britain? According to Phillips, it is because: "the presentation of Israel in British public discourse does not consist of mere criticism.

[cont. Newsletter No 528]