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## **The Challenges Facing British Jewry**

*Leslie Wagner*

- The challenges facing British Jewry now are little different from those that have faced Diaspora Jewry generally over the past one hundred years or more, namely, the twin problems of assimilation and anti-Semitism.
- There need be no fears about the Jewish identity of the strictly Orthodox community in the UK. The key to whether British Jewry can arrest its decline will be the performance of the other sections, and particularly the centrist Orthodox communities. Their challenge is to show that a Jewish lifestyle that is not strictly Orthodox can ensure Jewish continuity. The fact that, for example, over 60% of non-*haredi* children are now attending Jewish schools is a cause for hope that the challenge might be met.
- The forces of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are both deeply embedded and growing in Britain. The Jewish community's fight against classical anti-Semitism is well organized, and the community has a robust set of partnerships and networks in place. There has been more uncertainty, however, in the community's approach to the new anti-Semitism led by the unholy alliance of the political left and militant Islam. Here a more sustained, proactive campaign is needed.
- There are gloomy prognostications about European Jewry, including the claim that it has no future. While British Jewry will continue to be buffeted by the twin assaults of assimilation and anti-Semitism, on the whole it is robust enough to withstand those assaults for many years to come.

### **Introduction**

The challenges facing British Jewry now are little different from those that have faced Diaspora Jewry generally over the past one hundred years or more, namely, the twin problems of assimilation and anti-Semitism. The interesting questions today are whether the nature and

context of these challenges are different at present, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, and how effective the community's response to these challenges is likely to be.

## **Assimilation**

Assimilation is reflected in such issues as numbers, commitment, and identity. How many Jews are there in Britain? It is safe to claim that the figure is at least 300,000, based on the comprehensive data from the 2001 UK census. The Jewish data from the census is discussed in detail in the publication "Jews in Britain: A Snapshot from the 2001 Census," published by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) in 2007.[1] As the authors of that report point out, given that people self-identified as Jews and the extent of their "Jewishness" is not known, and also given that different denominations within Judaism now have their own criteria for acceptance, there is no "true" figure for the number of Jews. It all depends what one means by Jews.

At its height, soon after the Second World War, most estimates put the size of the British Jewish community at around 450,000. So it would seem that this population declined by up to a third in the second half of the twentieth century. The major factors in this decline were the age structure of the community with deaths increasing faster than births, and assimilation - not just intermarriage but more and more people of Jewish descent not recognizing themselves as Jews. *Aliyah* (emigration to Israel) is also a factor, but less than imagined, at least quantitatively, because of immigration of Jews to the UK from countries such as South Africa and Israel itself.

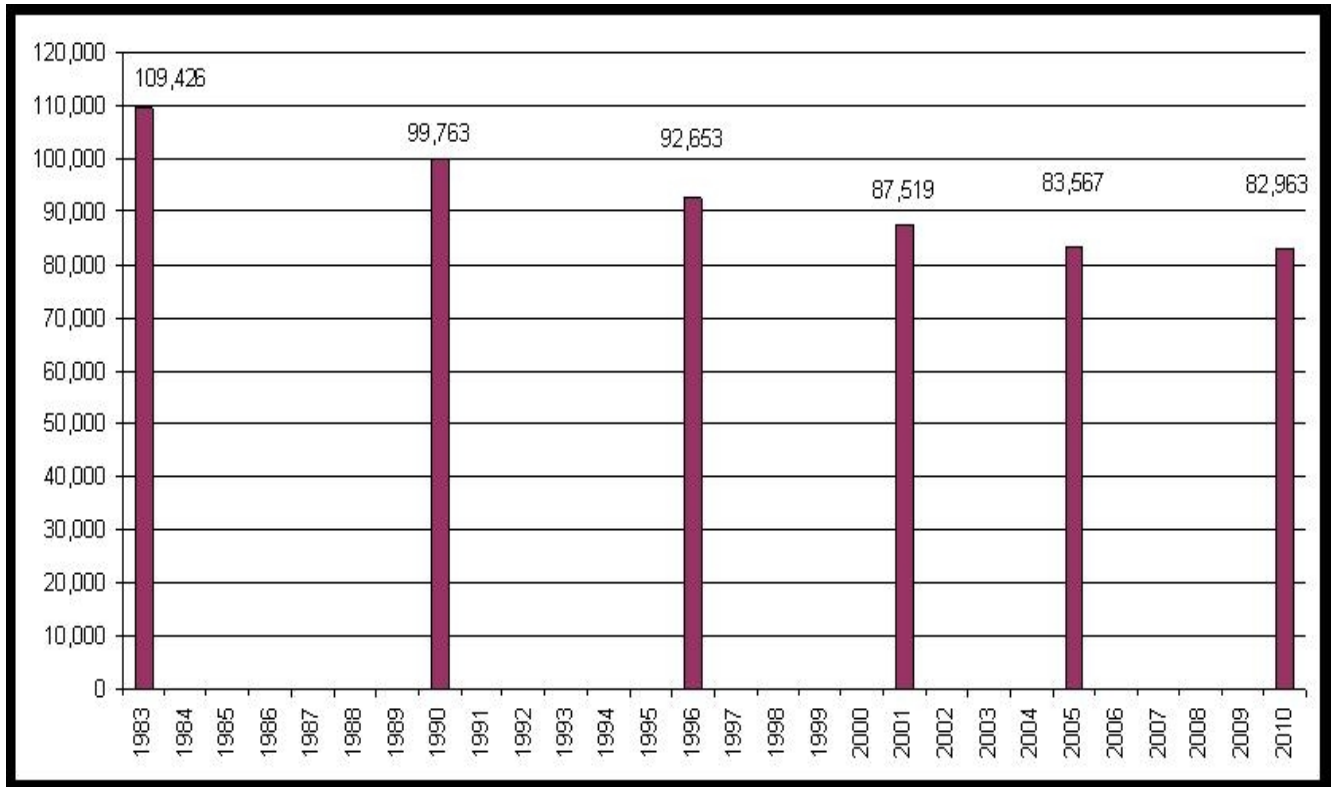
## **Synagogue Membership**

There is another more recent report, also from the JPR and the Board of Deputies, dealing with synagogue membership.[2] The methodology used in these surveys is always open to criticism. In particular it is difficult to obtain accurate data from the *haredi* (strictly Orthodox) community, where the idea of "membership" of a synagogue is often an alien concept. People just go to one *shtiebel* (synagogue) or the other to *daven* (pray), without any records being kept. However, the researchers have used the best possible methodology in obtaining their data and the results are fascinating.

They identified 82,963 households belonging to 409 synagogues. More interesting is the trend, which is shown in figure 1. This reveals a decline over the twenty-five-year-plus period since 1983, amounting to about 25%. However, what is notable is that the decline has been shallower over the past ten years. From 1990 to 2001 synagogue membership fell by around 12%, while from 2001 to 2010 the decline was just over 5%.

### **Graph 1**

#### **Long-term trend in total synagogue members 1983-2010**



The denominational figures can be seen in Table 1. Most obviously centrist Orthodoxy, essentially the United Synagogue and other largely Chief Rabbi- supporting synagogues outside London, have been hemorrhaging members, having lost a third of their numbers over the past twenty years.

**Table 1**  
**Total Synagogue membership by denomination, 1990-2010**

Denomination	1990	1995	2001	2005	2010
Central Orthodox	66,201	57,040	50,538	47,442	45,393
Reform	16,824	17,123	17,783	16,719	16,125
Liberal	7,785	8,269	8,055	6,743	7,197
Strictly Orthodox	4,489	5,609	6,631	7,664	9,049
Sephardi	3,238	3,199	3,056	3,022	2,930
Masorti	1,226	1,413	1,456	1,977	2,269
<i>Total</i>	<i>99,763</i>	<i>92,653</i>	<i>87,519</i>	<i>83,567</i>	<i>82,963</i>

The experience of the other denominations is equally fascinating. Over the past twenty years the Reform and Liberal communities have done relatively better than centrist Orthodoxy, but in overall terms have also lost members. Masorti (Conservative) membership almost doubled, albeit from a very small base. The standout performance is of course the strictly Orthodox, who have more than doubled in size.

Simply put, the numerical picture is one of decline, certainly outside the strictly Orthodox sector, and arresting that decline and strengthening the Jewish identity of its members is a major challenge for the leadership of British Jewry. It may be counterintuitive, but there is some evidence that the challenge is being met and that continuing sharp decline is not inevitable. The figures showed a sharp decline in synagogue membership over the past twenty years, including a continuing but slower decline over the past ten years. But the figures for the past five years in terms of change are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Denominational change, 2005-2010**

Denominational strand	The last 5 years (2005-2010)	
	Total change	Percent change
Central Orthodox	-2,049	-4.3
Reform	-594	-3.6
Liberal	+454	+6.7
Strictly Orthodox	+1,385	+18.1
Sephardi	-92	-3.0
Masorti	+292	+14.8
<i>Total change</i>	<i>-604</i>	<i>-0.3</i>

Overall, the decline has all but been arrested (0.3%). Centrist Orthodoxy continues to decline but at a slower rate, and that decline is largely outside London. The progressives show a small increase, attributed to the Liberals changing their criteria for membership by accepting patrilineal descent. Once again it is the strictly Orthodox who stand out not only by increasing their numbers significantly but seemingly also accelerating the rate of increase.

There need be no fears about the Jewish identity of the strictly Orthodox community. However, the other sections of the community exist to offer more options than either being *haredi* or assimilating. The key to whether British Jewry can arrest its decline will be the performance of these other sections, and particularly the centrist Orthodox communities. Even after its sharp decline over the past twenty years, centrist Orthodoxy still attracts the majority of synagogue members.

## Centrist Orthodoxy

Within centrist Orthodoxy there is a small group of synagogues known as the Federation, but the vast majority come under the aegis of the Chief Rabbi, some in the communities outside London but most through the United Synagogue. To Jews in the United States and Israel the idea that the majority of affiliated Jews belong to a synagogue body, which follows the Orthodox liturgy and adheres to the norms of Orthodox *halakhic* observance, but where probably less than 20% of the members follow an observant, even a modern observant, lifestyle must seem an anomaly. To supporters of the United Synagogue, the fact that it allows membership and indeed involvement to any *halakhic* Jew without any Jewish-observance requirement is its crowning glory, a testament to the inclusivity of Anglo-Jewish centrist Orthodoxy.

Why the United Synagogue adheres to this policy is not difficult to understand. Ideologically, it provides a framework within which people might become more observant, or at least strengthen their identity. Pragmatically, it enables Orthodoxy to dominate Anglo-Jewish religious politics, in a way that, for example, it does not do in the United States. What is more difficult to understand is why the majority of British Jewry, unlike their fellow Jews in the United States, continues to be comfortable with this approach.

This mass of less-observant (sometimes referred to as "three-day-a-year") Jews has long been recognized as the soft underbelly of the United Synagogue. While the first generation of British-born Jews might have been expected to stay loyal in membership, if not in practical observance, to the faith and synagogues of their parents, this effect ought to have worn off as the community moved on to its second and third generations, as has happened elsewhere. To some extent it has worn off, as the decline in membership indicates, but it is nevertheless still robust.

Moreover, while it is difficult to trace flows of people moving through the various denominations in any systematic manner, the decline in numbers of the centrist Orthodox component has not been accompanied by any dramatic increase in numbers in the progressive communities in recent decades. Indeed it is the strictly Orthodox community that is benefiting most from any move from centrist Orthodoxy, from people who become more observant while in membership of the United Synagogue (US), or from children of US members who have experienced a year or more in yeshiva or seminary in Israel.

After a major assessment of its future by a team led by Stanley Kalms (now Lord Kalms) at the start of the 1990s, the US slowly began to reform itself in terms of its structures and purposes. It took more than a decade for these changes to be introduced, and it is at least a hypothesis worth testing that the lower fall in membership over recent years is in some part due to these changes. Apart from giving individual synagogues and their rabbis more autonomy, the main focus has been to emphasize community as much as synagogue. The stress is now on serving the whole needs of members of the community from birth to old age, and not just their religious needs. Jews now join their local synagogue for a variety of reasons of which religious facilities may be way down the list. Whether this increased emphasis on community rather than synagogue continues to stem the loss of membership remains to be seen.

## **The Chief Rabbinate**

And then there is the Chief Rabbinate, very unlike the Israeli Chief Rabbinate in many of its functions and certainly in the qualities of its current incumbent, Lord Jonathan Sacks. The ongoing controversy within British Jewry concerns the extent to which a Chief Rabbi appointed by one section of the community can speak for the whole community. This was not a major issue under previous Chief Rabbis, partly because centrist Orthodoxy was so dominant numerically and partly because the outside world was not particularly interested in hearing the Jewish point of view. This began to change under Lord Sacks's predecessor, Immanuel Jakobovits, but it is Sacks who has faced the major challenge to his right to speak for the whole community.

The quality of his writing and ideas has made him the first choice of media outlets for not just a Jewish point of view, but also as a general religious voice on current issues. It is often not the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Roman Catholic Archbishop they go to, but the Chief Rabbi. He is ubiquitous in his media and public-lecture presence, and constant references to *the* Chief Rabbi are more than irritating to the progressive denominations. This is not assuaged when it is pointed out that Sacks does not invite himself to appear in the media but responds to invitations, and turns down as many as he accepts. Inside the community, Sacks has been involved in major controversies in his dealings with the other Jewish denominations despite an explicit desire to promote inclusivity. These controversies have been described in detail by Meir Persoff in his book *Another Time, Another Way*,[3] in what is, unfortunately, a flawed analysis of a complex issue.

Persoff's call for Sacks to be the last Chief Rabbi has been echoed by others, most recently Shmueli Boteach in the *Jerusalem Post*.<sup>[4]</sup> It is curious that the longer people have been separated from British Jewry, the more confident they feel in telling it what to do. Sacks has announced his retirement at the age of sixty-five in 2013, and the US and its fellow communities are planning to start the process for appointing his successor later this year. There may well be voices within the US itself that will also raise the question of the need for a Chief Rabbi, but these will be largely on the grounds of cost. It is doubtful if these voices, both inside and outside the US, will prevail. It is perhaps not well known that over a third of the funding of the Chief Rabbinate comes from private donations rather than communal funds. This provides an annual market test of its value. Hard-nosed business people are unlikely to continue funding the activities of the Chief Rabbinate if they do not feel it is providing value for their money. The more interesting question is whether centrist Orthodoxy can find a new Chief Rabbi who will inspire the community to strengthen its Jewish identity and commitment, and that remains to be seen.

## **Trends outside the Established Community**

The research of Steven M. Cohen is well known, and last year the JCPA's Institute for Global Jewish Affairs published his interview to Manfred Gerstenfeld about the greater engagement of young American Jews searching for Jewish purpose in their lives.<sup>[5]</sup> This is reflected in the

creation of new *minyanim* (prayer quorums), expanded social-justice activities, various cultural activities, and greater Jewish learning.

At the beginning of last year Cohen covered the same issues in a lecture in the UK, where there is much evidence of a similar phenomenon to that in the United States. New *minyanim* of younger people are springing up. Even the established synagogues in main areas of population now offer a variety of *minyanim* from Hashkamah (morning) to late, and from participatory to easy learning, something not evident a decade or so ago.

In his interview to Gerstenfeld, Cohen mentioned the greater openness to learning, particularly among younger Jews. Britain is where the leading international brand of open Jewish learning, Limmud, began and where it continues to flourish with over two thousand people attending the annual flagship residential conference over the Christmas period. This is a phenomenal number for a community the size of Britain's.

## **Jewish Schooling**

Finally, in looking at how the community is meeting the challenges of assimilation, one must note the remarkable changes taking place in Jewish schooling. Leaving aside the strictly Orthodox community for a moment, from 1995 to 2005 the number of children attending Jewish schools in London increased by 40%.<sup>[6]</sup> This excludes the strictly Orthodox because close to 100% of their children attend Jewish schools and growth is a function of their birthrate rather than resulting from choice. They are also the group least vulnerable to assimilation. In 2005 it was estimated that outside the strictly Orthodox group some 45%-50% of Jewish children attended Jewish schools. As a result of continued growth over the past five years, well over 60% of *non-haredi* Jewish children now attend Jewish schools, and the numbers are growing. *Haredi* children currently make up around 33% of Jewish children, and taking that into account around 75% of all Jewish children in London now attend Jewish schools.

Indeed there is now evidence of a clear shortage of places in the primary sector as supply struggles to keep up with a burgeoning demand. Part of the increase in demand is due to a rise in birthrates over the past five years. But it is also due to what can only be described as a "cultural shift" producing increased demand for both primary and secondary schooling. At secondary level, although demand is growing, there is no shortage of places, because as a result of uncoordinated expansion there has been a 50% increase in the number of places available in Jewish secondary schools in the last five years. The increase in numbers, while impressive, has not yet matched the growth in overall capacity, although popular schools still cannot meet demand.

One of the reasons for the "cultural shift" is that Jewish schools regularly feature among the top performing schools in the country. Secular education in the UK is funded by the state, so if one is going to send one's child to a state-funded school, then on educational grounds alone the Jewish school is the best option. At secondary level there is also the consideration that non-Jewish schools will be more mixed in terms of their social class, ethnic origins, and ability levels.

Undoubtedly, though, another reason for the attitudinal shift is that parents - most of whom are not regular synagogue attendees - see the schools as a partial antidote to assimilation, whether this be through the formal curriculum of Judaism, Jewish history, and Zionism or the informal curriculum of being in a Jewish atmosphere and mixing with other Jewish children.

There has been much debate about whether Jewish schools do act as an antidote to assimilation, but Jewish parents in the UK certainly believe that they do. The continuing rise in enrollment is one of the hopeful signs of the community investing in its future.

## **Anti-Semitism**

Anti-Semitism's deep roots in British cultural life have recently been documented by Anthony Julius in his book *Trials of the Diaspora*, and by Robert Wistrich in an article.[7] [8] In a recent lecture Simcha Epstein explained how the current wave of anti-Semitism in Europe is different from previous waves both in its length and in its provenance, coming from an unholy alliance of left-wing and jihadist Islamic factions rather than exclusively from the right. [9] Melanie Phillips in her 2006 book *Londonistan* was the first to point out how London had become home for the most extreme Islamic leaders from across the world.[10]

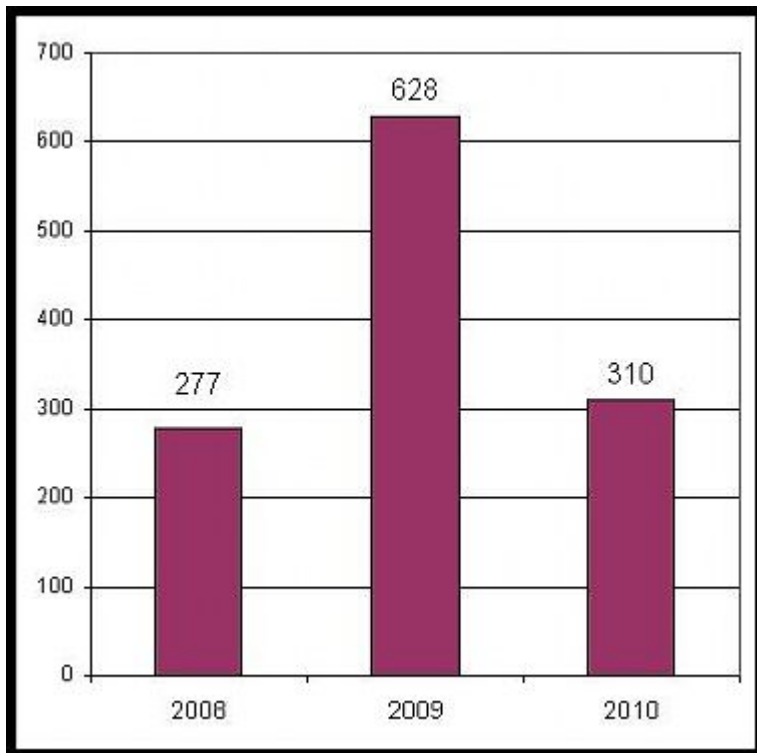
Recently two more publications, one from the Reut Institute and one by Ehud Rosen, have analyzed how London has become the center of the campaign for the delegitimization of Israel.[11] [12]

If one adds to this catalog other well-known anti-Israel actions in Britain, from pioneering the idea of academic boycotts, to the BDS resolutions of the Methodist churches in June 2010, to the use of universal jurisdiction to threaten visiting Israelis, it is not difficult to conclude that the forces of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are both deeply embedded and growing in Britain.

The key question here is how does this affect British Jewry? The data on anti-Semitic incidents is collected by the Community Security Trust (CST), the organization within the British Jewish community tasked with fighting anti-Semitism. The data for the first half of each of the last three years are shown in figure 2. The total of 277 in 2008 more than doubles in 2009 before falling back in 2010 to 310, still higher than the 2008 number. The CST in analyzing these figures attributes virtually all the 2009 increase to the fallout from the [Gaza](#) war, and the 2010 increase to the impact of the Gaza flotilla incident.

### **Graph 2 Antisemitic Incidents, January-June, 2008-2010**





Looking at annual figures, shown in table 3, the number of incidents from 2004 to 2008 varied between 450 and 600. Of course in 2006 there was the [Lebanon](#) war. In 2009 it rose to 924, again following the Gaza war. The most common form of anti-Semitism is abusive behavior followed by physical assault. In a handful of cases the assault is classified as extreme violence.

**Table 3**  
**Annual total incident figures 2004-2009**

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
532	459	598	561	546	924

The catalog of more than ten incidents a week in a normal year and over fifty a week in the Gaza months of January and February 2009 does not make pleasant reading, nor were they of course pleasant experiences for those subject to them. The CST augments its report on incidents with an annual discourse report, which analyzes written and verbal communication, discussion, and rhetoric about Jews and Jewish-related issues. This covers familiar territory, discussing in some depth among other things how issues such as anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, the Gaza war, the comparison between the Holocaust and Gaza, the "Jewish lobby" and so on played out in the media and other cultural forums. Again, this does not make pleasant reading.

Besides reporting and drawing attention to these incidents, what has been the community's response to these threats? One aspect, of course, is the protection provided by the CST to

communal buildings, events, and senior figures. The community's leadership would also argue that it is well connected and influential politically, at the most senior levels of government and Parliament, reflected for example in regular strong statements from the prime minister downwards, and the work of the Parliamentary Committee on Anti-Semitism. The relationship with the police is strong. Holocaust education remains a firm part of the school curriculum with an increasing number of visits to Auschwitz and other concentration camps by school parties. The fight against classical anti-Semitism is undoubtedly well organized, and the community has a robust set of partnerships and networks in place.

There has been more uncertainty, however, in the community's approach to the new anti-Semitism led by the unholy alliance of the political left and militant Islam. In part this is because, like the rest of British society, the Jewish community has been slow to recognize the significance of this threat. It also reflects the community's historical attitude toward its relationship with other faiths, and a desire to accentuate the positive rather than the negative.

The tardiness of British society's response to radical Islam, even after July 2005, has been well documented by Melanie Phillips and subsequently by others. At the security level the response has been strong, with many alleged attacks being thwarted. But at the political level there has been a lack of clear focus. The Jewish community has shared this lack of focus because its approach to other faiths has long been one of interfaith dialogue, based essentially on reconciliation and friendship with Christians following the Holocaust. As Muslims became more prominent the adaptation of this model to Islam followed, with three-faith forums and so on. Increasing anti-Israel and anti-Jewish comments by some Muslims, along with regular terror threats, have resulted in the community seeking to distinguish "good" Muslims from "bad" Muslims.

The discourse report for 2009, for example, focuses far more, and probably correctly, on the anti-Israel and anti-Jewish writings of leftist journalists, commentators, authors, and playwrights than it does on Muslims. Indeed, in one of its few references to Muslims it notes a letter that was sent to over a thousand British mosques by twenty prominent British Muslims at the height of the Gaza war, stressing that disagreements with Israeli actions in Gaza should not lead to attacks on Jews, and condemning such attacks.

The community's leadership has protested, often successfully, against the entry of radical imams to the UK, and more recently has been showing increasing concern on what is happening to Jewish students on campus. Remarkably, because he usually avoids strong language, it is the Chief Rabbi who has most recently articulated this concern. At a government ceremony to mark a report on anti-Semitism, he condemned events at the London School of Economics a few weeks earlier in which Jewish students had been attacked and intimidated, and said, "This has been going on for over a decade.... The inflammatory public speeches being allowed to take place on university campuses would in any other context and directed against any other group be prosecuted under the law...."[13] He accused the university authorities of turning a blind eye and a deaf ear, and urged the government to pressure the universities to take action.

It remains to be seen whether this is an isolated comment or the start of a more sustained, proactive campaign, not just to defend students but to confront specifically and vigorously leftist/Islamic anti-Semitism.

## UK Jewry and Israel

The increasing Israel-centered nature of anti-Semitism in the UK inevitably raises the question of the community's relationship to Israel. Remarks by Mick Davis, senior communal leader and chairman of the UJIA (United Jewish Israel Appeal) - essentially criticizing some Israeli policies, and arguing that Diaspora Jews are affected by such policies - hit the headlines in November 2010, but the issue has been a source of tension for some years. The aim here is not to comment on what Davis actually said but rather to try to throw some light, rather than heat, on the general issue of British Jewry's current relationship to Israel.

In the early decades of its existence, probably until sometime after the 1973 war, Israel was a unifying factor in Diaspora life. Now it is a source of division, both within Diaspora communities and between the Diaspora and Israel. This is reflected in the first survey of British Jewry's attitude toward Israel for nearly fifteen years, published last year by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research.[14] The results are shown in table 4.

**Table 4**  
**Attitudes to Israel**

- For 82% of respondents, Israel plays a 'central' or 'important but not central' role in their Jewish identities.
- 90% believe that Israel is the 'ancestral homeland' of the Jewish people.
- 95% have visited Israel at some point in the past. In contrast, previous studies reported comparable figures of 91% (2002) and 78% (1995).
- 72% categorize themselves as Zionists; 21% do not see themselves as Zionists, and 7% are unsure. Generally speaking, the more religious respondents say they are, the more likely they are to describe themselves as Zionist.
- 87% say that Jews in Britain are part of a global Jewish 'Diaspora'; just 19% regard Jews outside Israel as living in 'exile'.
- Only 31% agree that the State of Israel has a responsibility for 'ensuring the safety of Jews around the world'. By contrast, 77% of respondents agree that Jews have 'a special responsibility to support Israel'.
- An overwhelming majority (87%) agrees that Jews are responsible for ensuring 'the survival of Israel'- over half (54%) the non-Zionist respondents also agree.
- 78% favours a two-state solution
- 67% favour giving up territory for peace
- 52% think that Israel should negotiate with [Hamas](#)
- 72% view the security fence vital for Israel's security
- 55% consider Israel to be 'an occupying power' in the West Bank

- 50% consider control of the West Bank vital for Israel's security
- 35% think that Jewish people should 'always' feel free to criticize Israel in the British media; a further 38% say that there are some circumstances when this would be justified. Only a quarter says this is 'never' justified.

On the one hand, there is strong identification with Israel. Some 95% - a remarkable figure - have visited, 87% agree that Jews have a responsibility for Israel's survival, 82% think Israel plays a central role in their Jewish identity, 77% believe Jews have a special responsibility to support Israel - meaning the state, not the policies of any particular government - and 72% consider themselves as Zionists.

When it comes to particular policies the results are more varied. Thus, 78% favor a two-state solution, 67% favor giving up territory for peace, and 52% favor negotiations with Hamas.

Of course, as in all surveys, not all the responses are necessarily mutually consistent. So 72% think the security barrier is vital for Israel's security, 55% consider Israel an occupying power in the territories, while 50% regard control of the West Bank as vital for Israel's security. On the crucial question of whether it is correct to criticize Israel in public, the community is split: 35% say yes, 25% say never, and 38% say sometimes.

The relevant question here, then, is whether the community's leadership should reflect this division of opinion or stay publicly supportive of Israeli policy in all circumstances. In the past, the leadership's silence on some Israeli controversies was interpreted in some quarters as cowardice, the trembling-Israelites charge. Personal acquaintance with many of these leaders suggests that the last thing to accuse them of is cowardice and trembling. Whereas in the past these leaders may have decided that silence was the best approach when it came to Israeli policies or actions that they or their community were ambivalent about, Davis's recent remarks may indicate that this attitude is now changing.

Indeed, he set out his own position earlier in 2010, in an article in the *Jewish Chronicle*, before his actual comments in November. The headline succinctly expressed his view: "Open debate is our best way of defending Israel in the Diaspora." It remains to be seen whether British Jewish leaders faced with difficult Israeli policies or actions will publicly support Israel, remain silent, or begin to articulate what they think is good for Israel even if it differs from what the Israeli government thinks.

Finally, the CST, in its discourse report, while reporting on the various attacks on Jews and Israel also stresses that "Anti-Semitism does not prevent Jews from living a full life as British citizens." This is undoubtedly true, as testified by the many Jews who have and continue to occupy the highest positions in British political, business, financial, and cultural life. Moreover, these are not the "court Jews" of medieval times, who were indulged only while they were useful. Nor are they "secret Jews," hiding their identity. Not many may be religious, but they recognize their Jewish

identity and most are involved in Jewish-community activities. It is safe to say that Jews in Britain do not (yet) feel themselves to be a beleaguered minority.

## **The Outlook for British Jewry**

How then, to summarize the challenges facing British Jewry and its responses? Assimilation will certainly continue. The next census - which takes place in March this year, although its results will not be available for some time - will undoubtedly show a further fall in the number of people defining themselves as Jews. There is some hope that the community's actions through the changing role of its synagogues, increasing Jewish-school enrollment, the new approaches to Jewish learning, and the richer Jewish experiences of its young people may slow the decline. The viability and vitality of Jewish life in the major centers will undoubtedly continue for many years to come, while outside these major centers it will decline. The *haredi* community will be larger both in numbers and as a percentage of the community. The central challenge for the rest of the community is to show that a Jewish lifestyle that is not strictly Orthodox can ensure Jewish continuity.

As for anti-Semitism, the community is well organized to fight its classic form but has been less surefooted with the new anti-Semitism masquerading as anti-Zionism. This remains a major challenge, and there are some signs that the more outspoken and proactive approach that is needed is now being adopted. As for the challenge of British Jewry's changing relationship to Israel, this will continue to be a lively, passionate, and sometimes nasty debate both within the community and more widely.

There are often gloomy prognostications about European Jewry, including the claim that it has no future. This partly depends on what time frame one is speaking about. One need not be a futurologist to believe that, while British Jewry will continue to be buffeted by the twin assaults of assimilation and anti-Semitism, it is robust enough to withstand those assaults for many years to come.

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## **Notes**

[1] D. Graham, M. Schmool, and S. Waterman, *Jews in Britain: A Snapshot from the 2001 Census* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2007).

[2] D. Graham and D. Vulkan, *Synagogue Membership in the UK in 2010* (London: Board of Deputies of British Jews and Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2010).

- [3] M. Persoff, *Another Time, Another Way* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2010).
- [4] S. Boteach, "No Holds Barred: Fixing Failures of UK Chief Rabbinate," *Jerusalem Post*, 20 December 2010.
- [5] S. M. Cohen, "Highly Engaged Young American Jews: Contrasts in Generational Ethos," an interview to Manfred Gerstenfeld, *Changing Jewish Communities*, 60, 15 September 2010.
- [6] Commission on Jewish Schools, *The Future of Jewish Schools*, Consultation Document, Table 4 (London: Jewish Leadership Council, 2007).
- [7] A. Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- [8] R. S. Wistrich, "Anti-Semitism Embedded in British Culture," interview to Manfred Gerstenfeld, *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, 70, 1 July 2008.
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- [10] M. Phillips, *Londonistan: How Britain Is Creating a Terror State Within* (London: Gibson Square, 2006).
- [11] Reut Institute, *Building a Political Firewall against the Assault on Israel's Legitimacy* (Tel Aviv: Reut Institute, 2010).
- [12] E. Rosen, *Mapping the Organizational Sources of the Global Delegitimization Campaign against Israel in the UK* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2010).
- [13] Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks, "Speech to All-Party Parliamentary Group on Anti-Semitism," Website of The Office of The Chief Rabbi, London, 2011.
- [14] D. Graham and J. Boyd, *Committed, Concerned and Conciliatory: The Attitude of Jews in Britain towards Israel* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2010).

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