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From <https://www.onepalestine.land/rogues-gallery/#pete-gregson>



Friendly Fire?

There was a more “friendly fire” to come. Pete was attacked in a post on the JVL website in 2020, in an article headed [“Flimsy and vindictive: the ‘case’ against Ken Loach” – Antony Lerman’s blog](#)

Ken, a patron of LAW, had originally supported Pete’s principled stance with the GMB after seeing [his video with Rabbi Cohen speaking in Pete’s support](#). But later Loach himself was under attack for his views on Israel and he withdrew his support, in an astonishing volte-face. Why? He was to be a judge on Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC)’s school essay competition of 2020. JLM and other Zionist groups decided to kick up a stink and started demanding that SRtRC cancel Loach’s appointment because, they declared, Ken was a vile anti-Semite. At the time, other Zionists were busy in the press- there were calls to cut SRtRC’s funding, vilification of its staff and abuse was directed at Ken Loach and his family. Two things resulted- Loach withdrew as judge on the competition – and, upon being nobbled by the GMB (Gary Smith and Rea Wolfson), Loach decided to throw Pete under the bus. He [called Pete an anti-Semite](#) in a joint press statement [with SRtRC](#), a slur that was immediately republished in a digital pile-on by [Antony Lerman](#) (blog), Jonathan Cook (blog), [Artists for Palestine](#) and [Jewish Voice for Labour](#) (JVL). Thus anyone Googling Pete’s name gets the impression from these multiple sources of lefty antiracism that he is, indeed, a Jew-hater. Pete has written to all of them (most frequently Ken) asking for their evidence of his antisemitic views- only JVL has responded (see below).

Loach had apparently been fooled into believing the GMB allegations that Pete was a Holocaust denier and had abused a Jewish staffer. What Pete had actually done was point out how Israel exploited the Holocaust for political gain and identify Wolfson as a raving Zionist.

JVL's post was particularly insidious; it states "Ken Loach's response to Gregson was categorically not an endorsement of Gregson's antisemitism."

The post goes on to say "Loach made it clear that he was entirely unaware of Gregson's 'deeply disturbing and antisemitic comments' which he found 'utterly reprehensible' and 'unequivocally' rejected'. He profoundly regretted not making himself aware of Gregson's character and the complete picture. Had he possessed that knowledge, Loach said, 'I categorically would not have engaged with him.'"

Because none of his accusers are prepared to explain themselves, Pete and others tried to make clear how inaccurate and hurtful these "friendly fire" attacks are. Redress Information and Analysis published [Pete's Open Letter to Ken Loach](#) and later [published a defence of Pete here](#) .

[update of 19/02/2022: whilst not replying to Pete's messages, it appears that Jonathan Cook has now deleted the offending post in his blog.].

[Sadly Loach has been since expelled from the Labour Party, as part of Starmer's ongoing witch-hunt – in this case because Loach continued to support *other* victims of bogus antisemitism]



The attack by JVL was particularly hurtful as Pete had been an associate member of some years. He had always been a great supporter of JVL and was saddened to read it. Of all the attackers, they are the only ones who answered Pete's emails. He pointed out there was no evidence and asked JVL to delete the post; they have refused. JVL's slogan of "Always with the oppressed – never with the oppressor" rings rather hollow for Pete , as he feels they have sided with Zionists against him.

The JVL condemnation of Pete is ironic: nine of JVL's 16 officers and committee members have themselves been investigated by the Labour Party for bogus antisemitism, with three currently suspended. Yet they do to Pete what the Labour Party does to them... JVL, Loach and the rest are unable, or unwilling, to explain why they deem Pete antisemitic. He feels the only explanation is that they have adopted the IHRA Definition of Antisemitism themselves, as it is only that definition he has breached.

Sixteen FILMS

<https://www.sixteenfilms.co.uk/news/2020/3/18/show-racism-the-red-card-and-ken-loach-a-statement-from-his-supporters>

March 18th, 2020

March 18, 2020 - Film director Ken Loach has withdrawn as a judge in the 2020 School Competition run by respected anti-racism charity Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC).

The charity announced on February 4 that Ken Loach and author and former children's laureate Michael Rosen were to judge this year's competition, which involves thousands of schoolchildren in hundreds of schools producing poetry, drama, films and other forms of creative work on combating racism. Loach, Rosen and SRtRC were then subjected to an aggressive and abusive campaign both on-line and in print media, making baseless accusations of antisemitism against Ken Loach in particular.

In response to these allegations actor and comedian Steve Coogan said: "His entire career has been to shine a light on the plight of the dispossessed and the disenfranchised. His films have given a voice to the voiceless.....Ken Loach's legacy will remain long after his critics have gone."

Ken Loach's work as a campaigning film director has, over decades, consistently exposed inhumanity, inequality and injustice, from *Cathy Come Home* (1966) and *Kes* (1969), to *I, Daniel Blake* (2016). The vitriolic attacks mounted against him treated his contribution to combating social injustice with complete contempt.

More insidiously the attacks on Ken Loach and Michael Rosen were complemented by pressure behind the scenes on the charity itself, including from Government; pressure on football clubs who partner with SRtRC; and threats to jeopardise SRtRC's charitable status.

As pressure on SRtRC mounted Ken Loach **received overwhelming support** from more than 200 eminent public figures, including Eric Cantona, Sir Alex Ferguson, Sir Mark Rylance, John McDonnell MP, Dame Marina Warner, fellow filmmaker Mike Leigh, ex-minister for education Baroness Blackstone, Kenny MacAskill, former justice minister of Scotland, and over 30 national executive members of the National Education Union.

In letters sent to the charity's Trustees they said: "In our fractious and still deeply racist society, their work [Ken Loach and Michael Rosen] promotes decency, understanding and kindness." The signatories said that the calls, made by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, for Ken Loach's removal as a competition judge "clearly reflect political differences, including over Israel-Palestine". "Legitimate political differences" they said "must not be allowed to undermine unity against a common threat from the far right and racists."

On March 4th SRtRC's Trustees reaffirmed the choice of judges, and endorsed the earlier statement by chief executive Ged Grebby that Rosen and Loach were both ideally qualified to choose the competition winners. However, the charity was then subjected to further intense behind-the-scenes pressure, which threatened to wreck not only the competition and Ken Loach's reputation, but the charity's very existence.

In discussions between Ken Loach and SRtRC, it became clear that the charity has been the subject of an aggressive campaign to persuade trade unions, government departments, football clubs and politicians to cease funding or otherwise supporting the charity and its work (for example, training teachers to deal with racism in the classroom; and working with football clubs around the country to involve more young Asian men and women in the game). Threats were also made to its charitable status. The priorities of those involved in this campaign – which threatened to destroy an important and admirable anti-racist charity – deserve critical scrutiny.

It also got personal. Members of the charity's staff were insulted and threatened, and 83-year-old Ken Loach and members of his family were subjected to personal abuse online. This is the background to **the statement** today announcing his withdrawal as a competition judge. SRtRC paid tribute to the work Loach has done over many years in combating racism, which has led to him being a member of their Hall of Fame.

The allegations made against Ken Loach lean heavily on a deeply controversial International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance document that attempts to redefine antisemitism so as to conflate it with criticism of Zionism and of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. Ken Loach has publicly supported pro-Palestinian Labour Party members who have been accused of antisemitism for such criticisms.

In recent weeks, there has been a further wave of pressure on Show Racism the Red Card to break its links with Ken Loach, based on a response he had made in February 2019 to a request for support from Peter Gregson, a member of the GMB union. Gregson claimed that the GMB was victimising him for his opposition to the IHRA version of antisemitism, and he asked Ken Loach's advice on a video he had made in support of his appeal against expulsion from the union. Loach responded briefly by email, commenting on the video's technical short-comings and affirming that its political case was sound. Ken Loach was unaware at that time of some disturbing behaviour and other comments attributed to Peter Gregson that were antisemitic.

Loach said: "I find Peter Gregson's views and behaviour utterly reprehensible and I unequivocally reject his antisemitism. His misogynistic bullying of a young Jewish woman in the GMB union was also appalling. Had I been aware of these views and behaviour when he approached me, I categorically would not have engaged with him. I entirely support the GMB's decision in expelling Peter Gregson."

Ken Loach explained that his film company, Sixteen Films, has a small staff of five people who are frequently overwhelmed by requests for support from a range of campaigns and worthy causes. "Our day job is making films," Loach said. "We try to help and respond to people in good faith. This leaves us vulnerable to giving support to those to whom it should be denied. This has clearly happened in this case. An error on my part, for which I have apologised."

SRTRC has made clear that they do not believe that Ken Loach is an antisemite, nor that he supports antisemitic views. The campaign of vilification against Ken Loach, Show Racism the Red Card and those who supported them, has involved damaging and distressing online abuse that should have no place in anti-racism work. It is completely unacceptable that Ken and members of his family, and Michael Rosen too, have been subject to abuse. SRTRC is a

small organisation with an unparalleled record of promoting anti-racism within schools and football clubs. It has reached tens of thousands of young people around the country, every year for the past 25 years. This educational work is more vital than ever in face of the threat posed by the growth of far-right movements in the UK and internationally. The attacks reveal the priorities of those willing to put all this at risk.

These attacks on SRtRC and Ken Loach are dangerously divisive. They carry the danger of pitting minorities and their diverse community organisations against one another. This cannot be afforded and should not be tolerated at a time when society stands in urgent need of unity in fighting all forms of racism, discrimination and bigotry, together, wherever they occur.

- ENDS-

On 22nd March 2020, Pete responded by email to 'Emma' Emma@sixteenfilms.co.uk and as follows in an open letter, to which there was no reply:

<https://www.redressonline.com/2020/03/open-letter-to-ken-loach-regarding-his-attack-on-anti-racism-activist-pete-gregson/>

Dear Ken,

I've just read what you've been **saying about me** and I think it's hurtful and unfair. You have declared me an anti-Semite and a mysoginist and I believe you have no grounds to do so. The determination of Zionists to obliterate those who campaign against their fraudulent and politicised definition of anti-Semitism knows no bounds. You have criticised me because they seek to tar you for having, at one time, supported me. (You'd liked the **video** I'd made with Rabbi Ahron Cohen.)

So, please let me try and put the record straight. Since the day the Labour Party adopted the **International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition** I have spoken out against it. I was also disgusted by the film **The Lobby** which showed how Israel was working with groups such as the Jewish Labour Movement (JLM) and Friends of Israel to undermine those who support Palestine and campaign against Israel, a racist state.

I wrote many emails to Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC) demanding that the JLM be disaffiliated from Labour for its conduct. At the time I wrote those emails I had no idea that one of those on the NEC to whom I was writing was a senior member of the JLM; that person was Rhea Wolfson. In one of those NEC emails I mentioned I was a GMB Shop Steward. It was subsequently revealed at my GMB expulsion hearing that on the very day of that email, a complaint was lodged against me at the GMB. The grounds were that I had breached the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, of which the GMB were early adopters, so I was therefore an anti-Semite – for saying that Israel was racist.

Rhea Wolfson, along with Jon Lansman, was a key player in getting the IHRA definition adopted by Labour. She is also a senior paid officer in GMB Scotland, and so was way above my volunteer grade. The hammer was wielded on her behalf by Gary Smith, Secretary of GMB Scotland, who wrote me threatening letters almost on a daily basis declaring how vile I was for attacking Zionism. I made discrete enquiries and a senior member of GMB Scotland revealed that the person behind the drive for my expulsion – and who had been complaining hard that the GMB needed to act against me for criticising her precious Israel, was – Rhea Wolfson.

I subsequently exposed her actions on my website and said that I thought her to be a raving Zionist. I was furious with what she had done. So then the GMB added this to the charges against me and declared that I was "bullying their young female Jewish employee" – and suggested I was therefore a mysoginist. But I have never met Ms Wolfson, nor have I ever communicated with her on a one-to-one basis. This was never bullying. And where does the misogyny come from? In what way have I attacked her for being a woman? The misogynist slur is nonsensical. All I have ever complained about is her support for a racist doctrine – and that has nothing to do with her gender.

So, why, Ken, are you now repeating the nonsense that senior GMB officers spout? Has it never occurred to you that you are doing the dirty work of the Board of Deputies [of British Jews] and other Zionist bodies? And where on earth do you get the idea that I am anti-Semitic? I have never criticised Jews nor spoken against them. I think they are a valued and vital group in our society. What I have said is that the holocaust has been exploited by Israel – that Jews have leverage because of the holocaust, because the UK treated them so badly for so long that we have developed holocaust guilt – so many Jews died in Nazi death camps because Britain refused to let them in. But I have always made clear that only Zionists exploit this leverage and that they do so shamelessly,

claiming they continue to be at risk of extermination from Palestinians if they cannot have Israel exactly the way they want it.

Yes, I have been outspoken and I have probably gone too far when I said that Israel exaggerated the holocaust for political ends, when what I really meant was that they exploited it. I have never doubted that six million Jews died in the most monstrous fashion and I have never exhibited prejudice or discriminated against Jews, so why do you call me an anti-Semite? Are you so fearful of the **stooshie** that has been kicked up against you as a judge for "Show Racism the Red Card" that you think undermining other campaigners is going to get you off the hook? You say "my views and behaviour are utterly reprehensible" – but what have I done that's so bad? I had published the audio of my "expulsion trial" at Labour Against the Witch-Hunt, brought about by my publishing a link to a Herzl article that contained – as I said at the time – toxic views on Auschwitz, espousing theories which I later exposed as bad science. Freedom of speech matters too much for views to be condemned as "reprehensible" with neither examples given nor right of reply sought.

It is depressing that you have chosen to attack me. In your last email to me you signed off saying "Solidarity!" I would have thought that someone who said that would choose to contact me to clarify the facts before speaking publicly, rather than wading in with low blows, having swallowed guff from those that want to get me. Clearly, the Zionists want me smashed. Your decision to pick up the cudgel on their behalf only fans the flames of bogus anti-Semitism and plays directly into the hands of the Board of Deputies and the JLM – who want all to believe that anti-Semitism is rife in the UK. It is not – there is only support for **boycotts, divestment and sanctions**, something Israel is determined to crush. By your actions in attacking me, you are diverting energy from that vital cause. I thought we were meant to be on the same side.

-ends-

From: Peter <postmaster@roseburn32.plus.com>
Sent: 13 August 2021 15:53
To: 'Emma' <Emma@sixteenfilms.co.uk>
Subject: FAO Ken Loach re: Show Racism the Red Card statement

Dear Ken,

I wrote to you a couple of years ago, when I first saw what you had said about me on the "Show Racism the Red Card website" at www.theredcard.org/news/2020/3/18/update-on-school-competition-2020. You declared me an anti-Semite. Presumably this is because you had been challenged over your support for me, the only shop steward to have been expelled from his union under the IHRA and after having seen my video at www.tinyurl.com/gmbihra. You did not respond to my email.

I continue to be distressed by your comments- both my friends and my children have found them online and wonder why you have made this statement about me.

I would like to repeat the points I made then.

In response to Labour's adoption of the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, I had set up the petition at www.tinyurl.com/israelihra declaring Israel a racist endeavour and calling upon Labour party members to sign, asking for the NEC to abandon the full IHRA (it has over 2,500 signatures). I wrote to the NEC telling them of my petition. One of those NEC members to whom I wrote was Rhea Wolfson, who also was a GMB official. She has been a strong backer of the IHRA and together with Jon Lansman, had lobbied for its adoption. When she learnt I was a GMB shop steward, she pushed for my expulsion, for the GMB was an early adopter of the IHRA definition. According to it, by criticising Israel and its use of the holocaust to justify attacks on Palestinians, I could be accused of anti-Semitism. When I learnt of her behaviour (through a journalist who had spoken to the GMB) I pointed out online what she had done and complained that she was a raving Zionist (see www.tinyurl.com/rheagmb). Your statement that this was "misogynistic bullying of a young Jewish female GMB member"- which I assume you got from the GMB- is unfair. I do not see how my response to her actions can be construed in this way.

The IHRA definition has been used to remove our freedom of speech to criticise Israel on its racist treatment of the Palestinians, something I had hoped that you and Show Racism the Red Card were fully aware of. Yet your statement makes no mention of the IHRA definition, which is the only yardstick by which I might be deemed an anti-Semite. You said on the Show Racism the Red Card website *that you found my "views and behaviour utterly reprehensible and unequivocally reject [my] antisemitism". You said that when I first approached you, you had been "unaware of [my] deeply disturbing and antisemitic comments". I would very much like to know what these comments were.*

As far as I can see, all I have done is campaign against Israel's racist treatment of the Palestinians and those in this country who would silence activists such as myself from pointing this out. I would have hoped that you would not seek to do the same- by branding me as an anti-Semite. According to the dictionary definition nothing I have ever done justifies the use of this term against me.

It feels to me that you are doing exactly what the Zionists want- undermining those who seek to expose what Israel does in defence of its racist regime. Your unwillingness to explain your comments is frustrating and unfair.

Yours sincerely,
Pete Gregson www.tinyurl.com/rheagmb

Ken supports GMB for expelling Pete: why?

Lowkey has been singled out for continuous harassment. What also makes his case significant is that a leading part in the effort to ban him from Tolpuddle was taken by one of the largest unions in Britain, the GMB. Its General Secretary, Gary Smith, [wrote](#) to a Festival organiser announcing his 'severe doubts' about Lowkey's appearance and implying that it somehow carried a risk of promoting antisemitism. (see <https://skwawkbox.org/2022/08/20/exclusive-union-leaders-letter-demanding-lowkeys-tolpuddle-de-platforming/>)

An Article in Support of Pete

Published on 26th March 2020 at <https://www.redressonline.com/2020/03/in-defence-of-film-maker-ken-loach-and-anti-racism-activist-peter-gregson/> by Jon de Rennes

As with all socialist anti-racists, I was dismayed, if not entirely surprised, by the recent news that film-maker Ken Loach has felt unable to go ahead with a role he was appointed to some time ago with the anti-racist charity Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC). Loach was meant to be a judge in the charity's annual 2020 school competition along with Michael Rosen. As soon as these appointments were made there were objections from the usual racist Zionist suspects at the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BoD). With the usual lack of irony (maybe Jeremy Corbyn was right) or self-awareness, the BoD attacked Loach and Rosen as racists due to their opposition to the racist apartheid state of Israel. To the racist BoD such opposition is, well, racist. As others have observed, we are through the looking glass.

Unsurprisingly, the BoD have been backed in their racist hate campaign against Rosen and Loach by the establishment mainstream media and, it would appear, their friends in the Tory government. It's well known that the BoD's Chief Rabbi [Ephraim Mirvis](#) is a Tory and a close friend of [Boris Johnson](#) so the latter fact should come as no surprise.

One of the final straws in Loach's decision to step down was an apparent threat from the Tory government concerning SRtRC's charitable status. Another factor was apparently the personal abuse and threats directed at Loach and members of his family. Again, these strong-arm tactics of the Zionist racist thugs are nothing new. We have seen it deployed against venues planning to host talks by Chris Williamson, a launch of a book which disproves the fake Labour "anti-Semitism" smear campaign and the way these thugs [attacked our banner](#) at the Labour Party conference. By being hounded as racist by racists, Loach joins a long line of life-long campaigners for equality, anti-racism and social justice. These include Jeremy Corbyn, Ken Livingstone, Chris Williamson, Tony Greenstein, Jackie Walker and, unbeknownst to Loach apparently, Peter Gregson.

I was very disappointed to see [Loach's baseless accusations](#) that Peter Gregson is an "anti-Semite" and a "misogynist". You would have thought that people who were themselves victims of baseless claims of "anti-Semitism" would think twice before throwing similar accusations at others. Sadly, this doesn't always seem to be the case and once again it's not the first time we have seen it. It immediately reminded me of Corbyn's ludicrous accusation that the banner we displayed at conference was "anti-Semitic" and "racist". (I think the adjective he used was vile and he might have thrown in a disgraceful for good measure.)

I think such incidents as these are indicative of a couple of factors. First, they underline the divisions within the left. We often seem to be too willing to attack each other when we should be attacking our opponents on the right, including those on the "soft left".

However, more importantly when it comes to this particular issue I think it's a reflection of the insidious power of the witch-hunt which is apparently such that it often seems to have us witch-hunting each other.