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Jewish Labour members back Corbyn

EMINENT Jewish members of Islington Labour Party have dismissed accusations of antisemitism against MP Jeremy Corbyn in a letter this week to the *Tribune* (see page 13).

They maintain that the

Labour leader is a "strong believer" in human rights and values minority groups.

And they accuse the media of "unbalanced" reporting ahead of the local elections, partly arising from his "legitimate criticism of Israel's treatment

of Palestinians". Among the signatories are leading medical practitioners and academics, including Professor John S Yudkin and feminists Lynne Segal and Professor Mica Nava.

A senior Islington rabbi –

Rabbi Mendy Korer – has also told the *Tribune* that there has "developed over the years a strong relationship with our local dignitaries and the council, as demonstrated this

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AN EYE-OPENER!

US TV news man saved by the NHS

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Social media under fire as clip seen at murder trial remains online

TWO CLICKS AWAY: GANG KNIFE VIDEO

Is it end of the road for baby-toast pub?

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'SAVE OUR SHOP'

Support for fruit & veg business

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'Undercover' Uber driver

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Schoolgirl's cry of defiance page 4

by EMILY FINCH

A VIDEO featuring knife-wielding Islington gang members, shown during an Old Bailey murder trial, was still easily accessible online yesterday (Thursday).

Its availability raises questions about what social media websites are doing to combat escalating youth violence.

A two-minute clip, purportedly showing members of a gang made up of youths living off the Caledonian Road, was viewed during the murder trial of Dillon Zambon, 20, and Jhon Berhane, 18.

The two young men were convicted of murdering Nashon Esbrand, 27, of Upper Holloway, who was stabbed to death just 15 minutes after he said goodbye to his new-born baby girl.

YouTube has "blocked" the video in the UK, but it can still be easily watched by two clicks of a mouse by changing the country location on the website. This week, a leading anti-knife

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Jewish members support Jeremy

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weekend by us celebrating the communal Passover seder" at the Town Hall.

Mr Corbyn has often visited Jewish festivities, including the Chanukah celebration last December.

Support for the Islington North MP has come from George Durack, chairman of Islington Pensioners Forum, who argues that the "attacks" from the media are "part of a campaign to undermine growing support for him" in Britain.



Jeremy Corbyn with Rabbi Mendy Korer

Sheila Franklin, who helped lead the campaign to save the Whittington Hospital, says in another letter to the *Tribune* that she has known Mr Corbyn since the 1970s and that he has always opposed any form of discrimination.

She says that as a Jew she knows he has "always played an active and supportive role in the local Jewish population" and describes him as a "brave MP" leading his party to a "world of peace, equality and justice".

Corbyn, a leader under siege

Islington Tribune Comment

RARELY has there been such a stream of trenchant criticism by the mainstream media against the leader of a political party as there is against Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North.

Comparisons can be made with the media's treatment of the last radical Labour leader, Michael Foot, in the 1980s.

But it shades into relative insignificance set against the ferocity of the headlines and comparative TV coverage.

It turns on alleged antisemitism in the Labour Party though – quite rightly – not against Mr Corbyn personally. It also suggests he has been too cautious over the Skripal poisoning case. Here, events in recent days may yet prove he has adopted a more statesmanlike role than the more adventurous foreign secretary, Boris Johnson.

But there is no relief over the antisemitism accusation.

Those who have known Mr Corbyn are perplexed that he can be accused of being neutral towards antisemitism. As a local MP he has always demonstrated the opposite.

He has always shown support for human rights and minorities in the borough.

Letters in the *Tribune* this week (page 13) underline this point.

Critics have confounded his concerns – shared by many people across the political spectrum – over the treatment of Palestinians by Israelis with a prejudice against Jews. Mr

Corbyn has clearly denied this.

However, antisemitism exists at different levels, from bigotry to hatred. It is to be found in society as a whole and in all political parties, and needs to be challenged.

Jon Lansman, founder of the Labour Party's campaigning body, Momentum, propounded this approach this week.

Mr Corbyn, in a sense, is under siege. This benefits his opponents in government who are thinking long-term of the next general election in 2022. They hope today's mood music will persist.

But, so far, Jeremy Corbyn shows no sign of cracking.

Take down gang videos, YouTube told

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crime charity has warned that YouTube had "not done enough" to help curb the recent escalation of violence on the capital's streets. An 18-year-old

stabbed to death in Hackney on Wednesday night marked the 50th murder in the capital since the beginning of the year.

During the Old Bailey trial it was revealed that members of the gang who

featured in the YouTube video targeted Mr Esbrand after they labelled him a "grass" – a slang term for someone who has assisted the police.

During the trial, PC

Andrew Adams, from Islington's gangs team, explained the language and gang signs used in the music video, which is professionally edited and features drill music – a style of rap originating from the States.

He told the court: "It [the video] is a statement of intent. It essentially says: we are willing to come find you on your estate and do serious violence against you."

The clip, which has been viewed more than 60,000 times since it was uploaded in November 2016, opens with an aerial shot of the Bemerton estate, off Caledonian Road.

A group of around 10 youths are then seen bopping to the rap, with two masked men wielding long knives at various points.

The video opens with the line "gang gang gang gang gang" and the rapper later says: "We are a violent gang."

PC Andrews told the court he was able to identify two men in the video – Jhon Berhane and Jack Stevens, a man said in court to be a suspect in the continuing search for Mr Esbrand's killers. He is now believed to be abroad.

The police officer told the trial that the video shows "disrespect" to a rival gang. He estimated that the gang had around 70 to 80 members.

The preferred knife styles of specific members, including a



Gang video opens with aerial shot of estate



Victim Nashon Esbrand

"kitchen knife" – short for a kitchen knife – is explained in the rap, said PC Andrews.

Patrick Green, manager at the Ben Kinsella Trust, said social media websites were "amplifying" youth violence.

"YouTube videos are used to threaten people and social media companies have not done enough to address this issue," he said. "They should start to look at how their product is being used and take down videos particularly quickly."

"I've gone to a lot of events about knife crime but never have I seen anyone from social media come forward at the meeting to say what they are doing to stop the violence."

The trust, set up after the stabbing of a Holloway teenager 10 years ago, campaigns against knife crime by educating youngsters.

A spokeswoman for YouTube said: "We do not allow videos that promote violence."

"We work closely with organisations like the Met-

ropolitan Police who understand and provide relevant context for videos, and we act quickly to review and remove them when they violate our policies.

"In the UK, we have

developed policies specifically to help tackle knife and gang crime. We are also committed to working constructively with the Home Office on this issue, as we are doing with other organisations."

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