

“Ultimate Racists”: A Catalogue of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in the British Conservative Party, 2015-2018

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British media have singled out the Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour party for relentless and unprecedented accusations of widespread anti-Semitism. The same media have almost completely ignored far more widespread and easier-to-prove prejudice in the governing Conservative (Tory) party. Occasional reports have not amounted to daily, hysterical attacks against the Tories, as is the case with Labour.

Former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson’s remarks about veiled women looking like “letter boxes” is the tip of a very large iceberg.[i] A few months ago, the UN Special Rapporteur on Racism, E. Tendayi Achiume, highlighted what she called “structural racism” at the heart of British society.[ii]

In 2015, ex-Tory advisor, Derek Laud (who is black), told British media, with specific reference to how the Tories treat the migration issue:

“There is no other party better at pointing the blame their way than the Tories. They are the ultimate racists because they deal in stereotypes.”[iii]

But Laud didn’t stop there. Referring to the treatment of black Tory candidate for west London, Shaun Bailey in 2010, Laud said:

“They saw in Shaun a stereotype of what they wanted – black, presentable, committed. But as soon as he had served his purpose they dropped him.”[iv]

In 2016 (updated this year), the British union UNITE published a dossier of alleged and confirmed racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia within the Tory party. The report made no recommendations and states:

“the Conservative Party is regularly beset by allegations of racism against its MPs, councillors and candidates. It’s also clear that only rarely do such instances – even when particularly offensive – result in the person being expelled from the Party.”[v]

In 2016, Dr Feyzi Ismail reported that the British Tory government was refusing to host an online petition to call for an inquiry into racism.[vi]

What follows is a chronology of allegations and confirmations of prejudice made against Tory politicians and councillors. Boris Johnson deserves a separate article of his own for the racist things he's said and written. (For a Johnson compilation, see Chapter 2 of my book, *The Great Brexit Swindle* (2016, Clairview Books)). Years covered in this article are 2015 (when the Tories came into office) to the present.

2015

January: Peter Batty, Tory leader for Hinckley and Bosworth, passed on emails containing jokes about black people and Pakistani flood victims.[vii]

April: The Limbury Mead Residents Page Facebook group run by candidate David Coulter posted in reference to Irish travellers: "Red Alert! Be aware the pikies have moved the car park at the shops [sic]. LOCK YOUR DOORS- GUARD YOUR VEHICLES. It is not politically correct, but be damned, they are thieving troublemakers and we need vigilance" (emphasis in original). Coulter denies writing it and said he personally deleted it.[viii]

April: Candidate for Derby Council, Gulzabeen Afsar, was suspended after saying she'd never support then-Labour Party leader, Ed Miliband, whom she referred to as "the Jew." [ix]

May: No action was taken when councillor Thomas Crockett of Maida Vale compared local youngsters to Hitler Youth.[x]

May: Following a police investigation, no action was taken after Leicestershire Cllr Bob Fahey referred to one colleague as "the Indian" and another as a "Chink." [xi]

June: Dover District Cllr Bob Frost tweeted that a *Big Issue* (homeless magazine) salesperson should "fuck off back to Romania." Frost said it was satire. (Frost has a history of posting racist abuse, or "satire": calling rioters in London in 2011 "jungle bunnies" and Arabs "sons of camel drivers").[xii]

July: PM Cameron referred to refugees as a "swarm." [xiii]

September: Cllr for East Renfresshire, Gordon McCaskill, implied that refugees are terrorists when he tweeted that he wished to see those in Scottish National Party leader Nicola Sturgeon's house reveal themselves to be "Daesh moles." He was suspended.[xiv]

September: It was reported that Mike Kusneraitis, Cllr for Runnymede Borough Council, Surrey, posted numerous images, including a dog with a towel over its head, presumably in relation to Arabs or Muslims in general. Kusneraitis apologised and said he never meant to cause offense.[xv]

October: Cllr Jim Buckley of Rugby tweeted about Sadiq Khan: "Your next London Mayor? You think his corner shop would be open on a Saturday?" Buckley was suspended but later cleared of wrongdoing.[xvi]

December: Then-adviser to PM David Cameron, Oliver Letwin was exposed as saying in 1985 (when working for Margaret Thatcher) that black people had "bad moral attitudes" and that employment programs would see them move "into unemployment and crime." [xvii]

December: Bassett and Swaything Conservative Association member, Valerie Laurent, said: “You know the little brown boy who’s standing for Swaything? That should have been mine.” Laurent later resigned, denying the allegation.[xviii]

2016

January: PM Cameron referred to refugees as “a bunch of migrants.”[xix]

February: Cllr for Trafford, Manchester, Matthew Sephton (who was later jailed on child abuse charges), posted a sarcastic leaflet aimed at the welfare state inviting foreigners to “consider moving to England, The Welfare Country,” which also implies that immigrants are scroungers.[xx]

April: Tory Cllr David Whittingham was stripped of membership and sacked from the Fareham North West council borough after he told housing officers he didn’t want any foreigners living near him (by foreigners, he meant non-whites). Whittingham was expelled from the party.[xxi]

April: Abdul Zaman, deputy chair of Bradford’s Conservative Association, implied that due to his area being influenced by the Biradri system, Jews and Christians will be assimilated politically. He was suspended.[xxii]

June: Cllr Heather Venter of Driffield, Yorkshire, “liked” social media posts saying: “Shouldn’t employ Muslims. Nothing but trouble” and, “Sadly, looks like Romania’s Gypsy beggar/pickpockets [sic] will b [sic] soon replaced by African Muslims.”[xxiii]

August: Cllr Andrew Dransfield, vice chair of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes’ fire authority, said to a black firefighter, “You’re the first one I’ve seen ... [an] ethnic minority ... Now all we need is a woman.” He was suspended.[xxiv]

2017

January: Cllr David Dean of Merton was re-admitted (in April) to the party after he allegedly said to a constituent of Labour Mayor Sadiq Khan: “as a white man ... you will be a pariah in your own town. He will treat you like dirt.” Dean denies it.[xxv]

February: Cllr Alan Pearmain deputy chair of the South Ribble Conservative Association and Farington Parish Councillor posted a favourable comment about a tweet featuring Shadow Home Secretary, Diane Abbott (who is black), as an orangutan. Cllr Pearmain describes himself on Twitter as “slightly to the right of Attila the Hun.”[xxvi]

April: Cllr Ray Bray of Shelley on Kirkburton Parish Council appeared to have published a series of tweets about “Muzzie rapists” and taxi drivers. When quizzed by the media, he said he could not remember whether or not he’d posted them. He then said that his twitter account was hacked. Bray was suspended.[xxvii]

May: Warwick District Councillor Nick Harrington was suspended after saying Ireland can “Keep your f’king gypsies! Hard border coming folks!” (his self-censorship). The Warwick District Council said that Cllr Harrington could not be sacked because he is an elected official and not an employee.[xxviii]

May: Michael R. Watson, Kirklees Cllr for the Denby Dale Ward was reported liking tweets,

including pro-Nazi messages implying that “men” do not want big breasted women, but rather Nazi Aryan women. He was suspended.[xxix]

June: Following criticism of PM Theresa May over her seemingly indifferent response to the deaths of dozens of people in Grenfell Tower, Tory candidate for Coventry South, Michelle Lowe, tweeted a picture of Hitler and said sarcastically, “Politicians should go out and hug the public more. It proves they are nice people.”[xxx]

June: Gloucestershire County Councillor Lynden Stowe: “I think that some of Corbyn’s policies and the way he behaves are not dissimilar to some of the ways the National Socialist Party came about.” Calling Corbyn an anti-Semite, Stowe added: “In what he is trying to do with some of the younger people – it’s not dissimilar to Hitler Youth.”[xxxi]

July: MP for Newton Abbot, Devon, Anne Marie Morris, had the whip restored in December after she was briefly punished in July for using the anachronism, “Nigger in the woodpile” in relation to Brexit.[xxxii]

July: Tory Cllr Rosemary Carroll of Pendle Borough Council denigrated poor people, ethnic minorities and dogs by comparing poor minorities to dogs, tweeting that they “stink,” have never worked and are brown. Carroll was suspended and claims she shared the joke accidentally.[xxxiii]

August: It was reported that Stirling councillor Robert Davies tweeted of black people boarding a plane: “In the interests of security keep your loin cloths with you at all times. Spears go in the overhead locker.” Alastair Majury, Tory councillor in Stirling, tweeted jokes about Catholics: “Why is the Catholic Church against birth control? Because they’ll run out of children to molest.” Majury also called Catholics “tarriers,” an offensive term dating back to the Great Famine (1845-52). He also compared the Scottish National Party to Nazis. The Scottish Tories said: “Having served a suspension, both councillors have been readmitted to the party after offering unreserved apologies for any offence caused.”[xxxiv]

September: Jeff Potts of Solihull borough council in the West Midlands retweeted the comments of others, such as: “Deport and repatriate all muzlims [sic] from the UK or watch terrorists kill innocent people for generations to come” and, “You’ve clearly not experienced the Pakistani hospitality, having a daughter raped by men who think she’s ‘white trash’.” Potts was suspended.[xxxv]

October: Calls from opposition councillors mounted to suspend Solihull Cllr, Margaret Bassett, over retweets of some of Jeff Potts’ retweets relating to migration.[xxxvi]

November: MP Douglas Ross said of “Gypsy-travellers” that he would impose “tougher restrictions” on their movements and settlements.[xxxvii]

December: Teignmouth Cllr Robert Phipp was revealed to have liked a Facebook post by the far-right Britain First group featuring a covered dog and suggesting it could be a guide dog for blind Muslim women.[xxxviii]

December: It was reported that Cllr Eve Allison (who is black) filed a complaint against local Conservative bosses, accusing them of racism and sexism. She was sacked (a.k.a. deselected), meaning her application to stand for re-election was rejected.[xxxix]

2018

March: It was report that Derek McCabe of South Ayrshire council, who sits on the council's equality and diversity forum, had posted jokes on Facebook denigrating poor people and black people.[xli]

April: It was reported that in 2013, Councillor Mike Payne of Sowerby Bridge, Calderdale, shared an article which described Muslims benefit recipients as "parasites." Payne was suspended.[xlii]

April: A scandal broke (Windrush) in which it was revealed that for many years, the Home Office (including under then-Home Secretary and now PM Theresa May) had a policy of denying citizenship to Afro-Caribbean-majority Britons, despite many and their parents having been invited to Britain in the 1960s to fill an alleged labour shortage. The Tory government had a policy of creating a "hostile environment" for migrants (or "illegal migrants", as they claim).[xliii] Home Secretary Amber Rudd took the heat for May and resigned.

May: Rosemary Carroll (the councillor who shared on social media a joke comparing Asians to dogs) was re-elected.[xliv]

May: Baroness Warsi (Tory) expressed concern about Islamophobia in her party. No action was taken.[xlv]

June: Baroness Warsi again expressed concerns about Islamophobia in the Tory party, stating: "I think that there is a general sense in the country that Muslims are fair game and it is not the kind of community ... you can treat really badly and have many consequences. You can get away with it" (sic).[xlv]

July: Warsi called for a full and independent inquiry into Islamophobia in the Tory party, stating that no action had been taken since her last public statements, adding that the attitude among Tories was "fuck the Muslims".[xlvi]

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Notes

[i] Boris Johnson (2018) '[Denmark has got it wrong. Yes, the burka is oppressive and ridiculous – but that's still no reason to ban it](#)' *Telegraph*.

[ii] UN News (2018) '[UN rights experts voice concerns about "structural racism" in United Kingdom](#)'.

[iii] James Hanning (2015) '[Conservative party is still racist, says a former adviser Derek Laud](#)' *Independent*.

[iv] Ibid.

[v] UNITE (2016) '[A dossier on racism in the Conservative Party](#)'.

[vi] Feyzi Ismail (2016) '[No.10 website refuses to host petition calling for inquiry into Tory racism](#)' *Counterfire*.

[vii] Samantha Hadadi (2015) '[Top Tory apologises for sending racist and pornographic emails](#)' *Hinckley*

Times.

[viii] *Luton Today* (2015) '[Tory council candidate David Coulter caught in row over “pikie” post](#)'.

[ix] BBC (2015) '[Ed Miliband Jewish slur candidate suspended by Conservatives](#)'.

[x] Hannah McGrath (2015) '[Political row after Maida Vale councillor compares local children to Hitler Youth on Twitter](#)' *Kilburn Times*.

[xi] Alex Arnold and Martin Fricker (2015) '[Police investigate Tory accused of calling fellow councillor a “chink” in election night speech](#)' *Mirror*.

[xii] Eleanor Perkins (2015) '[Councillor Bob Frost gets away with tweet](#)' *Kent Online*.

[xiii] BBC (2015) '[David Cameron criticised over migrant “swarm” language](#)'.

[xiv] BBC (2015) '[Tory councillor suspended over Islamic State moles tweet](#)'.

[xv] Tom Batchelor (2015) '[“If Carlsberg did illegal immigrants” Tory councillor](#)' *Express*.

[xvi] *Coventry Live* (2016) '[Former Tory councillor found not guilty of sending offensive tweet to Labour London mayor hopeful](#)'.

[xvii] Matt Dathan (2015) '[The 5 most shocking quotes in Oliver Letwin’s “racist” memo](#)' *Independent*.

[xviii] Matthew Snape (2017) '[Exclusive: Southampton Tories’ history of racism and bullying revealed](#)' *Blasting News*.

[xix] Rowena Mason and Frances Perraudin (2016) '[Cameron’s “bunch of migrants” jibe is callous and dehumanising, say MPs](#)' *Guardian*.

[xx] Todd Fitzgerald (2016) '[Councillor prompts outrage after tweeting immigration poster claiming “Only Suckers Work in England”](#)' *Manchester Evening News*.

[xxi] Miles O’Leary (2016) '[Fareham tory councillor axed from party after racist rant](#)' *The News Portsmouth*.

[xxii] Campaign Against Anti-Semitism (2016) '[Confusion over suspension of “anti-Semitic” Conservative councillor](#)'. This organization appears to deny that the statement was anti-Semitic.

[xxiii] Alex Wood and Stewart Paterson (2016) '[“Ex-Yorkshire mayor in racism storm over anti-Muslim and “Romania gypsy” tweets”](#)' *Yorkshire Post*.

[xxiv] *Milton Keynes Citizen* (2016) '[Milton Keynes councillor suspended from Tory party after claims he made racist and sexist remarks](#)'.

[xxv] Adela Whittingham (2017) '[Councillor David Dean re-admitted to Conservative Party after being suspended](#)' *Your Local Guardian*.

[xxvi] *Lancashire Post* (2017) '[Lancashire Tory suspended in “racist” tweet row](#)'.

[xxvii] Nick Lavigueur (2017) '[Twitter account of Tory councillor used to post abusive Islamophobic comments](#)' *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*.

[xxviii] Simon Gilbert (2017) '[Eurovision gypsy tweet councillor Nick Harrington "cannot be sacked"](#)' *Coventry Telegraph*.

[xxix] Nick Lavigueur (2017) '[Second Tory caught in race-hate Twitter storm](#)' *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*.

[xxx] Sarah Morland (2017) 'Former Conservative candidate for Coventry South criticized for Hitler tweet' *The Boar*.

[xxxi] Matt Discombe (2017) '[Tory councillor in Gloucestershire compares Jeremy Corbyn to HITLER](#)' *Gloucestershire Live*.

[xxxii] *Mid Sussex Times* (2017) '[Former Mid Sussex councillor has Conservative whip restored](#)'.

[xxxiii] Bridie Pearson-Jones (2017) '[Tory councillor who shared joke comparing Asian people to dogs suspended](#)' *Independent*.

[xxxiv] Kevin Schofield (2017) '[Anger as Tory councillors in anti-Catholic and racist tweets row are re-instated to party](#)' *Holyrood* (magazine).

[xxxv] Henry Zeffman (2017) '[Tory councillor Jeff Potts suspended after sharing racist tweets](#)' *The Times*.

[xxxvi] Les Reid (2017) '[UPDATED: Pressure mounts after "anti-immigration" tweets on Tories to suspend second councillor Margaret Bassett](#)' *Solihull Observer*.

[xxxvii] BBC (2017) '[Tory MP Douglas Ross criticised over Gypsy remark](#)'.

[xxxviii] Tina Crowson (2017) '[A Muslim father who is angry at a local councillor's use of a Britain First post calls for an apology](#)' *Devon Live*.

[xxxix] Hugo Gye (2017) '[Tory race row: Grenfell Tower council hit with racism complaint as black Tory councillor is sacked by colleagues in "lynching"](#)' *The Sun*.

[xl] Kirsteen Paterson (2018) '[Tory councillor Derek McCabe's "offensive" posts revealed](#)' *The National* (Scotland).

[xli] Nick Lavigueur (2018) '[Councillor denies he's racist after sharing article that called Muslims "parasites"](#)' *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*.

[xlii] Sarah Pepin and Melanie Gower (2018) 'Windrush generation' House of Commons Library CDP-2018-0111, London: The Stationary Office.

[xliii] BBC (2018) '[Tories urged to act in "racist joke" row at Pendle Council](#)' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-44022663>.

[xliv] BBC (2018) '[Baroness Warsi: Conservatives must act on Islamophobia](#)'.

[xlv] Benjamin Kentish (2018) '[Islamophobia "very widespread" in Conservative Party, says Baroness Warsi](#)' *Independent*.

[xlvi] Dan Sabbagh (2018) '[Sayeeda Warsi calls for inquiry into Islamophobia within Tory party](#)' *Guardian*.

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