# Far-right councillor sparks backlash with Holocaust denial claims in Truro



A councillor’s recent comments have ignited a significant backlash after he was filmed asserting that Adolf Hitler had no conflict with Jews and suggesting that the Holocaust was "massively over-exaggerated." Peter Lawrence, a member of the far-right British Democrats, made these controversial claims during a conversation with anti-fascist activists at a "Great British Strike" rally in Truro. Lawrence was elected unopposed to the Mylor Parish Council earlier this year, raising questions about how such views are tolerated within local governance.

In the footage, Lawrence denies the existence of antisemitism, asserting instead that "World Jewry declared war on Germany" and accusing Jews of exacerbating Germany's economic woes following the Treaty of Versailles. He further contended that Hitler aimed to prevent Jewish people from disrupting Germany's self-determination, a fundamentally flawed narrative that disregards historical facts. He stated, "From what I've read and the revisionist historians I have read cannot find a single order from Adolf Hitler calling for the execution of the Jews," a remark that exemplifies a troubling phenomenon in contemporary discourse where denial of historical atrocities has begun to resurface.

Lawrence’s statements echo past incidents involving local politicians in the UK. In 2016, Truro councillor Lance Dyer was suspended for tweeting a link to a Holocaust denial website, casting doubt on the established figure of six million Jewish deaths during the genocide. Although Dyer later expressed regret for his "foolish" actions, the incident drew attention to rising antisemitism both in the UK and across Europe, alongside the urgent calls for political parties to respond meaningfully to such hateful rhetoric.

Another uncomfortable episode arose when Luton councillor Aysegul Gurbuz resigned in the same year after making anti-Semitic tweets that praised Hitler. Her statements, which included offensive remarks about Jews and Palestine, led to suspension from the Labour Party pending an investigation. Such incidents illustrate a troubling pattern that suggests an underlying current of antisemitic belief permeating some political spaces, calling into question the moral and ethical standards expected of public officials.

This disconcerting trend is further complicated by comparisons made by Conservative councillor Justin Thompson, who faced backlash in January 2025 for likening Israel's military actions in Gaza to the Holocaust. This comparison, made just before Holocaust Memorial Day, was met with severe criticism from Jewish groups and spurred calls for disciplinary measures within the Conservative Party. Both Thompson's and Lawrence's remarks highlight a broader issue regarding the sensitivity required when discussing historical events of significant impact and the necessity for responsible political discourse.

Community leaders, politicians, and citizens alike are increasingly challenged to confront these narratives that undermine historical truths and perpetuate hatred. As the conversations around tolerance and accountability in public life gain urgency, it becomes vital for communities to advocate for responsible representation and historical awareness in their elected officials.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2060672/far-right-councillor-sparks-fury), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-36274921)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2060672/far-right-councillor-sparks-fury), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-36274921), [[4]](https://www.lutontoday.co.uk/news/politics/luton-councillor-resigns-over-ill-judged-hitler-slurs-1250522)
* Paragraph 3 – [[5]](https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/tory-councillor-compares-gaza-war-holocaust-hmd-htmt0fjj), [[6]](https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/tory-councillor-compares-gaza-war-holocaust-hmd-htmt0fjj)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2060672/far-right-councillor-sparks-fury> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-36274921> - In 2016, Truro councillor Lance Dyer was suspended by his party after tweeting a link to a Holocaust denial website, suggesting that six million Jews weren't killed in the genocide. The Labour Party condemned the views expressed as 'wholly repugnant' and initiated an investigation into his actions. Dyer later expressed regret, stating he had been 'very foolish' and hoped to make amends. The incident highlighted concerns over rising antisemitism in Europe and the UK, with calls for more meaningful responses from political parties.
3. <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/tory-councillor-compares-gaza-war-holocaust-hmd-htmt0fjj> - In January 2025, Conservative councillor Justin Thompson from Redcar and Cleveland compared Israel's military actions in Gaza to the Holocaust in a Facebook post ahead of Holocaust Memorial Day. His comments drew criticism from Jewish groups, leading to calls for disciplinary action. Thompson's remarks were deemed offensive and inappropriate, prompting an investigation by the Conservative Party. The incident underscored the sensitivity required when discussing historical events like the Holocaust and the importance of responsible political discourse.
4. <https://www.lutontoday.co.uk/news/politics/luton-councillor-resigns-over-ill-judged-hitler-slurs-1250522> - In 2016, Luton councillor Aysegul Gurbuz resigned after anti-Semitic tweets surfaced, including claims that Hitler was the 'greatest man on earth' and that without the Holocaust, 'these Jews would’ve wiped Palestine years ago'. The Labour Party suspended her membership pending an investigation. Gurbuz, then 20, expressed regret, stating she was 'horrified' by her past comments and took full responsibility. The incident highlighted the need for vigilance against rising antisemitism and the importance of holding public officials accountable for their actions.
5. <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/tory-councillor-compares-gaza-war-holocaust-hmd-htmt0fjj> - In January 2025, Conservative councillor Justin Thompson from Redcar and Cleveland compared Israel's military actions in Gaza to the Holocaust in a Facebook post ahead of Holocaust Memorial Day. His comments drew criticism from Jewish groups, leading to calls for disciplinary action. Thompson's remarks were deemed offensive and inappropriate, prompting an investigation by the Conservative Party. The incident underscored the sensitivity required when discussing historical events like the Holocaust and the importance of responsible political discourse.
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7. <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/tory-councillor-compares-gaza-war-holocaust-hmd-htmt0fjj> - In January 2025, Conservative councillor Justin Thompson from Redcar and Cleveland compared Israel's military actions in Gaza to the Holocaust in a Facebook post ahead of Holocaust Memorial Day. His comments drew criticism from Jewish groups, leading to calls for disciplinary action. Thompson's remarks were deemed offensive and inappropriate, prompting an investigation by the Conservative Party. The incident underscored the sensitivity required when discussing historical events like the Holocaust and the importance of responsible political discourse.