

Funding the Future

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This was Zarah Sultana MP's [speech in the Commons](#) yesterday on the proscription of Palestine Action as a terrorist organisation, which the nodding donkeys in Labour later voted through:

Twenty-one years ago, a human rights barrister stood in court and defended an activist who broke into RAF Fairford trying to disable a bomber to prevent war crimes in Iraq. That became a landmark case in lawful, non-violent direct action against an illegal war. That barrister is now our Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer KC. He argued that it was not terrorism but conscience.

Fast-forward to 20 June 2025: two Palestine Action activists entered RAF Brize Norton and sprayed red paint—red paint, not fire—on aircraft linked to surveillance flights over Gaza. Instead of prosecuting them for criminal damage, which is what normally is done, the Home Secretary is using the Terrorism Act 2000 to proscribe Palestine Action as a terrorist group. This is an unprecedented and dangerous overreach of the state. Never before in Britain has it been a crime to simply support a group.

This order lumps a non-violent network of students, nurses, teachers, firefighters and peace campaigners—ordinary people, my constituents and yours—with neo-Nazi militias and mass-casualty cults. Palestine Action's crime is, we have to be clear, shutting down Elbit Systems sites that arm the Israeli military; its true offence is being audacious enough to expose the blood-soaked ties between this Government and the genocidal Israeli apartheid state and its war machine.

Let us be clear: to equate a spray can of paint with a suicide bomb is not just absurd; it is grotesque. It is a deliberate distortion of the law to chill dissent, criminalise solidarity and suppress the truth. Amnesty international, Liberty, over 266 senior lawyers and UN special rapporteurs have all opposed these draconian measures. Even at this late stage, the order should be withdrawn.

Under this order, anyone expressing moral support for a proscribed group could face 14 years in prison. That includes wearing a badge, wearing a T-shirt, sharing a post or calling for de-proscription. And journalists have no exemption either: there is no legal protection for reporting favourably, even factually, about Palestine Action. By this

weekend, millions of people, including many of our constituents, could be placed under these sweeping restrictions.

Let us not forget what is happening in Gaza, where the real crimes are being ignored: hospitals bombed, children starved, and tens of thousands of people killed. Palestinian children now suffer more amputations per capita than children anywhere else on earth. Israel is on trial for genocide at the International Court of Justice and the Israeli Prime Minister faces an International Criminal Court arrest warrant, yet the Government's response is to criminalise solidarity and to continue exporting lethal F-35 jets that are decimating Gaza.

We also have to understand the history of this country and what built our democracy: the tradition of civil disobedience that includes the suffragettes, without whom I would not have the vote, let alone the privilege of being here as an MP.

Even those who oppose Palestine Action's tactics must recognise the vast gulf between criminal damage and terrorism. If this order passes, what and who is next—climate protesters, striking workers, feminists in the street? Already we have seen a wider crackdown on our civil liberties—musicians censored, journalists arrested, and demonstrators, including MPs sitting here, harassed—and now this Government want to use anti-terror laws to make peaceful protest itself a crime. If our democratic institutions functioned as they should, none of this would be necessary.

To conclude, if this proscription passes, as it will, we have to understand that no campaign will be safe tomorrow. We have to recognise that this will go down as a dark day in our country's history and one that will be remembered: people will ask, "Which side were you on?" and I stand with the millions of people who oppose genocide, because I am one of them. I oppose the blood-soaked hands of this Government trying to silence us. So I say this loudly and proudly on Wednesday 2 July 2025: we are all Palestine.

I agree.

Jeremy Corbyn said this in the debate:

If the order goes through today, it will have a chilling effect on protest. I quote a letter sent to the Home Secretary on 28 June:

"Direct action is a longstanding and respected part of British political history. From the suffragettes chaining themselves to railings, to striking miners, to anti-apartheid campaigners occupying institutions and disrupting trade, civil disobedience and direct action have always been necessary forces for progress and justice."

He was right.

And I note this Tweet:

That's what hypocrisy looks like, Labour style.

Yesterday was another very sorry day in the long history of the oppression of the freedom to protest in the UK. And whether Labour likes it or not, the fact that they so clearly side with genocide will not be hidden from view.