



**Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities**

The Rev John Chalmers
Principal Clerk
Church of Scotland
121 George Street
Edinburgh
EH2 4YR

31st October 2012

Dear John,

I have to say we are saddened by your letter.

You have chosen to reproduce a long list furnished by Sizer of his supporters and of those sympathetic to his views. We recognise and have had first hand experience of some of them, and that knowledge offers little re-assurance to us; if anything, it reinforces our concerns. The list of speakers at Friday's conference certainly undermines your assertion that "The Balfour Project does not have a predetermined course". They are certainly not regarded by the mainstream Jewish community as "reputable" – and even if they were that would be irrelevant to the undeniably disreputable nature of other company Sizer habitually keeps.

Many of those quoted as defending him against accusations of antisemitism do so because they share his anti-zionist and anti-Israel views. Although that would seem to be the sole criterion by which he and they select their associates, as I made clear in my original letter, this is not relevant to our complaints against him. We are surprised and disappointed that you have not addressed a single one of the examples of his unsavoury associations contained in our attached file.

I would wish to emphasise once more that our issue with the Church allowing itself to be associated in any way with Sizer does not relate to his views on Israel or the Middle East conflict, unpalatable as they may be to the mainstream of the Jewish community. It is, as intimated in my original correspondence to you, with his open and "repeated flirtations with Holocaust denial, right wing extremism and unabashed antisemitism." I pointed out then and re-iterate now how his web site links to the Protocols, antisemitic conspiracy theories and Holocaust denial. I attached a dossier of information to back up and illustrate these claims and do so again.

I can do no better to summarise that than to quote the Board of Deputies:

"The evidence indicates that he spends time trawling dark and extreme corners of the internet for material to add to his website ... introducing his readers to the racist and antisemitic websites from where he draws his material. ... Revd Sizer keeps some strange company. He has shared a platform with and quoted from Holocaust

222 Fenwick Road, Giffnock, Glasgow, G46 6UE

T: 0141-638 6411

F: 0141-577 8202

scojec@scojec.org

www.scojec.org

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation no. SC029438

deniers, goes on trips to Iran as the guest of the NEDA Institute which contributes to global efforts to deny the Holocaust, and gave an interview with Qods News Agency, a Holocaust denying website. Sizer is also a speaker at the provocatively named Christ at the Checkpoint conference, which features a theology called supersessionism, which has antisemitic overtones.”

(www.bod.org.uk/live/content.php?Item_ID=541)

Your reply to me made no reference whatsoever to these core issues and we therefore would still wish to invite you to address these serious concerns.

You suggest that “the allegations you have compiled should be placed in the hands of the Church of England”. As you know, the Board of Deputies has done so, and the grounds of their disciplinary action have now been placed in the public domain (see www.bod.org.uk/live/content.php?Item_ID=540). Since you say that you “for the time being, accept the judgement of Dr Sizer’s superiors”, we trust you will continue to do so with open minds. We therefore together await the outcome of this unprecedented action with interest.

As for the openness of the “Balfour Project” to those who do not share Sizer’s views, we suggest that the terminology used in the publicity for their other event on Friday speaks for itself: see www.balfourproject.org/?page_id=635. We certainly find it difficult to infer from the evidence before us that its direction of travel is not predetermined.

We therefore urge the Church of Scotland even at this late stage to reconsider allowing itself to be associated with Sizer through this event. I cannot stress too much the seriousness with which the Jewish community will view your public association with Sizer.

We have worked hard together to promote good community relations and to enhance and strengthen the interfaith work in which we are all engaged. Both our communities have endorsed the Scottish Government’s strenuous efforts to make religious hatred unacceptable in all its forms, but the dissemination of Sizer’s message in Scotland must inevitably undermine this.

You say that you “hope we can overcome this difficult moment and seek to move forward in developing our good relationship”. We share that hope, but with some pessimism: please be in no doubt about the harm your willing association with this man and his activities will undoubtedly do.

Yours sincerely



Ephraim Borowski
Director