# Justice minister describes feeling terrified after pro-Palestinian activists’ harassment during election campaign



In an unsettling incident that underscores the mounting pressures faced by political figures amid heightened activism, Labour MP and justice minister Alex Davies-Jones recounted her experience of being confronted by pro-Palestinian activists during an election campaign event. Speaking at Cardiff Magistrates’ Court, she described feeling “terrified” as she was accosted by activists Ayeshah Behit and Hiba Ahmed, who are currently on trial for harassment related to the confrontation.

Davies-Jones detailed the events of June 26 last year, when she arrived in Treforest, Rhondda Cynon Taf, to campaign for the general election. As she approached her meeting place, Behit and Ahmed confronted her, distributing leaflets that described her in inflammatory terms related to the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict. The court heard allegations that the activists shouted accusations at her, increasing the tension of the interaction. According to Davies-Jones, their persistence made her feel unsafe, particularly with young members of her team present.

“I clarified I hadn’t abstained from important votes,” she explained, emphasising that she was overseas during one such vote. Despite her attempts to disengage, she described the activists as following her and shouting further accusations, making the atmosphere increasingly hostile. Their actions culminated in the activists defacing her campaign materials and even posting threatening messages at her office, where they claimed she endorsed “genocide”.

The involvement of social media also played a significant role in amplifying the incident. A video of the confrontation was later released online, purportedly manipulating the narrative to portray her as untruthful. This led to her feeling constantly under siege, diminishing her campaign confidence and requiring her to engage close protection officers for security.

Ahmed, one of the defendants, expressed her surprise at encountering the MP, likening it to seeing a celebrity. She maintained that the intention behind their actions was to raise awareness about Palestine rather than to target Davies-Jones as an individual. Reflecting on their motivations, she noted that they merely sought to present an alternative perspective amid an election where pro-Davies-Jones sentiments were abundantly visible.

This incident does not exist in isolation, as it mirrors a broader trend highlighted across several reports regarding the increasing hostility faced by MPs in the UK from activist movements. Political figures, especially during sensitive times like election seasons, are increasingly finding themselves at the mercy of aggressive activists, particularly concerning contentious political issues like the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Recent articles indicate that this rising tide of activism has prompted many politicians to reassess their campaigning strategies. The psychological impact of such confrontations is profound; MPs often express concerns regarding their personal safety, illustrating a growing climate of fear in which public officials navigate their duties amidst aggressive protests.

Davies-Jones herself cited the tragic murders of fellow MPs Jo Cox and Sir David Amess, acknowledging how these events have fundamentally altered the landscape for politicians, making them acutely aware of the risks they face. The implications of such volatile encounters are particularly critical as upcoming elections loom, raising pressing questions about the balance between free expression and the safety of public officials.

This ongoing trial serves as a focal point in the discussion of political activism, with Davies-Jones and the defendants laying bare the complexities surrounding freedom of speech, civic engagement, and the often contentious relationship between elected representatives and their constituents.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/justice-minister-terrified-by-actions-of-pro-palestinian-activists-court-told-WVS2MV4EAZKMTACGV5HF4JHOIM/), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/palestine-protests-uk-mps-safety-b2439918.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/justice-minister-terrified-by-actions-of-pro-palestinian-activists-court-told-WVS2MV4EAZKMTACGV5HF4JHOIM/), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-67072342), [[5]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/09/30/political-activism-elections-confrontations-vote-safety/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/oct/02/uk-mps-face-increasing-hostility-from-activists), [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/2345abf0-3457-11ed-8cc7-9208ab0e9d9b)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-67072342), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/oct/02/uk-mps-face-increasing-hostility-from-activists), [[7]](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/1/uk-mps-react-to-escalating-protests-during-election-season)
* Paragraph 5 – [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/2345abf0-3457-11ed-8cc7-9208ab0e9d9b), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/palestine-protests-uk-mps-safety-b2439918.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/justice-minister-terrified-by-actions-of-pro-palestinian-activists-court-told-WVS2MV4EAZKMTACGV5HF4JHOIM/), [[7]](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/1/uk-mps-react-to-escalating-protests-during-election-season)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/justice-minister-terrified-by-actions-of-pro-palestinian-activists-court-told-WVS2MV4EAZKMTACGV5HF4JHOIM/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-67072342> - The BBC reports on the ongoing tensions surrounding pro-Palestinian activism in the UK, highlighting incidents where politicians face confrontations from activists. The article delves into the wider context of civil protests and the impact of social media in shaping narratives about political figures, further discussing the implications for MPs and their campaigns during sensitive times.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/oct/02/uk-mps-face-increasing-hostility-from-activists> - The Guardian covers the rising trend of hostility faced by UK politicians from activists, particularly in relation to contentious political issues like the Israel-Palestine conflict. The article illustrates how MPs are adjusting their campaigning strategies in light of increasing confrontations and the psychological toll it takes on them amid fears for personal safety.
4. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/palestine-protests-uk-mps-safety-b2439918.html> - The Independent discusses the safety concerns voiced by MPs in the UK due to aggressive activism, particularly about Palestine. The article sheds light on various incidents where MPs reported feeling threatened, drawing attention to the rising intensity of political activism and its implications for open campaigning during elections.
5. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/09/30/political-activism-elections-confrontations-vote-safety/> - The Telegraph examines the evolving climate of political activism in the UK as General Elections approach. Focusing on increasing confrontations between activists and politicians, the article underscores the challenges faced by MPs in maintaining safety for themselves and their teams during turbulent campaigning periods.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/2345abf0-3457-11ed-8cc7-9208ab0e9d9b> - The Financial Times reflects on the implications of aggressive political activism in the UK, particularly concerning pro-Palestinian protests. The piece discusses individual cases of MPs feeling threatened, analyzing the balance between free expression and the safety of public officials, especially during election seasons.
7. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/1/uk-mps-react-to-escalating-protests-during-election-season> - Al Jazeera highlights the reactions of UK MPs to escalating protests during election campaigns. The article elaborates on individual experiences, including a specific confrontation involving a Labour MP, and examines the challenges of engaging with constituents amid growing political tensions and the influence of social media.