# Pro-Palestine activist sparks outrage by wearing Holocaust uniform with Islamic symbol in London protest



A pro-Palestine protester has sparked widespread outrage by dressing as a Holocaust victim during a demonstration in London's Trafalgar Square. The activist, Maria Gallastegui, wore a striped uniform reminiscent of those worn by Jews persecuted in Nazi concentration camps, but replaced the Star of David with a star and crescent symbol commonly associated with Islam. Gallastegui also held a sign referencing Palestine Action, a group recently designated a terror organization by the UK government following a high-profile protest stunt at an RAF airbase.

The protest occurred in the heart of London amid heightened tensions surrounding Palestine Action, whose activists had infiltrated RAF Brize Norton days earlier, damaging military planes in a stunt condemned by senior politicians including Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer and Home Secretary Yvette Cooper. The attack inflicted damage potentially costing £25 million to repair and has triggered counter-terrorism investigations. Over the past five years, Palestine Action has carried out more than 350 attacks on various UK sites, causing millions of pounds in damage, prompting calls for the group’s criminal proscription.

Monday’s demonstration was originally planned outside the Houses of Parliament, but police imposed an exclusion zone forcing the protest to relocate to Trafalgar Square. Hundreds gathered, waving Palestinian flags and holding placards, leading to clashes with police in scenes described as ugly. Officers moved aggressively to detain masked protesters, prompting scuffles during which activists pushed back, shouted at officers, and threw water.

Thirteen protesters were arrested, with seven facing charges including assaulting emergency workers and racially aggravated offenses. Gallastegui, a 66-year-old known for her decades-long activism, was not among those charged. She left her career as a coach driver nearly 20 years ago to engage in activism full time and became well-known for living in a tent in Parliament Square for six years protesting regulations on demonstrations. She has been arrested multiple times, notably during a protest in 2005 and for living in a tree threatened by urban development, highlighting her persistent commitment to various causes.

The government’s move to ban Palestine Action under anti-terror laws marks a significant escalation, as membership and association with the group would become criminal offenses. Home Secretary Cooper justified the ban citing the group's "history of unacceptable criminal damage" and what she described as an escalation in aggressive tactics, including the raid on RAF Brize Norton. This designation aligns Palestine Action legally alongside internationally recognised terror groups such as Hamas, al-Qaeda, and ISIS.

The demonstration in Trafalgar Square also witnessed confrontations between pro-Palestinian protesters and a smaller group of pro-Israeli counter-demonstrators, who were quickly escorted away amid jeers. Protesters and police tensions were high, with activists perceiving police actions as attempts to suppress legitimate protest rights. The Metropolitan Police faced criticism for their handling of the event, particularly for enforcing the exclusion zone and the forceful detentions.

This protest is part of a broader context of increasing direct actions by Palestine Action, which was founded in 2020 and has focused on disrupting British complicity in Israel’s military operations, especially targeting Elbit Systems, an Israeli arms manufacturer. Their tactics include occupations, vandalism, and blockades, which have drawn significant government scrutiny and calls for severe legal repercussions.

In summary, the protest and related developments encapsulate the volatile intersection of activism, state security concerns, and historical sensitivities. Gallastegui's controversial choice of attire during the protest intensified the outrage, reflecting the deep emotions surrounding the conflict and the contrasting methods employed by various actors to draw attention to their causes. The UK government's designation of Palestine Action as a terror group signals a firm stance against what it perceives as increasingly radical and unlawful protest activities amid a complex and highly charged political environment.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14851133/Outrage-pro-Palestine-protester-dresses-Holocaust-victim-demo-allowed-continue-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14851133/Outrage-pro-Palestine-protester-dresses-Holocaust-victim-demo-allowed-continue-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/4db657d1-7e74-4bc5-971c-7cb301fe19f6), [[5]](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/23/uk-to-ban-palestine-action-police-clash-with-groups-supporters-in-london), [[7]](https://www.thejournal.ie/palestine-action-explained-terror-group-6740913-Jun2025/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14851133/Outrage-pro-Palestine-protester-dresses-Holocaust-victim-demo-allowed-continue-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-06-23/protesters-clash-with-police-at-palestine-action-demonstration-in-central-london), [[6]](https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2025/06/23/denc-j23.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14851133/Outrage-pro-Palestine-protester-dresses-Holocaust-victim-demo-allowed-continue-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/seven-charged-london-after-protest-support-palestine-action-group-2025-06-24/), [[6]](https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2025/06/23/denc-j23.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14851133/Outrage-pro-Palestine-protester-dresses-Holocaust-victim-demo-allowed-continue-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 6 – [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/4db657d1-7e74-4bc5-971c-7cb301fe19f6), [[5]](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/23/uk-to-ban-palestine-action-police-clash-with-groups-supporters-in-london)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14851133/Outrage-pro-Palestine-protester-dresses-Holocaust-victim-demo-allowed-continue-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-06-23/protesters-clash-with-police-at-palestine-action-demonstration-in-central-london)
* Paragraph 8 – [[7]](https://www.thejournal.ie/palestine-action-explained-terror-group-6740913-Jun2025/)
* Paragraph 9 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14851133/Outrage-pro-Palestine-protester-dresses-Holocaust-victim-demo-allowed-continue-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/4db657d1-7e74-4bc5-971c-7cb301fe19f6), [[5]](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/23/uk-to-ban-palestine-action-police-clash-with-groups-supporters-in-london)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14851133/Outrage-pro-Palestine-protester-dresses-Holocaust-victim-demo-allowed-continue-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/seven-charged-london-after-protest-support-palestine-action-group-2025-06-24/> - Seven individuals were charged following a protest in London supporting Palestine Action, a group the UK government plans to ban under anti-terrorism laws. The proposed ban would criminalize association with the group, which recently damaged UK military planes to protest British support for Israel. Demonstrators clashed with police in Trafalgar Square, resulting in 13 arrests, with seven charged with offenses including assaulting emergency workers and a racially aggravated offense. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/seven-charged-london-after-protest-support-palestine-action-group-2025-06-24/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/4db657d1-7e74-4bc5-971c-7cb301fe19f6> - The UK government is moving to officially designate Palestine Action, a pro-Palestinian activist group, as a terrorist organization. This follows an incident where two activists infiltrated an RAF base and vandalized a Voyager aircraft, raising concerns about military security. If approved by Parliament, the proscription would criminalize membership, meeting attendance, and participation in the group’s activities. Home Secretary Yvette Cooper cited 'a history of unacceptable criminal damage' and increasing aggression in the group's actions. ([ft.com](https://www.ft.com/content/4db657d1-7e74-4bc5-971c-7cb301fe19f6?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-06-23/protesters-clash-with-police-at-palestine-action-demonstration-in-central-london> - Protesters clashed with police at a demonstration in support of Palestine Action as the UK government moves to ban the group. The protest, initially planned outside the Houses of Parliament, was relocated to Trafalgar Square after the Metropolitan Police imposed an exclusion zone. The demonstration saw tensions rise, leading to confrontations between protesters and law enforcement. ([itv.com](https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-06-23/protesters-clash-with-police-at-palestine-action-demonstration-in-central-london?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/23/uk-to-ban-palestine-action-police-clash-with-groups-supporters-in-london> - The UK government has announced plans to ban Palestine Action, a prominent campaign organisation, under anti-terrorism laws. This decision follows an incident where activists damaged two military planes at an RAF base in protest against the UK's support for Israel. The move would make it a criminal offence to belong to or support the group, equating it with entities like Hamas, al-Qaeda, and ISIS under British law. ([aljazeera.com](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/23/uk-to-ban-palestine-action-police-clash-with-groups-supporters-in-london?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2025/06/23/denc-j23.html> - A protest in London supporting Palestine Action faced police provocation, leading to confrontations and arrests. Demonstrators were corralled into Trafalgar Square after the police imposed an exclusion zone, resulting in scuffles and at least eight arrests. Protesters expressed frustration over the police's actions, viewing them as an attempt to suppress peaceful protest. ([wsws.org](https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2025/06/23/denc-j23.html?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.thejournal.ie/palestine-action-explained-terror-group-6740913-Jun2025/> - Palestine Action, founded in 2020, is a UK-based protest collective focused on targeting British complicity in Israel’s military operations, particularly through its campaign against Elbit Systems, Israel’s largest arms manufacturer. The group is known for its disruptive, direct-action tactics, including occupations, vandalism, and blockades. Recent actions have led to the UK government considering designating the group as a terrorist organisation. ([thejournal.ie](https://www.thejournal.ie/palestine-action-explained-terror-group-6740913-Jun2025/?utm_source=openai))