

Fascist killer of Labour MP Jo Cox to stand trial for murder

Robert Stevens
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Thomas Mair, the fascist charged with the June 16 murder of Labour Party MP Jo Cox, appeared Thursday for a pre-trial hearing at the Old Bailey criminal court in London.

Mair appeared via video link from Belmarsh jail, where he is being held in custody. A provisional trial date was set for November 14, with further pre-trial hearings scheduled for September and October.

Mair was witnessed stabbing and shooting Cox to death outside a library as she was about to meet some of her Batley and Spenningsdale constituents in the village of Birstall, West Yorkshire. Eyewitnesses heard Mair shout “Britain First” several times during the murder. Britain First is the name of a fascist organisation formed in 2011.

The political assassination took place under conditions in which a right-wing, xenophobic atmosphere demonising immigrants has been whipped up by both the Leave and Remain camps in the run-up to Thursday’s referendum on the UK membership of the European Union (EU).

Cox was an outspoken supporter of the Remain campaign for the UK to stay in the EU and campaigned in support of refugees. Both of these policies are strongly opposed by Britain’s far right. Cox also protested in January this year, via social media, a demonstration in support of a vote to leave the EU held near her constituency by Britain First.

On Monday the *Times* reported that Cox was “about to launch a report in parliament warning of the dangers posed by nationalist radicals.” Cox, the newspaper reports, “was to launch the report on June 29 in the Houses of Parliament and had recorded a video to be played to guests.”

The report was authored by Tell Mama, an organization that describes itself as a supporter of

“victims of anti-Muslim hate” and a “public service which also measures and monitors anti-Muslim incidents.” The *Times* states the report “shows an 80 percent increase in Islamophobic attacks and warns that Yorkshire, the county where Mrs Cox was born, is a hotbed of far-right activity.”

Speaking to the *Times*, Fiyaz Mughal, director of Tell Mama, said, “In the last 18 months South Yorkshire is one of the leading areas in the country [for Islamophobic incidents].”

West Yorkshire is also the location of the organisers of the fascist Redwatch web site, which regularly publishes photographs and information, including personal details, of left-wing individuals and organisations. It places the names of “enemies,” with all their data, including photographs, telephone numbers and addresses on the site’s web pages. Among its main targets are anti-fascist groups.

When asked his name at his first appearance at Westminster Magistrates Court in London last Saturday, Mair replied, “My name is “death to traitors, freedom for Britain.”

According to the crime summary case, presented by Crown Prosecution Service barrister David Cawthorne, as Mair was arrested he told police officers he was a “political activist.” Describing his frenzied attack on Cox, the barrister said Mair was seen to stab her “repeatedly.” Cawthorne said that when Cox fell to the ground, Mair took a firearm from a black bag and shot her three times. He then continued to stab her. “Whilst doing that, Cawthorne said, “the defendant was heard to say words to the effect of ‘Britain first, keep Britain independent, Britain always comes first, this is for Britain.’”

The prosecution summary of the crime states: “Initial searches [of Mair’s home] have recovered newspaper

articles relating to Jo Cox and ideological material relating to extreme right-wing and white supremacist organisations/individuals.”

Within a week of the murder, a substantial body of documentary evidence has emerged pointing to Mair’s decades-long activity as a fascist--going back at least to 1991.

Mair was a subscriber to the far right *South African Patriot*, a South African magazine founded in 1980 and published by a pro-apartheid group, the White Rhino Club. It was re-established in 1991 as *South African Patriot In Exile*. The *Daily Telegraph* reported that the Club “described the magazine’s editorial stance as being opposed to ‘multi-cultural societies’ and ‘expansionist Islam’.”

The magazine was edited by former National Front member Alan Harvey. The National Front, a UK fascist group, was founded in 1967. The *Daily Mirror* reported that a blog post attributed to Harvey, dated January 2006, described Mair as “one of the earliest subscribers and supporters of S. A. Patriot.”

He requested, “If anyone knows of his new address then we would be very grateful to learn the details.”

The newspaper reported last week that Harvey “told the Mirror he was trying to set up an S.A. Patriot group in the Yorkshire area at the time, and sent letters to everyone in the area they had contact details for.”

Documents published by the United States-based civil rights group, the Southern Poverty Law Centre, include two letters Mair wrote to the *South African Patriot In Exile*, the earliest in 1991.

The 1991 letter begins with Mair, who listed his address as Batley, UK, writing, “I recently received copies of SA Patriot Nos 28 and 29, via the British National Front. I was most impressed by your publication and the insight it gives into the South African scene.” He adds, “The nationalist movement in the UK also continues to fight on against the odds. ... Despite everything I still have faith that the White Race will prevail, both in Britain and in South Africa, but I fear that it’s going to be a very long and very bloody struggle.”

In his 1999 letter, Mair writes, “I was glad you strongly condemned ‘collaborators’ in the White South African population. In my opinion the greatest enemy of the old Apartheid system was not the ANC [African National Congress] and the Black masses but White

liberals and traitors.”

The SPLC also published documents establishing Mair’s support for the US-based neo-Nazi National Alliance group. Mair is reported to have purchased books from the National Alliance, founded by William Pierce, author of the notorious racist tract, “The Turner Diaries.” These included guides on how to build homemade explosives, guns and a copy of *Ich Kampfe*, a handbook for members of Hitler’s Nazi Party. The SPLC published four receipts dated 1999 and 2003 showing that Mair spent \$620 (£436) on the literature.



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