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

Box for use only by the Registrar of Tribunals	*Statement submitted by:* *Name of maker of statement:* *Date of statement:*

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: Tony Greenstein

My contact address, including postcode, is:
PO Box 173
Brighton
BN51 9EZ

***Telephone & e-mail details are optional, but it could be helpful to the registrar and bishop to have them.*

**My telephone number is: 01273 965704

**My e-mail address is: tonygreenstein111@gmail.com

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:

*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.*

Please see attached

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:



Dated: 25th November 2018

Statement by Tony Greenstein in support of Rev. Stephen Sizer

1. I wish to confirm that I stand by my previous statement of 24th January 2013 supporting the Rev. Stephen Sizer.

2. I have been an anti-racist and anti-fascist activist for most of my life and I am the author of the history of fighting fascism in Brighton and on the South Coast. See here for a review.

3. I understand that a complaint has been made by Marie van der Zvl, President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, alleging that the Rev. Sizer is anti-Semitic. Most of the allegations in her statement, which I have seen are typical of the classic guilt-by-association of the McCarthyite era. It is noticeable that they do not evidence anything that has actually been said by Rev. Sizer himself.

4. The Board of Deputies claims to represent all British Jews however that is not true. It represents the Jewish establishment in this country and in particular those who support the Israeli state. It is an overtly Zionist organisation and it refuses to allow representation to anti-Zionist and non-Zionist Jews. For example it has refused to allow the non-Zionist Jews for Justice for Palestinians to affiliate to it.

5. The Board does **not** represent secular or progressive Jewry in this country and it is widely seen as a right-wing group, an integral member of the pro-Israel lobby.

6. It does **not** even represent Orthodox Jewry in this country as evidenced by the letter from 29 Orthodox Rabbis criticising the Board of Deputies for its attacks on Jeremy Corbyn. The letter expressed *'shock'* at claims that Jews are considering leaving Britain because of the possibility of Jeremy Corbyn becoming Prime Minister.

7. According to an unpublished letter sent to the Jewish Chronicle by Shraga Stern, a Charedi (Orthodox) activist, '*The Board of Deputies and JLC do not represent Charedi Jews, who do not have voting rights at BoD elections and number today over fifty thousand in the UK, of which 30,000 live in Stamford Hill.'*

8. 70% of American Jews opposed the election of Donald Trump who is widely seen as anti-Semitic. [See Anti-Semitism is no longer an undertone of Trump's campaign. It's the melody, Washington Post, 7.11.16]. Most British Jews were horrified at the election of this bigot but not the Board of Deputies. Its then President, Jonathan Arkush sent Trump a message congratulating him.

9. The Board of Deputies does not represent the 41% of British Jews who, according to the survey The Attitudes of British Jews to Israel conducted by

City University in 2015, do not consider themselves Zionists, i.e. Jewish Nationalists or Jewish Supremacists. The BOD certainly does not represent the 24% of British Jews willing to contemplate sanctions against Israel and it doesn't represent the most liberal and anti-racist Jews in this country. Marie van der Zyl's complaint should be seen for what it is, a partisan political attack on the Rev. Sizer because of his support of the Palestinians.

10. In response to the murder of over 200 unarmed demonstrators at the fence (**not** border) between Gaza and Israel, the Board of Deputies under Marie van der Zyl justified what had happened by saying that "'*No state could allow its borders to be breached by those who openly wish harm to its civilians. Israel is defending its people from repeated violent attempts at mass invasion.'* This was met with a petition by hundreds of Jews who were outraged at this attempt to blame the victims of murder for their own deaths.

11. Those who were demonstrating, **inside** Gaza, were demonstrating against Israel's siege, the polluted water caused by Israel's theft of Gaza's water, its refusal to allow refugees from Israel to return, the repeated murder of Gaza's fishermen by Israel's navy and the control of Gaza by Israel such that nothing can go in and out, for example medical supplies without Israel's say so.

    Even Lord Michael Howard, the Jewish former leader of the Conservative Party, who is no liberal, confronted Benjamin Netanyahu on his visit to Britain with the simple question, *'Why did you have to kill them'.* The Guardian report Michael Howard confronts Netanyahu over Gaza deaths was sub-titled '*Tory peer subjects Israeli PM to sharp, unexpected questioning over killing of protesters'.*

    In its statement the Board went on to say *'The responsibility for the violence lies with Hamas.'* But it wasn't Hamas who murdered over 200 people and injured thousands, with expanding bullets designed to cripple its victims. The BOD are apologists for mass murder and war crimes and this is who is making the complaint against Rev Sizer.

12. When the Board of Deputies makes a complaint where Israel is the subject what they say should be taken with a handful of salt. Traditionally the Church of England has felt that they have to bow to whatever complaints the Board of Deputies make because otherwise they will be accused of *'anti-Semitism'* but it is high time that you stood up to this blackmail. Those of us who are anti-Zionist Jews have learnt to withstand Zionist vitriol (self hater, traitor etc.) Under the rubric of 'inter-faith relations' the Palestinians have been betrayed for far too long by the Church of England.

13. You cannot understand the complaint being made against Rev. Stephen Sizer unless you understand that when it comes to Israel no trust can be put in what the BOD says. They are a right-wing Zionist organisation which has amongst its ranks a number of extremely vicious Islamaphobes including supporters of Tommy Robinson. One of its deputies, Roslyn , who was suspended for 6 years for calling Muslims *"the vilest of animals*" and Arab migrants "*an invading army".* is about to reinstated as a Deputy for Finchley United Synagogue. Board's own panel criticises 'Islamophobic' deputy's suspension.

14. The Board of Deputies has even lobbied the Synod to oppose the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). A very dear friend of mine and a member of the Synod, the late Roger Farnworth, went out to Palestine to take part in this programme. The purpose of EAPPI is to accompany Palestinians when they go about their business in order to deter violent settler attacks on them. What possible reason could the BOD have to oppose this programme? The only conclusion is that they support the reign of terror that Palestinian farmers experience.

15. BOD Treasurer Laurence Brass went out to the West Bank and witnessed such things as settlers dumping a car in a Palestinian well making the water undrinkable. In 2015 Mr Brass resigned because he *"could not contemplate another three years of not being able to speak freely".*

16. Mr Brass described how he took part in a one-day trip led by a guide from the anti-occupation Israeli army veterans' group, Breaking the Silence. Board of Deputies treasurer 'shocked' by visit to West Bank

> "The village spokesman told us that he was very worried at the prospect of local Palestinian children being attacked by settlers on their way to school.
> "Just 48 hours after we left, a six-year-old girl from the neighbouring village of Atuwani was admitted to hospital with head wounds after being stoned on her way to school, just as we had been warned might occur.
> "I was shocked that this type of behaviour goes unchecked by the IDF."

17. Mr Brass had to resign as Treasurer of the BOD because he was not allowed to speak out and remain an officer. It is this which Ms Zyl is defending. If you have any integrity she will be sent away with a flea in her ear.

18. When reporting on what he had seen back in Britain, Mr Brass said that he had encountered "*very harsh and often quite abusive personal criticism*" when speaking out. This is what the Zionist zealots who run the Board of Deputies do to anyone who speaks out, even liberal Zionists. The Rev. Sizer is simply one in a long list of victims. It would be a disgrace if the Church of England, instead of bearing witness to what is happening, were to go along with the Board of Deputies complaint for the sake of political convenience. That is precisely what the Protestant Church, including the Confessing Church did in

Nazi Germany when it failed to speak out against the treatment of the Jews. In the words of Primo Levy, the Italian Jewish survivor of Auschwitz, declared that "*Today, the Palestinians are the Jews of the Israelis*.".

Marie van der Zyl's Complaint

19. Ms Zyl's complaint is worthless and worse, dishonest. It speaks of *'Stephen Sizer's history of antisemitism'.* There is no such history.

20. The Board of Deputies unfortunately does have a history of making false accusations of anti-Semitism. Jonathan Arkush, the BOD's previous President said that Jeremy Corbyn's *'unquestionably anti-Semitic views' make Jews question their future'.* Ms Zyle, who was a Vice-President at the time, did not dissent from this statement. Indeed Arkush went further and, in a statement on behalf of the Board, described the Jewish dissident group Jewdas as '*a source of virulent anti-Semitism'*.

21. The BOD attacks any perceived critics of Israel as 'anti-Semitic'. In doing so it drains the term anti-Semitism of all meaning. As Dr Brian Klug, an expert in anti-Semitism from Oxford University stated: *'when anti-Semitism is everywhere, it is nowhere. And when every anti-Zionist is an anti-Semite, we no longer know how to recognize the real thing – the concept of anti-Semitism loses its significance'* . [Tony Lerman, ***Labour should ditch the IHRA working definition of antisemitism altogether***]

22. The Church of England should take this opportunity to tell Ms Zyl that precisely because you take anti-Semitism seriously you are not going to entertain the accusations made against the Rev Sizer. False accusations of anti-Semitism let the real Jew haters go free. When you cry wolf repeatedly people can no longer recognise the real wolf.

23. Among the absurd 'proofs' that Ms Zyl offers for Rev Sizer's 'anti-Semitism' is that he participated in an Islamic Human Rights Commission conference entitled "*Towards a New Liberation Theology,"* speaking on a panel about "*The right to resist*" alongside Hezbollah representative Rima Fakhry. I fail to understand why this is proof of anti-Semitism. Even were Mr Fakhry anti-Semitic and no proof has been offered of this. this is merely a McCarthyist guilt-by-association technique.

24. Israel hates Hezbollah because it was the one Arab force that defeated it. In 2000 Israel withdrew from Lebanon because Hezbollah had made the cost of staying too high. In 2006 Israel tried to invade and were repulsed. Hezbollah had an inherent right to defend their country. Israel had no right to occupy

Lebanese soil after their murderous invasion of 1982 which killed over 20,000 people including the slaughter of over 2,000 refugees, mainly women and children, at the Sabra and Chatilla refugee camps by Israel's fascist Phalangist allies.

25. Hezbollah, who are part of the government of Lebanon, are a legitimate resistance group. The label 'terrorist' is one of political convenience.

Raed Salah

26. Ms Zyle says that Raed Saleh, a Palestinian Israeli is *'known for spreading the blood libel claim agarnst Jews and otherwise inciting antisemitism.'* This is an absolute lie. Raed Saleh has always denied this accusation and it is interesting that he was acquitted of this charge by the Jerusalem Magistrates Court and only convicted of racial incitement by the higher Jerusalem District Court. This was clearly a political decision.

27. Raed Saleh came to this country despite having been banned by Theresa May in 2011. He was accused of having written an anti-Semitic poem which the Jerusalem Post published. The Upper Immigration Tribunal released him from prison because the poem had been doctored with the words '*you Jews'* added. Ms Zyl is deliberately repeating material that the British courts found untrue.

28. I suggest that those dealing with this complaint read David Hearst's article in the Guardian Theresa May's haste to ban Raed Salah will be repented at leisure. Hearst described how:

> Mr Justice Ockelton said May was misled and "*under a misapprehension as to the facts*". Calling the case against Salah "*very weak*", Ockleton said the matters raised by the home secretary were not a fair portrayal of Salah's views or words as a whole; that those views caused no difficulty at the time or since, and that there was no evidence that the danger perceived by the home secretary was shared by any of the other countries Salah visited, least of all by Israel, whose citizen he is and who only took out an indictment against him on these grounds after May's deportation order in June.

29. All Marie van der Zyl has done in her submission to you is repeat the very lies that Theresa May used to lock up Raed Saleh and which were overturned by the Upper Immigration Tribunal. For the Church of England to uphold her complaint on the basis of proven lies would be a miscarriage of justice. Raed Saleh is a religious leader and a leader of the Palestinian population in Israel. He led the protests against the repeated settler invasions of the Mosque of Omar and Al Aqsa in Jerusalem and the Israeli authorities attempts to curtail Palestinian use of them. In the end Raed Salah and the Palestinians won this particular battle against the encroachment upon Muslim holy places but Raed

Saleh himself was imprisoned by Israel's colonial court on bogus charges for 9 months.

30. I suggest that when considering Marie van der Zyl's lies about Raed Saleh, you first read Raed Saleh's own account in the Guardian Britain's duty to the Palestinian people.

31. On the specific blood libel accusation there was a further discussion in the Guardian with their Reader's Editor Becky Gardiner. Unfortunately the reply of Raed Saleh was deleted by the moderators. Ms Gardiner asked:

'Are you guilty of inciting anti-semitism or not? Because the judge in your deportation case said you are'
I have read the judgement. On the blood libel point it is complex, so bear with me.
First the judge notes the context: the sermon was given on a somewhat turbulent day when [Salah] had been refused permission to pray at one of the holy sites of his religion
Having been barred from entering the al-Aqsa mosque, Salah gave a speech, or sermon, in the street outside. In it he said:
We have never allowed ourselves to knead the bread for the breaking fo fasting during the blessed month of Ramadan with the blood of the children. And if someone wants a wider explanation, then he should ask what used to happen to some of the children of Europe, when their blood used to be mixed in the dough of the holy bread.
Unlike the version relied on by the home secretary, the speech did not contain a reference to "*Jewish holy bread*". Salah denies that he was referring to the blood libel; in Salah's article he did originally have this paragraph explaining this passage, which I cut:
I don't believe in the "blood libel" against Jews and I reject it in its entirety. What I was really referring to in my sermon was the killing of innocents in the name of religion, including children, from the time of the Inquisition to as recently as Bosnia and elsewhere in Europe whose governments support Israel's action.
The judge did not accept Salah's explanation, saying he found it "*wholly unpersuasive*". He said the speech "*would offend and distress*" Jews. However, he also noted that the sermon as a whole "*was against the actions of the state of Israel*" rather than Jews as such.
To conclude, the judge said that:
"...there is no reliable evidence of [Salah] using words carrying a reference to the blood libel save in the single passage in a sermon delivered five years ago. ... The absence of other evidence is striking ... [Salah] is a prominent public figure and a prolific speaker. ... his speeches are of interest to the authorties in Israel. ... We think it can be fairly said that the evidence before us is not a sample, or 'the tip of the iceberg': it is simply all the evidence there is."
And later:
"the matters raised by the Secretary of State are not a fair portrayal of [Salah's] views or words as a whole; they are in essence confined to words on one day, that are not shown to have caused any difficulty at the time or since. There is no evidence that the danger percieved by [Theresa May] is perceived by any of the other countries where [Salah] has been, nor, save for the very tardy indictment, is there any evidence that even Israel sees the danger [she] sees."

The IHRA Definition of Anti-Semitism

32. Ms Van der Zyl accuses Stephen Sizer of 'anti-Semitism', however she is careful not to say what criteria she is using when making this accusation. It can

be assumed, however, that she is not using **the definition of anti-Semitism which can be found in the** Oxford English dictionary which **consists of just 6 words, as opposed to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition which is more than 500 words. According to the OED anti-Semitism is '***Hostility to or prejudice against Jews'.*

33. I don't think anyone could seriously accuse Stephen Sizer of harbouring hatred, hostility or prejudice against Jews. **Since the BOD** waged a war **recently against Jeremy Corbyn because the Labour Party hadn't adopted the IHRA definition *in toto* one can assume that when Ms Zyl says *'anti-Semitism'* she really means '*anti-Zionism'*.** The reason that the IHRA definition is 500+ words is that that is the number of words necessary to conflate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism.

34. The IHRA has been savaged by academics and legal scholars alike. The obvious question is why is there a need to define anti-Semitism? Anti-Semitism is obvious. Ask the man or woman on the Clapham Omnibus, the mythical reasonable person and they will say *'Anti-Semitism is someone who doesn't like Jews.'*

35. If you want a more sophisticated definition of anti-Semitism then there is that of Dr Brian Klug. In his 2013 lecture to the Jewish Museum in Berlin '***What Do We Mean When We Say 'Antisemitsm'? Echoes of shattering glass'*** given on the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht, Klug suggested the following definition:

> 'antisemitism is a form of hostility to Jews as Jews, where Jews are perceived as something other than what they are' or more succinctly 'hostility to Jews as not Jews' because the Jew that anti-Semites hate is not a real person but a mythical creature.

36. Critics of the IHRA include **Professor David Feldman**, who was Vice-Chair of the Chakrabarti Inquiry and is Director of the Pears Institute for the Study of Anti-Semitism. Feldman described the definition as 'bewilderingly imprecise.'

37. **Sir Stephen Sedley** was a Judge in the Court of Appeal who is also Jewish. In Defining Anti-Semitism he wrote that the IHRA *'fails the first test of any definition: it is indefinite.* In what is the most concise critique of the IHRA, Sedley wrote that:

> the IHRA definition offers encouragement to pro-Israel militants whose targets for abuse and disruption in London have recently included the leading American scholar and critic of Israel Richard Falk, and discouragement to university authorities which do not want to act as censors but worry that the IHRA definition requires them to do so.

38. Sedley described the problem of the IHRA was that it only allowed

> 'such criticism as can be made of other states, placing the historical, political, military and humanitarian uniqueness of Israel's occupation and colonisation of Palestine beyond permissible criticism.'

39. **Hugh Tomlinson QC** in an Opinion declared, as did all other lawyers, that the IHRA had

> 'a potential chilling effect on public bodies which, in the absence of definitional clarity, may seek to sanction or prohibit any conduct which has been labelled by third parties as antisemitic without applying any clear criterion of assessment.'

This is essentially what Ms Zyl is attempting. To chill Stephen Sizer's right to free speech.

40. **Geoffrey Robertson QC,** a renowned human rights lawyer described the IHRA as

> 'likely to chill criticism of action by the Government of Israel and advocacy of sanctions as a means to deter human rights abuses in Gaza and elsewhere.'

41. Tomlinson also found that when it comes to **genuine** anti-Semitism, the IHRA is weak.

> 'By pivoting upon racial hatred ... it fails to catch those who exhibit hostility and prejudice – or apply discrimination – against Jewish people for no reason other than that they are Jewish.'

42. Even the principal author of the IHRA, Kenneth Stern, acknowledged that the IHRA was being used in ways that were never intended. In testimony to the House of Representatives in November 2017, he warned that:

> The definition was not drafted, and was never intended, as a tool to target or chill speech on a college campus. In fact, at a conference in 2010 about the impact of the definition, I highlighted this misuse, and the damage it could do.

43. Stern spoke about how the IHRA was '*was being employed in an attempt to restrict academic freedom and punish political speech'*.

44. Stern described how the IHRA had been used to curtail free speech in Britain, listing the "Israel Apartheid Week" event which was cancelled by Central Lancashire University and the case of the Holocaust survivor who was required to change the title of a campus talk by Manchester university *after an Israeli diplomat complained that the title violated the definition.'* Stern described as '*Perhaps most egregious'* of all the call on a university to conduct an inquiry into Professor Rebecca Gould for 'antisemitism', based on an article she had written years before. Accurately describing what had happened as *'chilling and McCarthy -like.'* Professor Gould's description of what happened is on Open Democracy.

Jenny Tonge and Jews Being Responsible for the Holocaust

45. Normally one tries not to accuse one's opponent of bad faith or dishonesty. However in Ms Zyl's case I will make an exception. In her complaint she refers to a meeting at the House of Lords in October 2016 where she says that:

> Sizer breached the terms the agreement by attending and publishing a social media post about a particularly inflammatory event with Jenny Tonge in the chair. ... By attending an event where the audience was alleged to have applauded the suggestion that Jews were responsible for the Holocaust, Sizer earned a stinging public rebuke from his Bishop in the Diocese of Guildford.

46. If indeed the Rev. Sizer did earn a '*stinging rebuke'* from the Bishop of Guilford then it was most undeserved. Stephen Sizer does not have the gift of foresight and cannot be blamed for the contribution of a member of the audience. However the allegation that someone suggested *'that Jews were responsible for the Holocaust'* is a lie. Either Ms Zyl is completely ignorant of the timeline of this meeting and the subsequent Inquiry or she is simply happy to recycle fake news as fact.

47. Yes an allegation was made that a Rabbi from the anti-Zionist Neturei Karta sect had made such a suggestion. An Inquiry was held by Lucy Scott-Moncrieff, CBE, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. Iin Annex 2 of her Report, **The Conduct of Baroness Tonge** she rejected this accusation (paras 35/36 find that:

> 35. The allegation that Jews caused the Holocaust is an example of Holocaust revisionism and clearly fits within the official definition of antisemitism.
>
> 36. However, this is not what audience member 11 actually said. He referred to an economic boycott led by Rabbi Wise, but he did not say that the boycott was by Jews or Zionists.

48. However Ms Lucy Scott-Moncrief is wrong. Even if the Rabbi had said that the Jews were responsible for or caused the Holocaust that would not have been anti-Semitic. The allegation that the Jews brought the Holocaust upon themselves is a very common one amongst the Jewish Orthodox. Possibly up to half of Jewish Orthodoxy holds that the Holocaust was a consequence of the Jews' own actions. If you believe that God is responsible for everything that happens in the world then this applies to the Holocaust too. The traditional explanation is that God is punishing the Children of Israel for their sins.

49. For example the Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel, the late Ovadia Yosef:

> The six million Holocaust victims were reincarnations of the souls of sinners, people who transgressed and did all sorts of things which should not be done. They had been reincarnated in order to atone. Holocaust victims reincarnated 'sinners'?, Jewish Telegraph Agency, 8.8.2000.

Sephardic Jews are the majority of Jews in Israel. Ovadia Yosef was the spiritual mentor of Shas, who have 7 seats in the Knesset and are part of Israel's governing coalition.

The leader of the Satmar Chasidim, one of the largest Chasidic groups in the world, Rabbi Joel Teitelbaum wrote similarly. Holocaust theology, see also God Sent The Holocaust, Says A Rabbi Reviled — And Adored, The Forward, 23rd July 2017.

50. The debate on whether God was responsible for the Holocaust and whether it is divine punishment for the sins of Jews is part of an ongoing theological debate. Lecture #05a: The Holocaust as a Divine Punishment Part 1, Rav Tamir Granot. The question of whether the Holocaust was divine retribution for Jewish sins has been a recurrent topic of discussion amongst Orthodox Jewry. Is it anti-Semitic? I doubt it. Repugnant yes, but then much of religion is repugnant too!

51. I don't wish to comment on Ms Van der Zyl's allegations re links with holocaust deniers such as a Mr Tobin or Michael Hoffman other than to say that if the quality of evidence is anything like that with Raed Saleh then it should be discounted. Likewise many people link, unknowingly to sites, which later turn out to be anti-Semitic. The question is whether they endorse such views or not.

52. Quite laughably, one of Ms Zyl's accusations is that Rev Sizer, gave an interview to Australian radio '*claiming that Zionists have "diluted the definition of anti-Semitism to include criticism of Israel".* One wonders where Rev Sizer got that idea from!! Perhaps Ms Zyl can name one, just one, Palestine solidarity activist in Britain who has not been accused of anti-Semitism. The examples I have given above, of Jeremy Corbyn and others, proves that false accusations of anti-Semitism against anti-Zionists are the norm.

53. I understand that Rev. Sizer denies believing that Israel was in part responsible for 9/11. However even were it true then it would not be anti-Semitic. Israel is not the Jews or Jewish people. It is a state that calls itself Jewish, in so far as it is a state that defines itself as Jewish racially. It is not anti-Semitic to make accusations, even wrong accusations, against Israel.

54. Ms Zyl's complaint against the Rev. Sizer is tendentious. The Rev. Sizer is not anti-Semitic and the accusation that he is are malicious and unfounded. I hope that the Church of England puts an end to the persecution of Stephen Sizer and lays the ghost of false accusations of anti-Semitism against him to rest.

Tony Greenstein

25 November 2018