

# UK: Convicted fascist Finsbury Park attacker planned to kill Jeremy Corbyn

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Darren Osborne was jailed February 2 for carrying out a terrorist attack near the Finsbury Park mosque in London last June.

Just after midnight on June 19, Osborne took the life of one man, Makram Ali, who died of multiple injuries and injured 12 others when he ploughed a hired van into Muslim worshippers who were attending to Ali due to an existing medical condition—just 100 yards from the mosque.

Osborne was charged with murder and attempted murder. After being found guilty of both charges, he was sentenced to serve at least 43 years in prison—with the judge stating that he was guilty of “terrorist murder.”

What is extraordinary is how little has been said about the fact that Osborne admitted that, before deciding to kill people in Finsbury Park, he had planned to murder Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn and London Mayor Sadiq Khan.

Responding to questions from the prosecution, Osborne told the court that he and two other men, “Terry Jones” and “Dave,” planned to attack a June 18 Al Quds protest in central London where he believed “Jeremy Corbyn would be in attendance.”

Asked whether he was planning to attack Corbyn, Osborne replied, “Oh yeah,” adding “it would be one less terrorist off our streets ... If Sadiq Khan would have been there it would have been even better, like winning the lottery.”

Osborne told the court that they were not able to carry out attacks against Corbyn and Khan as roadblocks had “thwarted their plans.”

The roadblocks were in place because of the controversial nature of the Al Quds demonstration, which neither Corbyn nor Khan, in fact, attended.

Osborne told the court that the three men later drove

to Finsbury Park: “It was Jeremy Corbyn’s constituency. That’s what gave us the idea ...”

He also said their initial plan was to kill another Labour politician, Aftab Hussain, a councillor in the northwest town of Rochdale. Asked why they changed their mind about targeting Hussain, Osborne told the court, “We just wanted more casualties.”

Osborne was arrested after being attacked and detained by a crowd of people when he got out of the van. CCTV showed that he carried out the attack alone, despite his claims that “Dave” had driven the van into the worshippers.

Osborne was determined to carry out political assassinations having been radicalised by the fascist propaganda of Britain First.

He signed up for a Twitter account on June 3, just 16 days before the Finsbury Park attack. He had read messages from Tommy Robinson, the former leader of the fascist English Defence League, and Jayda Fransen, a leader of Britain First. Prosecutor Rees said Osborne received a “direct message” from Fransen—the group’s deputy leader—on the same day he signed up.

A week later, Osborne received an email from Robinson. The message was on the subject of the Manchester terrorist attack that had taken place the previous month in which the perpetrator, Salman Abedi, killed 22 people. Robinson wrote, “What Salman Abedi did is not the beginning, and it won’t be the end.

“There is a nation within a nation forming just beneath the surface of the UK. It is a nation built on hatred, on violence and on Islam.”

Robinson’s message made hostile statements about Abedi’s local mosque. He sent Osborne a further email addressed to “Dear Darren” on June 14, making hostile statements against “refugees from Syria and Iraq” in

Sunderland. This was just five days before Osborne's attack. So influenced was Osborne by Robinson's putrid views that he left some of Robinson's tweets printed out on the dashboard of the van he used in the attack.

On the evening of Osborne's conviction, the BBC's flagship *Newsnight* team invited Robinson on air for an interview. Robinson was given the opportunity to publicise his current far-right activity and air his reactionary views, including saying supportively of Osborne, "... he wrote, 'Terrorists march through our country today.' There was an Al Quds march."

Osborne's radicalisation ended with him establishing connections to fascist groups, but it was prepared by a more general climate of political reaction.

Osborne's attack took place just after a General Election campaign, with the campaign by Prime Minister Theresa May pitched in terms of "security." Following a series of terrorist attacks, May claimed she was the only one who could keep Britain "safe." Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was presented as the "terrorist's friend." An example of the bile hurled at Corbyn was an article in the *Daily Express* just days before the Manchester bombing that was headlined, "Jeremy Corbyn is anti-British and a friend to terrorists."

The official web site of the Conservatives listed nine things to know about Corbyn, with three of them, "HE WON'T STAND UP TO TERRORISM—AND OPPOSES SHOOT-TO-KILL ... HE CALLS TERRORISTS 'FRIENDS'—AND INVITED THE IRA TO PARLIAMENT... and "HE WANTS UNLIMITED IMMIGRATION." These statements remain on Conservative.com.

How far is all this from Osborne's statement that Corbyn's death would mean, "one less terrorist on our streets"?

This is not the first time that Britain First have been directly connected to the assassination of a political figure seen to be of the left.

Just a year before Osborne's attack, Thomas Mair, a fascist with long-standing connections to fascist outfits, murdered Labour MP Jo Cox. As he repeatedly shot and stabbed Cox, Mair shouted, "Britain first! This is for Britain. Britain will always come first."

Britain First had been active in Cox's constituency for some time.

In December, US President Trump retweeted three Britain First videos posted by Fransen, resulting in a sizeable increase in their online following.

Another terrorist attack last June by a fascist was only narrowly averted when police arrested a 20-year-old man, Ethan Stables, after receiving a tip-off.

This week, Stables was found guilty of preparing an act of terrorism, threats to kill and possessing explosives. Leeds Crown Court heard that Stables posted an online message that he planned to commit "slaughter" at an LGBT event with a machete at the New Empire pub in Barrow, Cumbria.

The revelations that emerged in Osborne's trial must be taken as a serious warning of the far-right tendencies being cultivated by sections of the ruling elite and the media. These forces will ultimately be used to suppress a mass movement of the working class, under conditions of growing social inequality.

Nothing has been said by any senior political figure about Osborne's plans to kill three Labour politicians. In his own statement on Osborne's conviction, Corbyn did not refer to the fact that he was the initial target. He said only that Osborne, "planned a hate-filled attack that murdered Makram Ali and shocked us all. He attacked the community I represent, Muslims in Britain and the values we all share."



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