Clergy Discipline Measure 2003
In the Clergy Discipline Tribunal – Diocese of Winchester
Re the Reverend Dr Stephen Robert Sizer

WITNESS STATEMENT OF
PROFESSOR ILAN PAPPE

I, **PROFESSOR ILAN PAPPE**, of 12 Linnet Close, Exeter, Devon EX4 5HF, **WILL SAY** as follows:

1. I make this statement on behalf of the Reverend Dr Stephen Sizer ("**Stephen**") in support of his Answer to a Complaint made against him by the Board of Deputies of British Jews ("**the Board of Deputies**").

Biography

2. I am an Israeli historian and activist. Currently I am a professor with the College of Social Sciences and International Studies at the University of Exeter and the Director of the European Centre for Palestine. Prior to this I was a senior lecturer in political science at the University of Haifa between 1984 and 2007 and during those years I founded and directed the Institute for Peace Studies at Givat Haviva Israel and was the Chair of the Emil Touma Institute for Palestinian Studies in Haifa.

3. I have written 20 books on the history of the Modern Middle East, Israel and Palestine, including *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine (2006), The Modern Middle East (2005), A History of Modern Palestine: One Land Two Peoples (2003)* and *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict (1988).*

How I know Stephen

4. I have known Stephen since 2010.

5. I have read Stephen's works and shared a platform with him at various presentations and seminars. My experience of Stephen's audience is that it spans all religions and Stephen's addresses do not speak to Jews or non-Jews in particular. His message is one of humanity and peace. For this reason, he is followed by a great number of supporters amongst the Jewish Community, particularly progressive Jews.

6. I have known Stephen for more than a decade. His humanity and kindness were apparent from the first moment of encounter. His Christianity is that of love and embrace and his commitment to the plight of the Palestinians whose disastrous past and present predicament have been forgotten is highly appreciated by the people over there.

7. Like so many decent and conscientious people, Stephen felt he had to voice his opposition to policies of destruction and oppression, not only in Palestine but also around the world. Criticising immoral policies of a Muslim, Christian, Buddhist or Jewish government is not racism against their religion but moral objections to their actions, regardless of who they are. Opposition to an ongoing occupation, as many Israelis agree, is not anti-Semitism.

Board of Deputies

8. While the Board of Deputies has represented faithfully the interest of the Anglo-Jewish community over the years, it has in this century acted, in many cases, as a front for Israel and plays a dubious role in silencing criticism on Israel. There is also a sense in many Jewish circles that it does not represent anymore the Anglo Jewish community (see https://www.jewishvoiceforlabour.org.uk/article/who-exactly-does-the-board-of-deputies-represent/ [**Exhibit 1**].

9. In 2007, the Board took an active role in trying to prevent my appointment to Exeter university (see https://www.jpost.com/jewish-world/jewish-news/controversial-historian-to-quit-israel-for-uk). [**Exhibit 2]**

10. The Board took a leading (ultimately unsuccessful) role in trying to abolish a pure scholarly conference I organized at the university of Exeter on Settler Colonialism in

Palestine (hardly an issue that should concern the Anglo-Jewish community see https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/board-concerned-over-exeter-university-conference-on-israeli-colonialism-1.68071). [**Exhibit 3]**

11. Part of its campaign against me was based on lies misquotes for which the Board never apologized (see https://www.facebook.com/pappeIlan/posts/the-president-of-the-board-of-deputies-for-years-is-looking-for-a-quote-that-wou/2697176916962030/). [**Exhibit 4**]

12. Zionism in many ways started as a Christian project of restorationism (a 19th century theological movement believing that the return of the Jews would precipitate the second coming of the Messiah and the resurrection of the dead) that was supported, for strategic reasons, by the British government long before Zionism was offered by Jewish activists as a solution to the predicament of the Jews in Europe.

13. The motivations for Christian Zionism were quite dubious. It was a mixture of anti-Semitism, driving the Jews to Palestine, and a bleak role for the Jews in this divine scheme, as understood by Christian Zionism: either converting to Christianity or rot in hell.

14. Today the support of Christian Zionism for Israel is unconditional. Which means that even if Israel pursues immoral and brutal policies, or is run by extreme right parties, it can rely on a carte blanche support from Christian Zionists.

15. Stephen is not an anti-Semite and I state with confidence, having followed his writings and shared platforms with him, that he neither holds anti-Semitic views nor has written or said things that I consider to be anti-Semitic.

Statement of truth

I believe the facts and matters in this statement to be true.

Ilan Pappe

PROFESSOR ILAN PAPPE

Date: 16 October 2020

Exhibit 1

Who exactly does the Board of Deputies represent?
Fri 3 Aug 2018

JVL Introduction

The Board of Deputies of British Jews constantly presents itself as "the voice of the Jewish community".

In this analysis from 2015, Joseph Finlay shows quite how wide of the mark this claim is, and the incredibly narrow base from which the Board claims to represent the wide diversity of Jewish communities in Britain.

It also outlines what a truly democratic representative body might look like.

JEWISH AND DEMOCRATIC?

The State of the Board of Deputies

Joseph Finlay, Jewish Quarterly
4 March 2015

Download a PDF of the JQ article here.

Joseph Finlay questions the democratic credentials of UK Jewry's representative body—and outlines a truly democratic alternative.

Democracy is the only game in town. In the modern liberal world, to be an opponent of democracy is to be a political pariah. This is especially true among Jews who, being quintessential moderns, are deeply committed to liberal democratic principles. American Jews are known to display one of the highest electoral turnouts of any ethnic group, and Jewish supporters of Israel proudly repeat the mantra 'Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East'.

In the internal politics of the Jewish diaspora, however, democracy is the exception rather than the rule. Power frequently remains in the hands of the great and the good: a self-appointed collective of wealthy individuals leading negotiations with the outside world. Perhaps this lack of democracy is a hangover from the definition of Judaism as purely a

religion (a tactical move in the enlightenment era designed to gain tolerance and civil rights)—a secular continuation of rule by rabbinic fiat. Perhaps it can be explained by Jewish minority status; in the modern world, it is states that are seen to have the primary obligation to be democratic, while religious and ethnic minorities are viewed as private clubs and thus permitted to be feudal, collectivist, and autocratic. Whatever the explanation, the Jewish passion for democracy is rarely expressed in the internal structures of the Jewish community.

Democracy was not a feature of the early history of the Board of Deputies—the organisation that aspires to lead British Jewry and represent it to the outside world. Formed in the distinctly pre-democratic 1760s out of a desire for the Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities to work together when dealing with the British establishment, the Board has long been the vehicle through which privileged Jews sought to placate the British governing elite and to prove that Jews in Britain could be respectable and assimilated. Strongly hierarchical governance, such as that provided by Moses Montefiore, Board President from 1838 to 1874, was the means to that end. Nowadays, however, unelected hierarchy is out of fashion, and the Board is keen to promote itself as a democracy, describing itself on its website as the "democratically elected voice of British Jewry." This designation allows the Jewish community to feel that its democratic instincts are reflected in its governance structure, and also grants legitimacy: when a delegation goes to meet government ministers, they can claim a democratic mandate. When the lobbying is done by an organisation like the Jewish Leadership Council that does not describe itself as democratic, and is instead comprised of the heads of various organisations, the presence of the President of the Board provides a helpful democratic fig leaf.

The Board's claim to be democratic is, however, distinctly tenuous. There are no British Jewish elections, no direct way for all British Jews to directly elect the board's 300 Deputies. To be involved in electing Deputies, one must be a member of one or more of approximately 138 synagogues, or be connected to one of 34 'communal organisations' (such as the UJIA or Reform Judaism) that are affiliated with the Board, all of which elect one to five Deputies—anyone not involved with these institutions does not have a vote, despite the Board still claiming to speak on their behalf. Inevitably, some individuals may be represented multiple times, through being members of more than one organisation.

The biggest problem, however, is with the elections held by affiliate organisations to select their deputies—it is these that justify the Board's claim to be a representative democracy. Transparency is a fundamental requirement of democracy—there needs to be openness as to who the electorate is and how many of them turn out in order for any election to be considered legitimate. Despite its own constitution obliging it to receive the data (Appendix A, Clause 3: "the election shall not be validated unless the form incorporates… the total number of members of the congregation… and the number who attended the election

meeting"), the Board does not release a list of the membership size or the numbers voting in each affiliate organisation, and claims to have no idea what the numbers might be. The Board's spokesman explained to me that, "While we do need to be more thorough in collecting statistics, these figures wouldn't add anything—they don't speak to the democratic legitimacy of the organisation or to anything else." This seems extraordinarily complacent—can we imagine a British election in which the size of the electorate, the list of candidates standing, and the turnout remained secret? It would be regarded as an affront to democracy.

If the Board is to continue to use the language of democracy, it must, at a minimum, collect and release these figures following the next set of elections in 2015. The likelihood is that the vast majority of elections are uncontested, and the number of people voting in them constitutes no more than a few thousand in total—or, around 1% of the overall number of British Jews, of which the Board claims to represent the totality. In response to this presumed low turnout, the Board's spokesman argues, "Every member of every one of the BoD's constituent members received a calling notice for the meeting and notice of the election. Some come; most don't—but you can't infer too much from that." A situation where the overwhelming majority choose not to vote is a pretty sure signpost of a rotten system—the opportunity to vote for an uncontested candidate that has no defined manifesto is hardly an enticing one.

The Board seems to be in denial, saying, "It's hardly surprising that many people don't bother to vote when there is a sole candidate for the post. It doesn't make the election undemocratic." Let's imagine a small country. It has elections under a first past the post system with 100 constituencies. In the majority of these, there is only one candidate. Some people have two or three votes. The size of the electorate and the turnout are never revealed. No one would seriously consider this a democracy, yet this is the system the Board of Deputies continues to defend.

Given all this, the most honest way forward would be for the Board to cease to describe itself as democratic. It could instead admit that it is a largely appointed body and acknowledge that its claim to represent the community is in fact based on regular consultations with community stakeholders and donors. This is probably how the government and much of the community already view the Board.

In addition, it would need to stop trying to speak for all British Jews on matters that are deeply contested. While it may be reasonable for the Board to negotiate with state agencies on uncontroversial issues—such as welfare for the Jewish elderly or the continued right of Jewish schools to teach Hebrew as their primary modern language— issues around Israel are highly contentious, and the Board cannot speak for the entire Jewish community in this

area. British Jews hold the full range of view on Israel, from the annexationist right to the BDS left, and it is impossible for a single, undemocratic body to represent all of them.

The alternative is to take the opposite path; to turn the Board of Deputies into a genuine one-member-one-vote body. An electoral roll would be created, using synagogue membership lists as a basis, with those who did not want to be on the new register having to specifically opt out. Anyone who self-defines as being part of the UK Jewish community would be able to register, thus including the large number of Jews who are not members of any Jewish organisation and are at present entirely unrepresented. Naturally, it would take time to build up a register—but it would not take long to increase it far beyond the 1000-3,000 that are likely to currently vote in Board of Deputies elections. Something in the neighbourhood of 20,000 would be a credible medium term target.

Once there is such a register, there would be regular elections to elect slates of candidates, ideally using list- based proportional representation, so parties would receive a number of seats equivalent to the percentage of the vote they received. The leader of the largest slate, or the one able to command a majority, would become the president. The electoral process could easily be carried out by an outside body, like Electoral Reform Services, who already do this for a wide range of organisations.

Parties in this new Board might be based on denominational lines, or around differing views on Israel, or on other issues. Crucially, the new body would represent the wide range of views held within the Jewish community, not merely those held by Jewish professionals and donors. Turnout would likely be far higher than at present; these would be genuine contested elections for parties with defined manifestos, as opposed to the current coronations of candidates in half-empty synagogue AGMs. It would also be far easier to find candidates willing to stand for election—it is surely more attractive to face election for a body with genuine democratic legitimacy than one whose democracy looks more like the British Parliament of the 18th century, complete with rotten boroughs and patronage.

A system reformed on these lines might also attract more participation from Haredi Jews. Under the current system, Haredi community organisations refuse to affiliate with the Board, largely due to the inclusion of non-orthodox groups; but individual registration would allow individual Haredim to join, whatever the views of their community leaders.

This suggestion offers the possibility of a genuine, contested UK Jewish Politics in which issues could be brought into the open, and all British Jews included, whatever their views. It would put an end to what JQ editor Keith Kahn-Harris has described as a “denial of politics”—in which those who effectively govern the community are seen to be simply doing public service, with no recognition of the power they hold and the specific ideological baggage they carry. A reformed democratic body could contain an ‘official opposition’—a

powerful representative of the views of those who do not constitute the majority, but desire to be properly represented within the community. A genuine democracy would also limit the power of major donors to dictate policy—at present, the Jewish community can be best defined as a plutocracy in which a handful of very wealthy (and usually middle- aged male) individuals make all the key decisions.

It is true that such a reform—in which a religious or ethnic minority group creates a system of 'one member one vote' democracy—would be a first in the UK (and perhaps globally). But it is hard to imagine which group could lead on this issue, if not British Jews. As one of the UK's oldest minority communities, we have defined the terms for later immigrant and other religious collectives: how to assimilate into Britishness while maintaining a degree of autonomy. Recently constituted bodies such as the Muslim Council of Britain, Hindu Council UK, and Sikh Council UK, are clearly modelled on the Board of Deputies. Jews are regularly held up (by leading politicians at CST or Norwood dinners) as the integrated minority par excellence—but so far, this has been achieved by suppressing the diversity of the Jewish community in favour of a tightly defined, narrow model of how to be a Jew in the UK. Democratising ourselves would be the greatest gift we could give to other communities: to demonstrate that maintaining a separate cultural identity need not require corrupt communitarianism and oligarchy.

Given the flagrantly unsatisfactory nature of the status quo and the existent of a clear alternative, why, beyond inertia, do undemocratic structures persist? I would suggest that antipathy to communal democratisation comes from two intellectual sources present in the Jewish community— if not specifically motivating the Board of Deputies itself. Firstly, the post-enlightenment identification of Judaism as a religion—necessitating hierarchical, rabbinic decision-making, as opposed to democracy. This is reflected in the fact that control of conversions, weddings and burials remains in rabbinic hands, even in non-orthodox denominations. A system that allows all religious decisions to remain in the hands of a small rabbinic hierarchy will find it inevitable that 'civil' decisions should be equally controlled by a privileged minority. Though it is predominantly non-Jews (and those Jews who are distanced from the community) who continue to view Judaism purely as a religion, the hierarchical organisational style persists— not least because it is so convenient for those who already hold political power within the community.

The other source of opposition to UK Jewish democracy is the underlying Zionist ideology found amongst a section of the community: surely the place where Jews can express themselves democratically as part of a modern governmental system is in the Jewish state? There is thus an unspoken tendency to view the diaspora as a waiting chamber, the purpose of which is to care for and bury the elderly while educating the young so they will be ready to move to Israel, where they can finally live a full Jewish life. The key function of those who remain, according to this viewpoint, is to a) offer moral and financial support to Israel, and

b) practice endogamy, so that future generations will be recognised as Jews for the purposes of aliyah and life in Israel. This worldview (even when largely unarticulated) is unlikely to place much importance on the governance structure of a community that it views as essentially temporary.

A call for a rejuvenated British Jewish community based on democratisation implicitly views the community neither as a religious sect nor a group of proto-Israelis, but rather as a quasi-national collective, with shared practices, linguistic conventions, and common institutions. While most contemporary political thought sees the state as the only possible unit of government, theorists like Karl Renner and Otto Bauer (writing in the aftermath of the Austro-Hungarian empire) imagined systems of non- territorial autonomy in which linguistic and cultural minority groups might run their own affairs without ever being in control of a nation state. While this may sound like a communitarian dystopia, Bauer and Renner insisted that their system of 'diaspora nationalism' would have to be democratic: citizens would opt to register as a member of an autonomous group and then vote to decide its leaders and policies. While the UK is not about to implement anything as radical as this (the Austro Marxists planned to give autonomous communities a share of taxation income and limited judicial powers), the Jewish community (not least because of the wealth it holds) already functions like this—it has its own schools, cultural institutions, welfare infrastructure, media, and politics. The only step needed for British Jews to fully embrace a definition of cultural autonomy is to democratise its structures, so that the power that is currently in the hands of the privileged few is opened to all members of the community.

An approach such as this is unlikely to sway many in the anti-intellectual corridors of British-Jewish power. But when has democratic reform ever come from above? Change will only come when enough British Jews demand it—and it is likely to be Israel, that most divisive of issues, that acts as the trigger. We can learn lessons from two past attempts at change, the first being the establishment, in 2007, of Independent Jewish Voices. This criticised the Board's failure to represent the diversity of opinion on Israel within the community. But rather than proposing a democratic overhaul of the Board, it instead founded a new group—a left wing organisation that mirrored the Board's status as a right wing one. IJV has not had the impact it hoped to achieve, perhaps because of a lack of clarity over what Jewish communal organisations would have to do in order to answer the critique the group was making.

Secondly, after a long campaign, the 'Pro Israel-Pro Peace' group Yachad was, in 2014, accepted as a member of the Board of Deputies, signalling for many an acceptance of the group as part of the British Jewish establishment. Perhaps Yachad secretly hoped for rejection—so it could, in turn, condemn the Board as being out of touch; but the eventual acceptance allowed the Deputies to position themselves as modern and inclusive, while the institution remained as undemocratic as ever.

Criticisms of the Board's structures have been made beyond those groups with a left-wing stance on Israel. The recent 'Change The Board' campaign limited itself to calling for more women and young people to become deputies— without commenting on the lack of democracy inherent in the system. And Jewish chronicle columnist Geoffrey Alderman, while a conservative voice on some matters, has critiqued the increasing inclusion of non-membership bodies such as Yachad and UJS—pointing to the dangers of people being represented twice through different organisations. But critics of the Board need to go further and be more ambitious. They should demand that existing structures are overhauled in order to become genuinely representative—and they should lobby government agencies not to consider the Board a representative of the Jewish community until it holds contested elections to ascertain what the views of that community actually are.

We as a community need to have a serious internal conversation about how we see ourselves and how we want to run our institutions. If we are not a community willing to be ruled exclusively by rabbinic rulings, and one that sees Britain as a permanent home, it is time we built a system of communal governance that is fully in tune with our values. — JQ

Joseph Finlay (2015) JEWISH AND DEMOCRATIC? The State of the Board of Deputies, Jewish Quarterly, 62:1, 14-17, DOI: 10.1080/0449010X.2015.1010388 © Joseph Finlay 2015 and reprinted with permission of the author

Exhibit 2

Controversial historian to quit Israel for UK

Ilan Pappe: 'Many Israelis also believe that I am working as a mercenary for the Arabs.'

Ilan Pappe, a senior lecturer in the University of Haifa's Department of Political Science, says he is moving to the UK because it is "increasingly difficult to live in Israel" with his "unwelcome views and convictions." In an interview in The Peninsula, Qatar's leading English-language daily, during a visit last week to Doha as a guest of the Qatar Foundation, Pappe said: "I was boycotted in my university and there had been attempts to expel me from my job. I am getting threatening calls from people every day. I am not being viewed as a threat to the Israeli society but my people think that I am either insane or my views are irrelevant. Many Israelis also believe that I am working as a mercenary for the Arabs." Pappe is to join the History Department at Exeter University, in southwest England. He is active in anti-Israel academic boycott efforts. Referred to in the Peninsula article as "the only Jewish academic in Israel who is vehemently critical of Zionism," Pappe said the only solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was the creation of a single state, shared by Jews, Arabs and others. He said that two independent states cannot coexist in "the land of Palestine." He also said there was "no immediate solution to the crisis and only international pressure can force Israel to end the occupation and the continuing atrocities against the Palestinians." "Over the past six years, the Israeli government has become more oppressive, thanks to the strong support from the Bush administration. They now feel that they can do anything they want," he said. The interviewer in Qatar admitted to being "a bit surprised" by Pappe's support for Hamas. "A bit surprisingly," the paper wrote, Pappe said: "I support Hamas in its resistance against the Israeli occupation, though I disagree with their political ideology. I am for separating state from religion." Pappe also questioned Israeli democracy: "Any state that perpetrates occupation cannot be called a democratic state," he said, adding that Israeli democracy was meant "only for Jews" and there is "no space for other communities." The interview then looks at what has shaped Pappe's opinions: "Pappe's transformation from a 'typical Jew' to a strong critic of Zionism started in the 1980s while studying in the UK," it wrote. "I reexamined the events of 1948, which changed my perceptions, and I realized how the Israeli state was formed at the expense of the Palestinians. I don't subscribe to the view that a community which has a claim to a land that goes back thousands of years had the right to occupy it by dispossessing indigenous communities," Pappe said. Jon Benjamin, chief executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, said: "After taking full advantage of all

the freedoms accorded to him in Israel, a country he has so shamelessly attacked, Pappe has decided to set up shop here. Whilst this provides the opportunity for academics here to challenge him on his revisionist agenda, the uncomfortable fact is that in the lecture theaters and seminar rooms at Exeter, many impressionable young minds will be exposed to his partial and biased views." Mitch Simmons, campaign director of the Union of Jewish Students, said: "We not angry or frustrated that he's coming to the UK. What is of concern is that he may use his position to vocalize support for the boycott of Israeli academics."

Exhibit 3

Board concerned over Exeter University conference on Israeli ‘colonialism’



The Board of Deputies has raised concerns over a public body’s funding of an academic conference on “settler colonialism in Palestine”.

Board CEO Gillian Merron wrote to the Arts and Humanities research council which, the Board said, had provided £247,535 worth of funding to a project of which the conference, due to take place at Exeter University in October, is a part.

She said the conference was “a disingenuous attempt to politicise” issues surrounding Israel’s Bedouins community, “in the wider context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict”.

She added: “It appears that this is a publicly funded attempt to further a political agenda masquerading as an academic exercise.”

Fiona Sharpe, of Sussex Friends of Israel, has urged Israel supporters to write to the AHRC, which provides around £102 million from the government to support research in the arts and humanities.

“We are very concerned that public money is being used to support virulent propaganda throughout our universities,” she said.

The conference would be biased and one-sided, she believed.

“I don’t think we will find any pro-Israel speakers or anyone speaking against the notion that there is colonialism in Israel.”

She added she was concerned over the possible effect the conference would have on the “comfort levels” of students at the university.

The director of the university's European Centre for Palestine Studies, the anti-Zionist Israeli historian Ilan Pappé is listed as one of the speakers.

A conference in Southampton challenging the right for Israel to exist was cancelled earlier this year following complaints from community bodies and pro-Israel groups.

Exhibit 4

Board of Deputies President: ‘Labour has utterly failed to achieve progress on antisemitism’

SEPTEMBER 20, 2019 - BOARD OF DEPUTIES - SHARE: Twitter Facebook
On the eve of Labour's annual party conference, Board of Deputies of British Jews President Marie van der Zyl has spoken of her "deep" concerns over the party's continuing failure to banish anti-Jewish racism.

Marie said: "I have deep and ongoing concerns about Labour going into their Party Conference. Since the last party conference, Labour has utterly failed to achieve any meaningful progress on antisemitism in the party. Indeed, this is the year that the Equality and Human Rights Commission decided that anti-Jewish racism was a big enough concern for the party to be fully investigated. To Labour's shame, the Labour Friends of Israel have decided to pull their promotional stand over security fears, a motion proposing rule changes will be debated on Shabbat when observant Jewish delegates will not be able to attend and an official fringe will feature historian Ilan Pappe, who has argued that Zionism is more dangerous than Islamist militancy. Now, the leadership plans to purge groups which have stood up for the Jewish community, such as Labour Students. Labour has been told countless times about the steps it must take to rid the party of anti-Jewish racism. The leadership, including, Jeremy Corbyn, seems determined to let this disease flourish in the remains of a party which used to be a great, progressive force."

Exhibit 5

Exhibit 4