

FORM 3 (Rules 6 and 17)

Clergy Discipline Measure 2003

Statement in support of a Complaint, or in support of an Answer to a Complaint

<i>Box for use only by the Registrar of Tribunals</i>	<i>Statement submitted by: Name of maker of statement: Date of statement:</i>
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In the matter of the complaint

*Enter the name of the complainant.
Enter the name of the member of the clergy about whom a complaint is made.*

made by The Board of Deputies of British Jews
against Rev Dr Stephen Sizer

My full name is: Rev Canon Dr Christopher Michael Neville Sugden

The matters in this statement to which I refer are all within my own knowledge, except where I indicate otherwise. If anything is not within my own knowledge then I set out the source of any matters of information and belief:

I am not qualified to make a judgement on the details of Rev Stephen Sizer's response to the charges made against him.

I have known him for over ten years to be a person of conviction, consistency and integrity.

The challenge from the chairman of the Board of Deputies and Rev Sizer's response does raise three important questions which those charged with reviewing the case will need to provide answers.

- 1. Does the Board of Deputies regard other critiques of the government of Israel and its policies to be anti-semitic? Some of these criticisms have been made by members of the Church of England, its leaders and organisations. For example I was present during the "Caterpillar" debate in General Synod in 2006 which the Church Times reported as below. Was General Synod, including Archbishop Rowan Williams, anti-semitic in debating and passing its motion or Mr Malcouronne anti-semitic in using the term 'browbeaten'?**

THE Church of England's Ethical Investment Advisory Group (EIAG) has advised the Church not to pull its £2.2-million investments out of Caterpillar, the company whose bulldozers have been used by the Israeli government ([News, 17 February](#)). The decision, taken at an emergency meeting of the EIAG on Tuesday, goes against last month's vote in General Synod ([News, 10 February](#)).

Members of the General Synod, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, voted to heed the call of the Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East "to disinvest from companies profiting from the illegal occupation" [of Palestinian territories]. The motion called on EIAG to have intensive discussions with Caterpillar to withdraw its equipment.

EIAG unanimously reaffirmed on Tuesday its decision of September 2005 not to disinvest from the US-based manufacturer ([News, 23 September](#)). It said the group had spent "an unusually large amount of time in engagement with Caterpillar and with the various groups representing Palestinian and Israeli, Jewish and Christian opinion seeking to influence its decision".

It had taken the Synod's resolution very seriously, and given special weight to the letter it received from the Bishop in Jerusalem, the Rt Revd Riah Abu El-Assal. Caterpillar had no current or projected sales of equipment for use by the Israeli government, it said. Its discussions with the company had been productive. "Disinvestment is by definition a last-resort action," it declared.

Keith Malcouronne, who introduced the Synod debate, said on Wednesday that he feared that EIAG had been "browbeaten". "The resolution asked EIAG to engage more intensely with Caterpillar on the issue, and also to take up the invitation by the Church in the Middle East to go and see the situation on the ground, but they have not had time to do either," he said.

"There is a deeper concern: Jewish spokespeople have taken the Synod's concern and motion as anti-Semitic. They don't want to listen to the underlying concern about what is happening. . . EIAG may have stepped back from making an appropriately critical decision because of the plethora of over-reaction by the Chief Rabbi and others. They have allowed themselves to be brow-beaten," he said.

You must explain in your statement how you know about each of the matters you describe, unless you know about them because you have personally seen or observed them.

2. Does the Board of Deputies regard the Bible, on which the Church of England bases its doctrine and practice, and therefore by extension the Church of England, as anti-semitic since the Bible contains trenchant criticisms of Jewish leaders for example by Ezekiel and John the Baptist?
3. Will the Church of England allow another body to determine for it the criteria by which a critique of the policies of a government, be it Jewish or Moslem for instance, is judged to be respectively anti-semitic or anti-islamic? In other words to be ruled by the criteria: "Offence is purely in the eye of the beholder, and so not subject to any objective standard of judgement."

I believe the facts in my statement to be true. I am aware that the contents of this statement may be made public

You must sign and date this statement.

Signed:

Chris Sugden

Dated:

27 November 2018.