

Scottish prosecutors allege "terrorist connection" over Trump golf course protest, as juries throw out terror cases

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An indictment released by the Scottish courts service this week reveals that seven people charged over a pro-Palestinian protest at Donald Trump's Turnberry golf resort in Ayrshire are accused of an offence 'aggravated by reason of having a terrorist connection'.

Seven people are charged over the March 8, 2025 action: Kieran Robson (aged 35); Uzma Bashir (56); Ricky Southall (34); Autumn Taylor Ward (22); Rebecca Sian Davies (29); John Moxley (58); and Dylan Chiaramello (24).

Their first appearance at the High Court in Glasgow, due on August 31, was adjourned to October. Robson, Bashir and Davies face an additional charge of attempting to "defeat the ends of justice", with prosecutors alleging that they drove to and from the resort on false registration plates.

The 16-page indictment describes damage to a luxury golf course where non-residents pay up to £1,000 a round. The accused, it states, 'did maliciously damage property there in that you did maliciously dig up turf on the golf course, spray glyphosate [weed killer] or similar substance on the fairways and greens, spray a building and signpost with paint, paint political and offensive slogans on the grass, score a political slogan into the turf, paint political and offensive slogans on a building, walls and pillars, damage a sprinkler system causing flooding, and damage a light'.

The 'political and offensive slogans' were 'Free Gaza', 'Free Palestine' and 'Gaza is not 4 sale'—a reference to Trump's plan to expel the Palestinian population and redevelop Gaza as a 'riviera' resort. No terrorism offence has been formally charged. The Crown is attaching a terrorism aggravation to a charge of malicious mischief, permitting far longer sentences for what is, on the prosecution's own account, the spraying of paint and

weedkiller.

The timeline demonstrates a conspiracy at the highest levels of the Trump administration and Britain's Labour government to label political protest "terrorism". Within weeks of the action, Trump branded those responsible 'terrorists' who should be 'treated harshly'. On March 13, 2025, Scottish First Minister John Swinney met Trump's son Eric and, the official note records, 'offered reassurance that the relevant authorities would continue to take the incident seriously'.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* reported in August 2025, evidence had already emerged by then that the proscription of Palestine Action (PA) the previous month was a central demand of the Trump administration.

Declassified UK's John McEvoy sought the minutes of the then Labour Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer's calls with Trump on March 11 and March 30, 2025 and 'all references to Palestine Action in both phone calls'. The Cabinet Office released nothing, admitting it 'holds information of relevance' while claiming an exemption on national security grounds.

On August 26 this year, two days before the Turnberry indictment appeared, the US Treasury designated Palestine Action a terrorist organisation, froze its US-controlled assets, and extended sanctions to an international Palestinian solidarity movement Masar Badil (Alternative Palestinian Revolutionary Path Movement). The same day, the Treasury separately imposed financial penalties on Autistici Inventati, an Italian collective that provides digital services to left-wing groups, including pro-Palestine organisations.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent declared, 'Far-left extremists, their fronts, and their enablers should be on notice: We will bring the full weight of our economic tools to bear.'

The governments in Washington and London share a common agenda of imperialist war abroad and the repression of anti-war, anti-genocide action at home. But they are running up against enormous popular opposition.

A week before the move to add a terrorism connection in the Turnberry case, another judge refused a request from the prosecution to do so in a case against five Palestine Action activists who vandalised a Barclays bank branch in Burnley in August 2024. More significantly, the assault on democratic rights meeting resistance from juries.

On August 19, after more than 37 hours of deliberation, the jury in the second Filton trial at the Old Bailey was discharged having failed to reach verdicts on 14 of 15 charges. The eight defendants were accused of helping plan the August 2024 direct action against the Elbit Systems factory near Bristol. One guilty verdict for criminal damage was returned by a nine-to-one majority against a defendant who cannot be named. William Plastow had already been cleared of violent disorder.

Widespread anti-war sentiment was clear as supporters applauded; the jury foreman reportedly raised his fist as he left court. A hearing on September 14 will decide whether the Crown seeks a retrial.

All eight defendants were held on remand for up to 18 months, far beyond the six-month custody limit. Teuta Hoxha was one of several Filton detainees—including Kamran Ahmed, Qesser Zuhrah and Heba Muraisi—who went on hunger strike demanding bail and a fair trial. Hoxha's own strike ran 60 days, from November 2025 into January 2026, before her release on bail that February.

None of the eight in the second trial were even at the Elbit factory--a key supplier to the Israeli Defense Forces. Instead, prosecutors sought to convict them on joint enterprise powers. Aleksandra Herbach was alleged to have cooked pasta for the group the night before and paid £50 for a campsite. Hannah Davidson was accused of driving Jordan Devlin to a DIY store--Devlin having already been acquitted of any offence connected to Elbit protest.

The first Filton trial collapsed in February, with the defendants acquitted of aggravated burglary and no verdicts on criminal damage. Only at the May retrial were four convicted. A terrorism connection was then applied by Justice Jeremy Johnson at sentencing in June, producing combined sentences of more than 25 years. The jurors were never told their verdicts would have this result.

Two days after the second Filton jury was discharged, a jury at Kingston Crown Court took two hours and eleven minutes to unanimously acquit the anti-Zionist writer Tony Greenstein. He had been charged under Section 12(1) of the Terrorism Act 2000 with inviting support for Hamas, a proscribed group.

The charge rested on three social media posts on October 7, 2023, linking to his blog, in which he wrote of a 'Gaza ghetto uprising'. Greenstein--whose relatives were murdered at Treblinka and whose father confronted Mosley's fascists at Cable Street in 1936--faced 14 years in prison.

Judge Sarah Plaschkes KC repeatedly warned him against treating the court as a 'political forum', insisting the jury was 'not concerned with events in the Middle East'. Half the disputed blog post and dozens of his articles attacking Hamas were excluded from evidence.

In his own closing speech, Greenstein told the jury Britain's terrorism laws were drafted so broadly they would have criminalised the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. The Canary reported that Plaschkes, having floated contempt proceedings, dismissed his address as a rambling speech delivered by an old man. According to the news site, it was the fourth jury acquittal in seven recent Section 12 prosecutions over pro-Palestinian speech.

Events in the Filton case, along with Greenstein's, make clear the gulf between mass anti-war sentiment and a state committed to war, austerity and repression. But there can be no complacency; the defence of democratic rights cannot be entrusted to the courts, as the Trump golf course case demonstrates.

The extent of the ongoing criminalisation of political protest is evidenced in Home Office figures which record a staggering 3,061 terrorism-related arrests in the year to March 2026--2,819 of them linked to suspected support for Palestine Action. The average age was 59, against 31 for other terrorism arrests, and most were women.

The fight against this repression--and the proscription of Palestine Action, terrorism laws and threats to jury trials--demands the independent political mobilisation of the working class against the Labour government, on the basis of a socialist programme.



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