

Webinar summary for Justice for Tony Greenstein - Repeal the Terrorism Act (08/11/2026)

Quick recap

The webinar, organized by the Justice for Tony Greenstein campaign, focused on the upcoming trial of Tony Greenstein under Section 12 of the Terrorism Act 2000 for expressing support for Palestinian resistance. Speakers including Ali Abunimah, Ghada Karmi, Annette Norman, Ronnie Kasrils, Huda Amouri, Lubna Speitan, and Tony himself discussed the broader context of state repression against Palestine solidarity activism in the UK and internationally. They highlighted the use of counter-terrorism laws to criminalize political speech, the prescription of Palestine Action as a terrorist group, and the targeting of activists like the Filton 25. The panelists emphasized the historical and ongoing complicity of the British government in supporting Israel's actions, the importance of international solidarity, and the need to resist attempts to silence criticism of Israel and Zionism. The meeting also addressed the chilling effect of these laws on free speech and the right to protest, with calls for continued support and solidarity with those facing prosecution.

Summary

Anti-Semitism and Regional Concerns

The discussion focused on addressing anti-Semitism accusations and the context of attacks and restrictions, with Tony suggesting how to approach the topic while avoiding support for Hamas to avoid prosecution.

Court Appearance and Terrorism Act

Tony discussed his upcoming court appearance on the 18th, explaining that the first day will involve legal arguments and jury selection, followed by prosecution and defense cases. He expressed concerns about his legal representation and indicated he will likely deliver the closing speech himself. The conversation then shifted to discussions about the Terrorism Act and its impact on various protest movements, with participants comparing it to South Africa's terrorism legislation and noting how it restricts defendants from explaining their motivations.

Virtual Meeting Technical Issues

Cathy Farnworth was the chair for the meeting and outlined the agenda, which included speakers presenting in the order listed on the poster, with no questions during presentations but an hour for discussion afterward.

Tony Greenstein Trial Discussion

Catherine introduced a webinar organized by the Justice for Tony Greenstein campaign to discuss his upcoming trial under Section 12 of the Terrorism Act 2000, which criminalizes supporting prescribed organizations or expressing supportive opinions. Ali Abunima, director of the Electronic Intifada, spoke about the broader implications of using anti-terrorism laws to criminalize political speech about Palestine, citing examples of repression in Switzerland and the United States. Ali emphasized that Tony's prosecution is a test case for the British government's efforts to silence critics of Israel's actions in Gaza and called for support for Tony's defense and an end to using terrorism laws against political speech and Palestine solidarity.

Palestinian Activism Defense Event

Catherine introduced speakers at an event defending Tony Greenstein, including Ali Abunimah who shared his experience of incarceration in Switzerland for supporting Palestinian rights, and Ghada Kami who discussed Greenstein's activism and persecution by the British state. Ghada explained that Greenstein's real "crime" was being an outspoken anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian activist, and shared her own experience of being investigated for terrorism after speaking about Hamas at a literary festival in Lewes. Annette Norman, mother of Maddie Norman who is one of the "Filton 25" activists, described their action against an Elbit Systems weapons facility and the subsequent counter-terrorism raids and lengthy imprisonment of the activists.

Palestinian Solidarity and Activism Discussion

Ronnie, a former ANC military wing member and Minister of Intelligence, spoke at an event about solidarity with Tony and the Palestinian cause. He compared current British laws against pro-Palestine activism to the restrictions that would have prevented anti-apartheid movements in the 1960s-1980s. Ronnie criticized the British government's support for Israel as a client state of Western powers, arguing that the current legal measures against protesters are part of a broader trend toward proto-fascism.

Palestine Action Campaign Update

Huda Amouri discussed the founding and activities of Palestine Action, highlighting their direct action campaign against Elbit Systems and the subsequent government and Israeli lobby efforts to crack down on the group. She explained how counter-terrorism legislation has been used to silence activists and recently expand sentencing for criminal damage cases as terrorism, setting a concerning precedent. Huda expressed solidarity with Tony and others facing similar legal challenges, emphasizing the need for continued resistance against repressive tactics aimed at deterring support for Palestinian rights.

Anti-Zionism Motion Discussion

Catherine facilitated a discussion about supporting Tony Greenstein and opposing weapons supply to Israel, with Annette joining remotely to explain that such efforts aim to stop Israeli genocide. Lubna Spyton from the Greens presented a motion confronting Zionism as racism, calling for the party to declare itself anti-Zionist and support BDS, full embargoes, and Palestinian rights including return. Lubna emphasized that the motion represents Palestinian voices and resistance, urging attendees to support it globally as a movement to end what she described as racist, genocidal policies in Palestine.

Tony's Court Case Support Strategy

Tony discussed his upcoming court case next week, where he faces charges related to a tweet supporting Palestinians and Hamas. He explained that supporters can help by contributing to a crowdfunder, attending the demonstration outside the court at 9 o'clock next Tuesday, and coming to the trial to show jury that he has public support. Tony provided historical context about Zionism and terrorism definitions, arguing that the current terrorism legislation in Britain has been misused to silence opponents of foreign policies, particularly regarding Israel and Palestine.

Zionism and Israel's Future

Tony discussed the shifting attitudes towards Zionism among young Jews and criticized the portrayal of a unified Jewish community by British authorities. He argued that the Court of Appeal's decision to label Palestine Action as a terrorist group was flawed, comparing the group's actions to historical non-violent protests like the suffragettes. Tony also expressed his belief that Israel's future is uncertain due to its perpetual conflicts and similarities to apartheid South Africa, predicting that it may not survive its first century.

Legal Cases and Contempt Issues

Catherine led a discussion about legal cases involving Tony, Rajiv Menon KC, and others, focusing on issues of contempt of court and the defense of pro-Palestine activists. Tony and Huda explained that Rajiv Menon KC was cited for contempt for defending his clients effectively and explaining jury rights, while the case against Tony won't be affected by Professor David Miller's court ruling. Huda described the broader context of repression against Palestine activists and the implications for legal defense in such cases.

Terrorism Act Legal Cases Discussion

The meeting focused on discussing legal cases under the Terrorism Act, with Tony providing details about ongoing prosecutions. Tony explained that there have been six cases to date, including three hung juries and three acquittals, with his upcoming trial being the seventh case. The discussion also covered international solidarity movements, with Ronnie comparing current struggles to historical movements against apartheid in South Africa and US involvement in Vietnam. The conversation ended with a discussion about the new National Security States Threat Act and its implications for expressing support for certain resistance groups.

Support for Tony Webinar

The meeting was a webinar featuring panelists discussing solidarity with Tony, who is facing prosecution for Palestine-related activism. Panelists including Ali Abunima, Lubna, Annette, Huda, Ronnie, and Ghada expressed support for Tony and highlighted the urgent need for continued action to support Palestinian rights, with Ghada emphasizing that time is not on the Palestinian side due to Israel's rapid colonization efforts. The panelists called for widespread support for Tony's upcoming court appearance next week in Kingston, with Ronnie committing to reach out to contacts across Britain to organize support.