

Prominent anti-Zionist Tony Greenstein charged in Britain under Terrorism Act

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The charging of prominent anti-Zionist Tony Greenstein under anti-terror laws is the latest move by the British state to intimidate and silence opposition to the war in Gaza.

Greenstein, aged 70, has been charged under the Terrorism Act 2000 by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) on one count of inviting support for a proscribed organisation, Hamas. He is bailed to appear at Westminster Magistrates' Court on December 12.

Greenstein is a co-founder of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC), which, along the Stop the War Coalition and Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has organised more than 20 national protests against Israel's genocide of the Palestinians. A supporter of former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, Greenstein was expelled from the party in 2018—while Corbyn was still in charge—based on manufactured charges of antisemitism. His father was a Rabbi who marched against Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists during the 1930s.

On November 25, Greenstein received an e-mail "Case Update" from DC 5520 of Investigations Team 3, Counter-Terrorism Policing South East. This stated, "I have today received a response from the CPS in relation to the ongoing case against you. The CPS have authorised one charge, contrary to Section 12(1) of the Terrorism Act 2000, expressing support for a proscribed organisation".

The e-mail continued, "I appreciate that this has taken a long time to reach this decision and the result will be disappointing for you." The letter instructed Greenstein to attend a police station on November 27, "where the charge will be read to you and you will be released under the same bail conditions as you are currently on."

The *Skwawkbox* website reported that Greenstein attended the police station on November 29 "because of hospital treatment". The alleged offence could see him jailed for a maximum of 14 years. This was increased from 10 years when the Counter-Terrorism and Sentencing Act 2021 came into force.

It has been almost a year since police raided Greenstein's home in the early hours of December 20, 2023 for a social

media post defending the right of the Palestinians to resist Israel's genocide in Gaza. During the raid police seized his phone and laptop and held him for nine hours. The *World Socialist Web Site* noted, "While Greenstein has not been charged with any offence, draconian bail conditions have been imposed. He is banned from posting statements on Twitter/X about Israel's war on Gaza, he must inform police if he plans to sleep anywhere other than Brighton, and must give police the phone number, IMEI and SIM number for any new device within 24 hours."

Denouncing the police raid and the seizure of his electronic devices as an intelligence gathering exercise against the state's "enemies on the Left and in the Palestine solidarity movement," Greenstein told the *World Socialist Web Site* his arrest was "a fundamental attack on free speech and must be resisted on those grounds, amongst others".

Explaining what happened he said, "My arrest was for a tweet I made on 15 November 2023 by someone identifying himself only as James who demanded:

"Just tweet I support Hamas! 3 words is all you have to tweet and then we know where you stand."

I refused to take the bait and responded, '*I support the Palestinians that is enough*' before going on to say '*I support Hamas against the Israeli army*'. As I told my police interrogators after my arrest I would have supported the devil against Israel's genocidal army."

Greenstein told *Skwawkbox*, "I've been charged under the notorious s.12 of the Terrorism Act 2000 with expressing an opinion or belief in support of a proscribed organisation.

"It is clear that this is a clear attack on the right of people to express their opinions on the right of Palestinians to resist the genocidal Israeli military. It is perfectly fine to support Israel's genocidal massacres but it is an offence to support any resistance.

"This absurd situation is akin to criminalising the Resistance against the Nazi occupation of France. It is criminalising political opinion and has nothing whatsoever to do with terrorism. Suffice to say I shall be mounting a vigorous defence in support of Free Speech on Palestine."

Greenstein has faced repeated persecution and arrest for protesting the Israel Defence Forces' mass slaughter of the Palestinians.

On September 6, 2023, he was handed a nine month prison sentence, suspended for two years, for his part in a *planned* Palestine Action activity at an arms factory at Shenstone, England owned by Israel's largest weapons firm, Elbit Systems. The Palestine Action website site reported "five activists from Palestine Action were scheduled to be sentenced after being convicted for 'possession of items with intent to commit criminal damage'. Judge Michael Chambers stated he would sentence them as though they would have committed over £30K of criminal damage..."

"Initially, there were six activists who were stopped in a van on the way to an Israeli weapons factory in Shenstone. On May 15th 2023, after a 7 week trial, four out of the six were convicted by a jury. This came after the Judge refused to allow any justification defences for the activists actions, including preventing the greater crime, Israel's war crimes against the Palestinian people committed by Elbit's weaponry."

The factory was targeted because it specialised "in making engines for combat drones, which Elbit openly market as 'battle-tested' on the Palestinian population. The Hermes 450 aircraft has been used to surveil and attack the people of Gaza for over a decade, decimating thousands of lives.

"The factory also manufactures parts for the Watchkeeper, used to surveil migrants seeking refuge in the UK, and the Shadow drone, which forms part of the US military arsenal, notably used in the American invasion of Iraq and likely to be used in ongoing attacks on Yemen."

The crackdown on anti-Elbit protesters is intensifying. A group of activists—the Filton 10—who targeted the Elbit Systems factory in Filton, Bristol remain behind bars four months after they were arrested and detained under anti-terrorism laws. The 10 were later charged with non-terror related offences, including criminal damage, but were imprisoned on remand under harsh and repressive conditions due to their initial questioning by counter-terrorism police.

On October 4, Greenstein was arrested for a "racially aggravated" offence while protesting outside the official London residence of Israeli ambassador Tzipi Hotovely. Protests at the residence demanding the government expel Hotovely for her pro-genocide views have been held weekly. Greenstein wrote, "I spoke, as a Jewish anti-Zionist at the lobby and I compared the behaviour of the Nazis to Israel's genocide of Palestinians." This was said four months after the prestigious *Lancet* concluded that according to a "conservative" estimate, the IDF had already killed around 186,000 Gazan men, women and children.

Israel's genocide in Gaza began with a crisis-ridden

Conservative government still in power in Britain. Under Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, the Tories gave Israel total support in alliance with the Labour opposition under Sir Keir Starmer. There was a single Conservative/Labour party of war in Parliament with Sunak assured of Labour's backing in support of the NATO-led war against Russia in Ukraine.

Since Labour came to office in July, suppression of anti-war sentiment has accelerated with protesters arrested and their democratic rights abused along with a growing number of journalists.

On October 29, world-renowned Jewish Israeli historian Professor Haim Bresheeth, a lifelong peace activist and anti-Zionist, was arrested outside Hotovely's residence during a protest against Israeli's genocide of the Palestinians.

On November 24, a further eight Palestine Action activists were remanded to prison after an action targeting the Filton factory. They too were arrested and interrogated under Terrorism Act powers, before being hit with criminal—not terror—charges.

Following the arrest under anti-terror laws, in April, 2023 of Ernest Moret—the foreign rights manager for the Éditions La Fabrique publishing house—*Grayzone* writer Kit Klarenberg was detained at Luton Airport under the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act (2019). In October last year independent journalist Craig Murray was detained under schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act (2000).

Within the six months of the Labour government, independent journalists Richard Medhurst, Sarah Wilkinson and Asa Winstanley have all been arrested in operations involving counter-terror officers.



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