



**Rt. Hon Joan Ryan MP**  
Member of Parliament for Enfield North  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 020 7219 2442  
Email: joan.ryan.mp@parliament.uk

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Mr Richard Burgon MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Richard,

I am writing in response to comments reported in the Daily Mail on the 8 August, where you apparently urged MPs and party members to quit Labour Friends of Israel and declared that 'Zionism is the enemy of peace'.

I assume that you have been misreported and made no such comments. I would appreciate it, therefore, if you were able to assure me that you are seeking a correction from the Daily Mail, making clear that you did not express these views and do not hold them.

As you know, the Chakrabarti Report made very clear the dangers of ill-informed references to Zionism, suggesting that:

"My advice to critics of the Israeli State and/or Government is to use the term "Zionist" advisedly, carefully and never euphemistically".

As you will also know, 'Zionism' is a simple term rendered complicated by its use and abuse by critics of the State of Israel. It refers only to the broad ideological movement for Jewish national self-determination in Israel, a movement born out of the brutal persecution to which the Jewish people were subjected in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

I am sure that you will agree that any suggestion that Jewish self-determination is an 'enemy of peace' serves simply to demonise those who believe in the mere right of a Jewish state to exist. As such, it is highly offensive to the vast majority of British Jews. Indeed, even high-profile figures on the left who are extremely critical of Israel, such as Jon Lansman, have suggested that 'the Left must stop talking about 'Zionism'.

It is a great tragedy that the Labour Party's relationship with the British Jewish community has been so damaged by the events of the past year. As Labour MPs, we all have a responsibility to help rebuild bridges and repair these crucial ties.

As I'm again sure you will know, Labour Friends of Israel promotes a negotiated two-state solution for two peoples; with Israel safe, secure and recognised within its borders; living alongside a democratic, independent Palestinian state. We work closely with our sister Labor Party in Israel

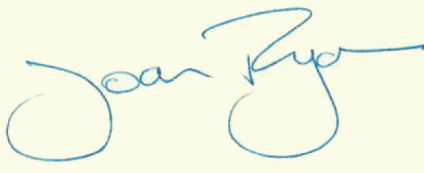
which works every day to oppose the damaging policies of the Netanyahu government.

I hope that you agree with me that fostering links with, and supporting, progressive forces in Israel is an important task for an internationalist party such as the Labour Party and one that parliamentarians should be encouraged to engage with.

As Chair of LFI, I am incredibly proud to lead a campaign to encourage an increase in spending on co-existence projects, which seek to promote peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. This, rather than the repeated incidents of incitement by the Palestinian Authority or the violent anti-semitism embedded in Hamas's charter, is the best way to help promote the Labour Party's long-standing policy of a two-state solution.

I look forward to hearing from you so that we can ensure that any damage caused by the misreporting of your views can be swiftly dealt with.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joan Ryan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Rt. Hon Joan Ryan MP**  
**Chair, Labour Friends of Israel**