

Zionist at the heart of the British government

Gordon Brown appoints Israel apologists to oversee British media

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By Redress Information & Analysis

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Britain's new prime minister, Gordon Brown, has appointed Israel supporters to key positions of responsibility over the British media.

James Purnell, a notorious Israel apologist, has been given the post of secretary of state for culture media and sport. As such, he will have an **oversight role** over the British Broadcasting Corporation and the rest of the British media.

From 2002 to 2004 James Purnell served as chairman of Labour Friends of Israel.

He is also on record as describing critics of Israel as closet anti-Semites. In a **letter** published in Prospect in December 2004, he said:

... As the (non-Jewish) chairman of Labour Friends of Israel for the last two years, I have been shocked by the occasional demonisation of Israel that I've encountered. Israel's government makes mistakes. So do the leaders of the Palestinians. But some people are trying to turn Israel into a global villain, the new pariah regime to take the place of apartheid-era South Africa.

I find it hard to reconcile that image to the reality on the ground-Israel is a democracy, suffering terrorist attacks, surrounded by countries that don't recognise its existence, the victim of well-funded terrorist organisations that preach antisemitic hate. The Palestinians deserve a viable state, and are suffering real poverty and hardship. There is suffering on both sides-neither can solve this problem without the other.

So when some people talk as if Israel is entirely to blame, I ask why. The only answer I can find is that there is something deep in our cultural memory that makes us disposed to blame Jews. That tendency was put in its box by the Holocaust. But today it re-emerges-occasionally, but persistently. I would call it passive, or unexamined, antisemitism.

So not all criticism of Israel is antisemitic. But some is, and we should be very wary of it.

A second Israel apologist, Jim Murphy, takes the position of minister of state for Europe with responsibility for, among other things, the BBC World Service and the British Council. Raised in apartheid South Africa, Mr Murphy served as chairman of Labour Friends of Israel during 2000-02 and has also been a member of the Anglo-Israeli All Party Parliamentary Group.

In addition to Purnell and Murphy, another appointee to the Brown government is also known for his pro-Israel bias. In October 1999, Douglas Alexander, who has been appointed by Brown as secretary of state for international development, paid a **visit to Israel** that was sponsored by Labour Friends of Israel.

Gordon Brown has also chosen another Israel apologist to a key advisory role. Simon McDonald, a former British ambassador to Israel and a man **described** by Israeli officials as "a true friend to Israel", becomes the prime minister's chief foreign policy adviser.

He is joined by yet another Israel fanatic, Meg Munn, who becomes parliamentary under-secretary of state with responsibility for foreign affairs. A former chairwoman of Labour Friends of Israel, Meg Munn has visited the racist, Jews-only state of Israel **at the expense** of Labour Friends of Israel and the Israeli Foreign Ministry.