

Brits Spied on Me, According to Memo Marked "STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL"

British Labour Party operatives who put Prime Minister Keir Starmer in power hired APCO PR firm to investigate me and other journalists probing political corruption.



PAUL D. THACKER

FEB 19, 2026



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Memo prepared for Labour Together - December 2023

Executive Summary

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For both left- and right-wing influencers, Labour Together and CCDH sit at the centre of a nexus of conspiracy theories that involve government attempts to suppress free speech, increasing state censorship, the sabotaging of left- and right-wing leaders, and pro-Israel advocacy, among many other accusations.

The British media has been consumed the last week over a scandal involving political operatives working for the British Labour Party who hired a PR firm to investigate seven reporters—one of whom is me. One close advisor to Prime Minister Starmer has resigned, and the British government has launched an investigation to uncover these attacks against the media.

A British Labour Party official denied during a phone call that I was a focus of their attention when I called for an explanation a couple days ago. I'm releasing one of the documents leaked to me from a London reporter that shows I was one of the British Labour Party's targets.

The document is marked "STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL."

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Significant Persons of Interest

Henry Dyer – The author of the original Business Insider piece on the Electoral Commission investigation into Labour Together and the follow up article. Following the publication of *The Sunday Times* article he [noted](#) that it featured "a lot of interesting new detail on meetings and quotes".

Gabriel Pogrud & Harry Yorke – *The Sunday Times* journalists who authored the [article](#) in November 2023. Both are well-known journalists who have reported on Labour Together activities since mid-2020.

Kit Klarenberg – The author of the Unherd [article](#) on the Center for Countering Digital Hate which linked it to Labour Together and alleged attempts to undermine the British left. While a self-described "investigative journalist", he is an author for *The Gray Zone*. The site has been [described](#) as a "conspiracy blog" and "Wagner propaganda channel". In May 2023 Klarenberg was [arrested](#) by counter-terrorism police after he arrived in the UK.

Paul Holden – South African who is the Director of Investigations at Shadow World Investigations. He has only published occasional articles, including [one](#) in *The Guardian*, one on *Racket News*, and [two](#) in the *Independent*.

Matt Taibbi – Blogger who regularly posts on X and on his substack disinformation surrounding the Democrats, Ukraine, vaccines and more. Has partnered with leading members of the American left and is the owner of *Racket News* where Paul Holden published his article about CCDH and Labour Together. Has also published material on OR Books, where Paul Holden will be publishing his upcoming book.

Paul Thacker – Author of the Tablet [article](#) and publisher of *The Disinformation Chronicle* on Substack, where he complains about the Democrats, the pharmaceutical industry, and other articles about the CCDH. Regularly Tweets about the 'Twitter Files'.

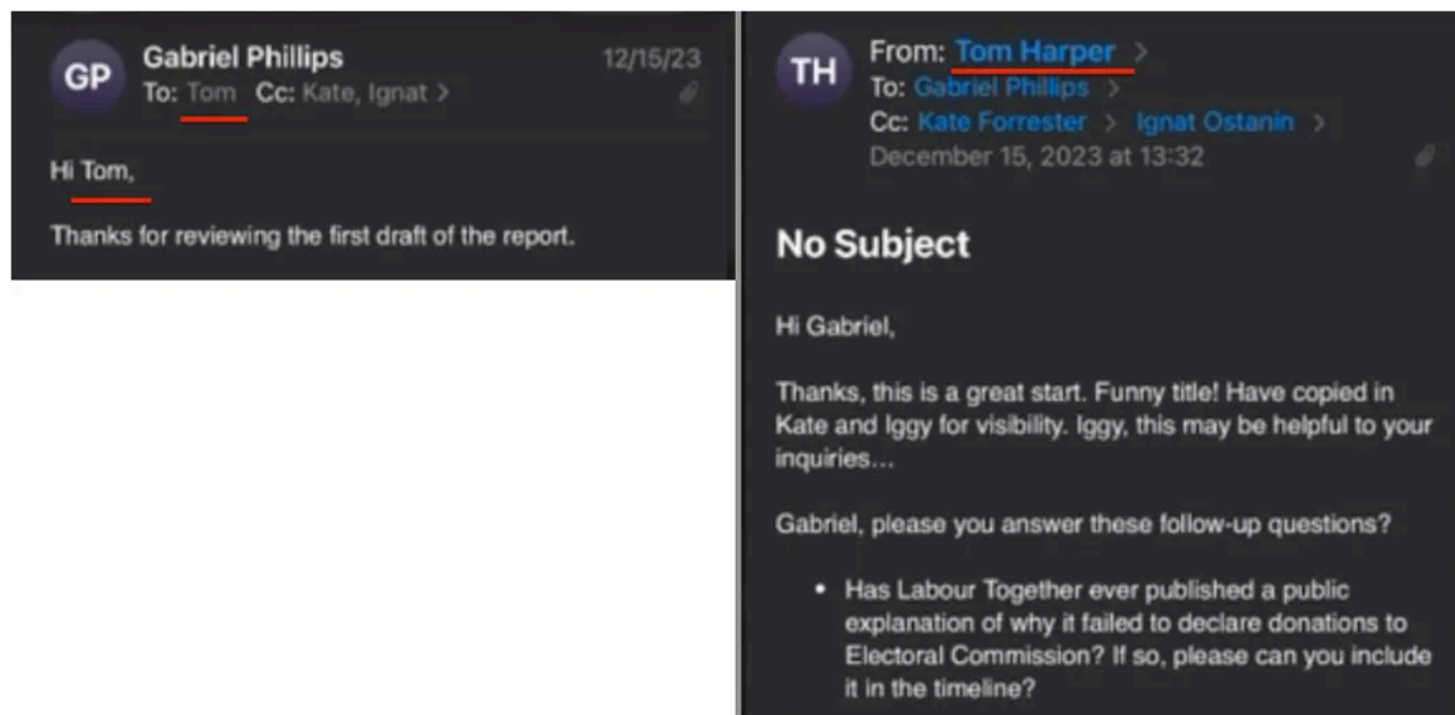
John McEvoy – Blogger who has written for *The Canary*, *Jacobin*, and is currently affiliated with *Declassified UK*. Authored original [article](#) on Labour Together and Lisa Nandy and has written multiple articles about the 'Israel Lobby's' relationship with Keir Starmer MP's Labour Party.

I became a Labour Party "significant person of interest" after I began reporting on the Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH), in 2023. The CCDH was created by a British think tank called Labour Together, which was run by Josh Simons in 2023. Simons hired the PR firm APCO to spy on myself and other reporters.

Simons is now a Member of Parliament and posted on X "APCO were asked to look into a suspected illegal hack." However, the Simon's memo discusses nothing about a hack.

Simons did not return repeated requests for comment that I sent to both his government and private email.

According to emails leaked to me, APCO's work for Labour Together was overseen by Tom Harper, a former reporter for the British Sunday Times. Tom Harper did not respond to repeated requests for comment.



I became interested in CCDH because American legacy media such as The New York Times and Washington Post were quoting CCDH as purported experts on everything from vaccines, to online hate, misinformation and disinformation, both antisemitism *and* Islamaphobia, climate denial pretty much everything and anything.

But despite living for a decade in DC, I had never heard of CCDH nor their CEO Imran Ahmed.

So what was going on?

In a 2023 [investigation for Tablet](#), I traced CCDH back to London, where they started sometime around 2018. Imran Ahmed, I had learned, was a UK political operative who had worked for the British Labour Party. And Ahmed's best buddy was another British Labour Party operative named Morgan McSweeney who ran a think tank called Labour Together. [McSweeney](#) is widely credited as the [architect of Prime Minister Keir Starmer's](#) rise to power, and he served as Starmer's chief of staff until earlier this month, when he [resigned](#) because of a separate scandal connected to Jeffrey Epstein.

Both Ahmed and McSweeney hid that they were behind CCDH for several years, although it later came out that CCDH was based inside McSweeney's Labour Together think tank. When CCDH landed in America in 2021, they immediately got the attention of the Biden White House and multiple Democratic Party members of Congress. I found this bizarre.

DC is crowded with nonprofits and think tanks fighting for public attention. Yet this tiny nonprofit, run by a guy from London with no DC experience, was getting quoted by White House officials. Here's how I [explained this in Tablet](#):

For a tiny, unknown, nonprofit to gain so much attention in D.C.'s crowded, competitive policy space is akin to a pudgy, amateur athlete catching the winning touchdown in the Super Bowl, while setting a new world record in the marathon, all in one week.

Digging through CCDH's tax records, I found a possible explanation for CCDH's magical success. CCDH's chairman is Simon Clark, who once worked at the Center for American Progress (CAP), a think tank founded by former Bill Clinton chief of staff John Podesta that supported the Biden administration.

Clark, I figured, must have introduced Ahmed to the Biden White House and Democratic Party officials in DC.

I also tracked some of CCDH's money back to Hollywood. You can read all the details I reported for Tablet, here: [The New Push for Censorship Under the Guise of Combating Hate](#).

I published some further investigative details about CCDH, [here at The DisInformation Chronicle](#), about a week after my Tablet investigation. In this piece, I reported that CCDH's reports were rather flimsy and that CCDH's "head of research" was some British dude named Callum Hood who had no employment history except working at CCDH. I later reported that [Callum Hood was also](#) a former Labour Party operative.

Both my investigation in Tablet and my report here at The DisInformation Chronicle stirred up APCO. Here's a screenshot of what APCO wrote about me in their report to Labour Party officials.

October 2023: Tablet Magazine – an American Jewish publication – [published](#) an article about the [Center for Countering Digital Hate \(CCDH\)](#) and its founder Imran Ahmed.

The article describes Ahmed as a “political operative who spent several years advising conservative members of the British Labour Party” before moving to “run two interrelated dark money groups: Stop Funding Fake News and the [Center for Countering Digital Hate](#)”. The author accuses the campaigns of claiming “left-wing scalps in London” by “lobbing vague accusations of fake news at political enemies” which “helped to run Jeremy Corbyn out of Labour Party leadership while tanking the lefty news site Canary”.

The article subsequently focuses on Ahmed “trying to drive away Elon Musk’s advertisers on X” based on “dubious claims that the social media site is a playground for racists”.

The article notes a rumour that Ahmed has works for British intelligence services and notes that Ahmed refused to answer any questions related to that. The article proceeds to quote several figures who suggest that the British and US intelligence services may have created “a cutout for the purpose of influencing the online news economy, to rig public debate in [favor of political speech that supports agency agendas](#)”.

The article proceeds to ridicule the CCDH while attacking its role in “censoring Americans” and fighting Elon Musk about Twitter.

The author of the article, Paul Thacker, [published](#) a follow up article on his [Substack](#), Disinformation Chronicle, two days after the Tablet article was published, continuing to ridicule the work of CCDH, suggesting that most “CCDH employees are either political operatives who worked for the British Labour Party”.

A whistleblower inside CCDH read my reporting and contacted me in 2024. We spoke dozens of times on the phone, and the whistleblower sent me tons of internal CCDH documents and several of Imran Ahmed’s emails. Based on these documents, I wrote a piece titled, “[Election Exclusive: British Advisors to Kamala Harris Hope to “Kill Musk’s Twitter,”](#)” that rocketed around the globe.

Citing these documents I released, the State Department began deportation proceedings against Imran Ahmed a few days before Christmas.

The BBC interviewed me about Imran Ahmed’s deportation and I told them it was time for Ahmed to go back to England, because Americans were not going to tolerate his agenda to censor U.S. citizens.

In an [interview on The DisInformation Chronicle Podcast with State Department Undersecretary Sarah Rogers](#), I noted that, by deporting Ahmed when he was so closely tied to Keir Starmer's government, the State Department was "knocking on the door of the Prime Minister's office."

"We have a very special relationship with the British government," Undersecretary Rogers told me, declining to detail her discussions with Starmer officials. "The issue has been communicated."

To download the Labour Party's document on investigating reporters, click the link below.

[MEMO PREPARED FOR LABOUR TOGETHER](#)

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For both left- and right-wing influencers, Labour Together and CCDH sit at the centre of a nexus of conspiracy theories that involve government attempts to suppress free speech, increasing state censorship, the sabotaging of left- and right-wing leaders, and pro-Israel advocacy, among many other accusations.

Many of the news articles have repeatedly recycled the same information about CCDH and Labour Together using publicly available information – through sources such as social media, Companies House and others.

However, recent articles and blog posts from both *The Times* and Paul Holden have contained more information than ever before, raising questions and concerns about the sources of the information. In particular, there are two specific causes of concerns:

1. The granularity of detail about Labour Together's funding details that appeared in *The Times* article on 12 November.
2. The use of internal Labour Party emails involving Imran Ahmed that appeared in Paul Holden's Substack blog on 14 November.

This new information is of particular concern as Paul Holden is planning to publish a book in March 2024 that focuses on Labour Together and its role in the Labour Party and Keir Starmer MP's leadership – raising concern about the source of his information and what more he may choose to publish in the future. As a result, it is important to identify the source of the information and to ascertain what additional information could be published.

After a review of publicly available information, there appears to be two potential sources for the information about Labour Together's funding that appeared in *The Times* article:

1. A leak from someone within the Electoral Commission or Labour Together to the author; or
2. Illegally-gathered information collected from the 2023 hack of the Electoral Commission that has been passed on to the author.

For the emails concerning Imran Ahmed, it is less clear about the source of this information as there are more potential avenues due to the additional stakeholders which may include:

1. Leaked information from someone within Labour Party HQ or Parliament – such as the five former employees currently engaged in legal action with the Labour Party;
2. Hacked information from Labour Party, Parliamentary emails;
3. Previously unreleased content from the 'Labour Files' that has only recently emerged; or
4. An alternative source that has not previously been considered.

As a result, it is essential that any next steps taken by Labour Together consider the various scenarios listed above when determining a response and strategy in response.

[LABOUR TOGETHER'S DOCUMENT CAN BE DOWNLOADED HERE](#)

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Lisa 21h

You know you're a force to be reckoned with when they put a target on your back. You're in good company with @mtaibbi.

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Vivien C Buckley 18h

Excellent work Paul!! Sure supports the United Nations message yesterday that said Jeffery Epstein files suggests the existence of a global criminal enterprise. What kind of world are we living in? These people all have one thing in common, they all feel entitled. Not only to they feel they're above the law they think of themselves as elite.

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