

The End of Western Pluralist Democracy. Craig Murray

By [Craig Murray](#)

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[Craig Murray](#) 1 September 2024

Region: [Europe](#)

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No major western leader is ever again going to be able to speak about human rights or ethical values, without attracting howls of derision. They are turning on their own people in order to prevent protest at a genocide they actively support.

Keir Starmer stepped up the pressure on opponents of Zionist genocide on Thursday with the arrest of journalist Sarah Wilkinson and the charging of activist Richard Barnard, both under the draconian Section 12 of the Terrorism Act which carries a sentence of up to 14 years in prison.

The UK MSM has of course ignored these, but is universally carrying outrage at the conviction of two Hong Kong activists for sedition, which carries a maximum sentence of ... 2 years.

But they tell us it is China and not the UK which is the authoritarian dictatorship.

(To be plain, I do view the Hong Kong convictions as also an unwarranted interference with free speech. I merely point out the incredible hypocrisy of the British Establishment and far worse laws here).

Richard Barnard has been charged and will face trial, apparently related to public speeches supporting the Palestinian right to armed resistance.

Sarah Wilkinson was released on bail after about 14 hours. Like the recent arrest and bailing of Richard Medhurst, the arrest and bailing is a device to chill her reporting and activism.

The harassment of dissident journalists at ports, using the extensive powers of the Terrorism Act for questioning and confiscation of communications equipment, has become routine. I myself suffered detention, interrogation and confiscation of equipment for "terrorism" last October.

But the Sarah Wilkinson case is an escalation, in that this is a raid on a journalist whose home was invaded by 16 policemen at 7.30am, while she was arrested and taken to the police station as her home was comprehensively turned over, presumably looking for gunmen under the bed.

More details of the raid have come out which are scarcely believable. Armed counter-terrorism police wearing balaclavas were used against a peaceful, female journalist. She was manhandled and physically hurt. The ashes in her mother's funerary urn were desecrated in a "search". And Sarah's bail conditions include that she may not use a

computer or mobile telephone.

It is a fascist government that sends 16 police to bust a peaceful journalist at home at 7.30am.

Like the stopping of Richard Medhurst's plane on the tarmac by police vehicles and his being dragged from the plane (which had just landed and was en route to the gate anyway) this is an authoritarian theatre of intimidation, a Nazi stamping of the violence of the state.

Richard Barnard is a co-founder of the brilliant Palestine Action, which has done so much to disrupt the Israeli arms industry in the UK as it continues to send vital equipment to carry out the mass destruction of civilians in Gaza.

BREAKING: After a targeted campaign by the Zionist lobby, Palestine Action's co-founder Richard Barnard is facing three charges for two speeches.

He is accused of supporting a proscribed organisation under the Terrorism Act and encouraging 'criminal activity'. pic.twitter.com/cWq0qwk15v

— Palestine Action (@Pal_action) [August 29, 2024](#)

Richard has been charged under Section 12 of the Terrorism Act over two speeches he made supporting the Palestinian resistance.

I have of course said this before, but it bears repeating:

Palestine has the legitimate right of self-defence against the illegal occupation.

The occupying power Israel has no right of self-defence. That is the plain position in international law.

Yet in the UK, it is legal to offer full-throated support to Israel's genocide and to wish that all Palestinians are exterminated.

IDF participants in genocide happily move between Israel and the UK with no legal consequences.

Yet it is illegal to support certain Palestinian organisations when engaged in legal acts of armed resistance.

The state's actions against activists have been ramped up – as I predicted – since Starmer came to power.

Five young activists in Glasgow were ten days ago given sentences ranging from 12 months to 24 months in prison for direct action against Thales weapons plant in Govan, which makes parts for Israel's Watchkeeper drones, widely used against civilians in Gaza.

The sentences from Sheriff Judge McCormick were savage – far higher than would normally be given on the specified charges, which were of breach of the peace, vandalism, disorderly conduct and acting in an abusive manner.

These normally would attract at most a suspended sentence on a first offence. McCormick also ignored the Scottish government guidelines not to give custodial sentences of 24 months or less but to seek alternatives.

More tellingly, McCormick completely ignored the elephant in the room: the genocide in Gaza, which Thales are supplying.

(The fact the action occurred before the genocide should be properly viewed as a commendable act of prescience.)

The Zionist Starmerite Establishment were [quick to crow](#) over the jailing – notably Luke Akehurst and John Woodcock (who is laughably called Lord Walney nowadays and is the Government Adviser on political violence) who said “Activists considering breaking the law to get their way need to see there will be consequences”.

This follows similarly harsh sentencing of climate change activists, including those who merely took part [in Zoom calls](#) discussing direct action.

The authoritarian reaction of the threatened Zionist ruling class is a worldwide phenomenon. Redoubtable Australian journalist Mary Kostakidis has been [ludicrously charged](#) under hate speech laws for retweeting mainstream pro-Palestinian tweets.

American activist Professor Danny Shaw was turned over by the FBI on return to the USA following a trip which included speaking on a panel alongside me at the Palestine International Film Festival.

Also in the United States my friend Scott Ritter has been raided by the FBI and all his electronics and other materials confiscated.

I have spoken to Danny Shaw and to Richard Medhurst. In all of these arrests and detentions, including my own, the emphasis has been on confiscating electronics and on questioning focusing very strongly on contacts, meetings and sources of finance.

The Five Eyes intelligence services are plainly building up Venn diagrams of the democratic opposition to Zionism and the neoliberal project. It is notable that many of those recently arrested over Palestine – including Mary Kostakidis, Richard Medhurst, Scott Ritter and myself – were active in the campaign to free Julian Assange.

I have always maintained that Keir Starmer’s record shows that he will be an even bigger danger to civil liberties than the Tories. It is worth noting that all of the Tory recent draconian legislation – The Public Order Act, The National Security Act and even the Rwanda Act – was not opposed or was supported by Starmer as the pretend “Leader of the Opposition”.

Starmer and Cooper are continuing the Tory policy of challenging a High Court ruling [won by Liberty](#), that Suella Braverman acted illegally in tabling secondary legislation lowering the threshold to ban a demonstration on grounds of inconvenience to the public.

The forthcoming Online Safety Act will be truly chilling, including making it illegal to publish what the government deems misinformation.

Starmer has always been MI5-controlled. The fact that, while a Tory government was in

power, the Crown Prosecution Service destroyed all the key documentation revealing Starmer's involvement in the Assange, Savile and Janner cases (the last being far more important than generally appreciated), shows the extent to which Starmer is a protected Deep State asset.

If we are to survive this descent onto fascism as a society, we need to be prepared to dissent now, and each of us needs to be prepared to go to jail if necessary.

A last word to Craig Mokhiber, the senior UN international lawyer who resigned in protest at UN pusillanimity in face of genocide:

A dark evil has descended over the West. As the genocide in Palestine continues, the US, UK, Germany & other Western governments, instead of cracking down on those committing, aiding and inciting the genocide, are cracking down on those opposing the genocide. Human rights...

— Craig Mokhiber (@CraigMokhiber) [August 31, 2024](#)

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