# Far-right exploitation of Lucy Connolly case deepens divisions over race and free speech in UK



In recent weeks, the case of Lucy Connolly, a childminder and the wife of a Conservative councillor from Northampton, has become a focal point for far-right activists in the UK following her unsuccessful appeal against a 31-month jail sentence. Convicted for inciting racial hatred through a social media post that called for the burning of hotels housing asylum seekers, Connolly is being championed as a martyr by extremist groups who exploit her plight to further their divisive agenda.

The tweet that landed Connolly in prison was markedly incendiary. Following a tragic incident in Southport, where three girls lost their lives in a horrific knife attack, she tweeted: “Mass deportation now, set fire to all the fucking hotels full of the bastards for all I care… if that makes me racist, so be it.” This violent incitement, driven by rampant misinformation regarding the assailant's background, resonated with a disillusioned public. Legal experts have rightly noted that such rhetoric poses a genuine threat, reinforcing the idea that inciting racial hatred is among the most severe violations under current hate crime legislation.

Connolly's failing appeal has since been manipulated by far-right factions to prop up their narrative of a “two-tier” justice system. Even prominent politicians, previously at odds with each other, have echoed this sentiment, asserting that Connolly has become a victim of an increasingly oppressive legal framework. Her case has garnered not just domestic attention but also international scrutiny, graining support from groups like Patriotic Alternative, who have contributed £1,000 to aid what they term “political prisoners,” and the US State Department voicing concerns over perceived infringements on freedom of expression.

Notably, recent comments from various political figures highlight the rising apprehension within mainstream parties about the ramifications of Connolly’s case. Some Labour MPs, including Mary Glindon, have aligned themselves with Conservative voices in signing a motion supporting Connolly, causing a rift within Labour on how best to navigate this contentious issue. Glindon’s actions particularly underline the emotional stakes, especially for Connolly’s young daughter, complicating any political response to the situation.

In contrast, the Conservative leadership has adopted a more cautious approach. While Kemi Badenoch has refrained from fully endorsing claims of a biased justice system, her comments hint that there is a growing perception of unfairness in Connolly’s treatment—a sentiment that could inadvertently fuel radicalisation. This careful positioning raises questions about how politicians are grappling with the sensitive emotional and political implications surrounding this controversial case.

As dialogues on the most derived narratives progress, the backlash against legal professionals involved in cases similar to Connolly’s illustrates a troubling trend. The Law Society of England and Wales has strongly condemned the violence and abuse directed at legal practitioners, correlating these threats with the inflammatory rhetoric perpetuated in political discourse. Richard Atkinson, president of the Law Society, has raised alarms over an alarming rise in threats directed at those who uphold the law, exacerbated by hostile characterizations prevalent in media narratives.

While Connolly remains incarcerated until August, support and fundraising campaigns continue to swell, epitomized by the efforts of groups like the Free Speech Union, who frame her situation as emblematic of broader issues concerning free expression in the UK. Experts and political analysts urge vigilance regarding this evolving scenario, as it could significantly reshape the electoral and social landscapes—particularly in light of the narratives perpetuated by alternative media and those looking to exploit Connolly's case for political gain.

In this environment of heated debate and rising tensions, Connolly's case illuminates the complexities surrounding race, free speech, and legal justice in modern Britain. As various factions maneuver for public sympathy and political leverage through her narrative, the ramifications extend far beyond her personal ordeal, threatening to redefine societal dialogue around justice, expression, and the very foundation of British identity in a rapidly changing political landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/26/loss-of-sentence-appeal-over-southport-tweet-boosts-far-right-fundraising-for-lucy-connolly> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/26/loss-of-sentence-appeal-over-southport-tweet-boosts-far-right-fundraising-for-lucy-connolly> - The Guardian reports that Lucy Connolly, a childminder and wife of a Conservative councillor from Northampton, was jailed for 31 months in October after calling for hotels housing asylum seekers to be torched. Her failed appeal against the sentence has bolstered her status among far-right activists, leading to significant fundraising efforts. Groups like Patriotic Alternative have contributed £1,000 from a fund for 'political prisoners'. The judge who sentenced Connolly has faced online abuse, with one far-right influencer mocking up a photograph of the judge under the heading: 'The Banality of Evil: Who is Lucy Connolly’s Anti-British, Woke Judge?'
3. <https://www.reuters.com/fact-check/uk-woman-jailed-inciting-racial-hatred-not-posting-hurtful-words-2024-10-29/> - Reuters Fact Check clarifies that Lucy Connolly was not jailed merely for posting hurtful words but for inciting racial hatred. Her social media post, which called for 'mass deportation' and setting fire to hotels housing immigrants, was based on false information about a Muslim immigrant committing a knife attack. Authorities emphasized that her intent was to incite violence, endangering lives and promoting racism online.
4. <https://news.sky.com/story/lucy-connolly-childminder-married-to-tory-councillor-pleads-guilty-to-stirring-up-racial-hatred-13193012> - Sky News reports that Lucy Connolly, a childminder married to a Conservative councillor, pleaded guilty to publishing material to stir up racial hatred following the Southport stabbings. She posted on X (formerly Twitter) calling for 'mass deportation now' and for hotels housing asylum seekers to be set on fire. This post was made on the day of the knife attack in Southport, Merseyside, when false information claiming the attacker was a Muslim asylum seeker spread online, leading to riots across the UK.
5. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/10/17/tory-councillors-wife-lucy-connolly-jailed-riots/> - The Telegraph reports that Lucy Connolly, wife of a Conservative Party councillor, was sentenced to 31 months in jail for posting a tweet stirring up racial hatred against asylum seekers on the day of the Southport attacks. Connolly, a childminder at the time, resigned her registration with Ofsted following her arrest. The court heard that she had sent a message saying she intended to work her notice period as a childminder 'on the sly' despite being de-registered.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/10/18/boris-johnson-questions-jail-sentence-tory-councillor-wife/> - The Telegraph reports that Boris Johnson questioned the jail term given to Lucy Connolly, wife of a Conservative councillor, who was sentenced to 31 months for stirring up racial hatred against asylum seekers. Connolly's tweet, posted on the day of the Southport attacks, called for 'mass deportation now' and for hotels housing asylum seekers to be set on fire. Johnson suggested that the sentencing indicated a lack of value placed on freedom.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/lucy-connolly-northampton-southport-riots-tory-councillor-b2605751.html> - The Independent reports that Lucy Connolly, wife of a Conservative councillor, admitted to stirring up racial hatred after calling for migrant hotels to 'burn'. The Crown Prosecution Service stated that Connolly posted on X hours after the Southport killings, having encountered false information online that the perpetrator was a Muslim asylum seeker who had entered the country on a small boat. Connolly was interviewed by police on 6 August and was charged three days later.