

Labour Party response to Panorama programme

A Labour Party spokesperson, responding to BBC Panorama's programme, said:

"We completely reject any claim that Labour is antisemitic. We stand in solidarity with Jewish people, and we're taking decisive action to root out antisemitism from our movement and society.

"The Panorama programme was not a fair or balanced investigation. It was a seriously inaccurate, politically one-sided polemic, which breached basic journalistic standards, invented quotes and edited emails to change their meaning. It was an overtly biased intervention by the BBC in party political controversy.

"An honest investigation into antisemitism in Labour and wider society is in the public interest. The Panorama team instead pre-determined an answer to the question posed by the programme's title.

"No proper and serious attempt was made to understand our current procedures for dealing with antisemitism, which is clearly essential to reach a fair and balanced judgement. And Panorama distorted and manipulated the truth and misrepresented evidence to present a biased and selective account.

"We complained in advance to the BBC over the way the programme was put together and its choice of a presenter who has expressed overt personal and political hostility to Jeremy Corbyn's politics. We will be pursuing complaints at every level.

"The Labour Party will fully investigate any complaints concerning the antisemitic incidents reported by party members in interviews in the programme.

"Labour stands in solidarity with Jewish people and is fully committed to the support, defence and celebration of the Jewish community and its organisations.

“Despite claims made in the programme, Labour is taking decisive action against antisemitism. Since Jennie Formby became General Secretary the rate at which antisemitism cases have been dealt with has increased more than four-fold.

“We will build on the improvements to our procedures made under Jennie Formby, and continue to act against this repugnant form of racism.”