

Renowned academic Haim Bresheeth arrested in London under Terrorism Act during protest against Israel's genocide

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World-renowned Jewish Israeli historian Professor Haim Bresheeth, a lifelong peace activist and anti-Zionist, was arrested Friday evening in London during a protest against Israeli's genocide of the Palestinians.

Bresheeth, who is in his seventies, is a retired professor of media and culture at the University of East London. He was arrested by police under the Terrorism Act, accused of a "hate speech", outside the official London residence of Israeli ambassador Tzipi Hotovely.

After being held for hours in custody in Charing Cross police station, he was released without charge Saturday morning. A video of his arrest, published by left-wing website *The Skwawkbox*, can be viewed here, and in their X posting below.

Bresheeth, the son of holocaust survivors, was arrested after making a speech at the protest against Hotovely, with a police officer stating that he was suspected of "hate speech". The arresting officer refused to tell Bresheeth, and other protesters present, what his supposed hate speech consisted of.

In the video two police officers are seen approaching Bresheeth with one asking that he come away from the people he was with as "I need to speak to you over here." Bresheeth asks "what have I done?" Another person says to the police officer, "Not on his own." The people with Bresheeth ask for and receive the collar IDs of the police.

The male police officer then states: "So, earlier today, you made a speech. So you are under arrest under the Terrorism Act 2000, for making a hate speech."

Bresheeth replies, "A hate speech? I made a hate speech? Are you talking about somebody else probably. Not in this demonstration."

The police officer then reads Bresheeth his rights and says to him, "So you are nice and calm at the moment so [pointing over his shoulder] we are just going to walk

over here away from the crowds".

Bresheeth replies, "I don't understand why you are stopping me" and another person says, "You need to tell him what's he's alleged to have said".

The police officer takes Bresheeth away, as protesters shout, "Shame, shame", "Shame on you" and "You are arresting a Jewish man". Protesters are blocked off from Bresheeth by at least four police officers.

In his speech outside Hotovely's residence—which can be viewed on *Skwawkbox* here—Bresheeth denounces the Israeli war machine stating that Israel "has not achieved any of its declared aims, either in Gaza, in Lebanon, in Iran or anywhere else. What has it achieved? Murder, mayhem, genocide, racism, destruction. This is what they are good at. They're really good at killing babies. They're really good at killing women and old men. But they cannot fight the resistance. They have lost every single time."

He said that while Israel "has won a number of wars against very big and successful armies... They cannot win against Hamas, they cannot win against Hezbollah, they cannot win against the Houthis, they cannot win against the united resistance to the genocide that they have started."

According to *Skwawkbox*, a Metropolitan Police spokesperson said Bresheeth was arrested to "prevent intimidation and serious disruption to communities", and that police had to maintain "a constant balancing act". The spokesperson said, "One man was arrested on suspicion of showing support for a proscribed organisation. This person had been a speaker at the demonstration. He has been released under investigation."

Peaceful protests have been held weekly for over a year against Hotovely at the residence located in the borough of Camden. These are organised by the UK branch of the

International Jewish Antizionist Network (IJAN), and Jewish Network for Palestine (JNP). The protests demand the government expel Hotovely for her pro-genocide views. Justifying Israel's mass bombing of Gaza last January, and the killing of thousands of men, women and children, Hotovely told LBC Radio's Iain Dale, "I really want to mention the fact that Gaza has an underground tunnel city and in order to get to this underground tunnel city, those areas must be destroyed."

Hotovely added, "And one of the things we were exposed to after getting into the areas in Gaza that we try to find all those tunnels and underground metro city that Hamas has built thanks to this great support of Iran, Qatar, of the international community generosity, everything turned [out] to be this horrible terrorist city. One of the things we realize is that every school, every mosque, every second house has access to these tunnels."

Asked by Dale if her comments were a call for the destruction of all of Gaza, Hotovely responded, "Do you have another solution?"

None of Britain's mainstream national or local media have even reported Bresheeth's detention. The only media to report Bresheeth arrest was the Qatar-based *Al Jazeera*, and independent outlets including *Skwawkbox* and the *Middle East Eye*.

Bresheeth is an author, photographer and filmmaker whose journalistic work—going back almost four decades—includes a widely viewed documentary film on the first Palestinian Intifada, originally shown by the BBC in 1988.

As part of his fight to oppose the victimisation of himself and others under the bogus claims of "antisemitism" by the Labour Party—which began under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn—Bresheeth provided a biography to the party in February 2020 while Corbyn was still leader.

He wrote that he is "an academic, an ex-Israeli Jew who has been active for over five decades as a socialist, anti-Zionist and anti-racist activist. My parents were Polish Jews, survivors of Auschwitz and other camps. They ended forced onto death marches to the Third Reich after the Auschwitz camp was vacated by the SS in Mid-January 1945. My mother was freed by the British forces in Bergen-Belsen, and my father was freed by the US forces in Mauthausen. I was born in a Displaced Persons Camp in Italy, and arrived in Israel as a baby, during June 1948, as no European country would then accept Holocaust survivors.

"I served in the Israeli Army (IDF) as a junior infantry

officer, and took part in two wars, in 1967 and 1973, after which I turned into a committed pacifist. I came to study in Britain in 1972, and a short while afterwards I have learnt much about Zionism which I did not while in Israel, thus becoming an ardent supporter of Palestinian rights, and an anti-Zionist activist. I was an active supporter of the Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Labour member in the 1970s and acted against racist organisations throughout my life. My films, books and articles reflect the same political views outlined here; these include a popular book on the Holocaust (*Introduction to the Holocaust*, with Stuart Hood, 1994, 2001 2014), among others, a BBC documentary film (*State of Danger*, with Jenny Morgan, BBC2, March 1988) about the first Intifada, and a forthcoming volume on the Israeli Army (*An Army Like No Other*, May 2020). I have re-joined the Labour Party after decades, when Jeremy Corbyn was elected to the leadership, as I regained hope in promoting a progressive agenda for the party, after years of Blairism."

Bresheeth resigned from the Labour Party in August 2021, citing the expulsion of left-wing filmmaker Ken Loach from the party as the last straw. In his resignation letter to Sir Keir Starmer, seen by the *Electronic Intifada* publication, Bresheeth wrote that the new Labour leader had "perfected a regime of inquisition in the Labour Party, searching for anti-Semitism in every group which supports a just peace in Palestine."

Bresheeth's arrest follows the hounding of prominent academics in Britain, under the Conservative and now Labour government, in office since July, as part of a clampdown aimed at silencing protests against genocide—especially those that have erupted on campuses. These include the cases of Professor David Miller, Professor James Dickins, and Dr. Shahd Abusalama. Anti-terrorism legislation has also been used in the arrests and intimidation of pro-Palestinian journalists including Sarah Wilkinson, Richard Medhurst and Asa Winstanley.



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