**Model Motion 1:**

**Defending the Right to Protest and Resisting the Criminalisation of Peaceful Protest and Civil Disobedience**

**This Branch Notes**

- The escalating attacks on freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, the right to a fair trial and trial by jury.
- The increasing use of the Terrorism Act and Serious Crime Act to criminalise peaceful protest, non-violent direct action and civil disobedience.
- Thousands of arrests under the Terrorism Act for alleged expressions of support for Palestine Action.
- The imposition of disproportionately harsh sentences, including lengthy prison terms and restrictive surveillance conditions, in cases deemed to have a 'terrorism connection', even where convictions are for criminal damage alone.
- Contempt proceedings against a leading defence barrister for reminding jurors of their right to acquit according to their conscience.
- New police powers to restrict protests on the grounds of 'cumulative disruption'.
- That the freedoms to protest, organise, demonstrate and take collective action are fundamental to trade union rights and were won through generations of working-class struggle.

**This Branch Believes**

- That sentencing people on the basis of an alleged 'terrorism connection', rather than the offences of which they have been convicted, is an abuse of the judicial process.
- That the independence of defence lawyers and juries is essential to the right to a fair trial.
- That peaceful protest, civil disobedience and non-violent direct action are legitimate democratic rights and must not be criminalised.
- That attacks on civil liberties are attacks on trade union rights. The same powers used to suppress protest threaten workers' ability to organise, strike, picket and campaign.
- That the trade union movement must defend democratic freedoms and stand in solidarity with all those facing repression for exercising their right to protest.

**This Branch Resolves To**

1. Co-sign the 31 October 2026 *Protest is not Terrorism* statement, condemning attacks on freedom of thought, expression and peaceful assembly.
2. Write to the Executive Committee and General Secretary calling for the union to sign the statement nationally and encourage branches and regions to do likewise.
3. Call on the union to work with elected representatives in relevant Parliaments to campaign against the misuse of the Terrorism Act and Serious Crime Act to suppress protest and civil disobedience.
4. Contact sister branches to raise awareness of the statement and encourage them to sign.
5. Provide members with information about attacks on civil liberties and the implications for trade union rights, drawing on the resources of *Protest is not Terrorism*, the *Filton 25 Defence Campaign* and *Defend Our Juries*.
6. Issue a public statement condemning 'terrorism connection' sentencing and attacks on the right to a fair trial, encouraging other unions to show solidarity.

7. Draft a motion for the regional committee and/or national conference calling for a coordinated trade union response to attacks on the right to protest and civil liberties.
8. Invite speakers from the *Filton 25 Defence Campaign*, *Defend Our Juries*, *Protest is not Terrorism*, the *Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign* and/or the *Workers Coalition for Palestine* to address a future branch meeting.
9. Organise a public meeting on resisting state repression, defending the right to protest and protecting trade union and democratic freedoms.

## Reference:

**Protest is not Terrorism:**

https://protestisnotterrorism.uk/2026/10/31/statement-on-police-claims-that-all-attendees-at-doj-protests-are-meeting-to-commit-a-crime/

**Model Motion:**
https://www.scottishpsc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/11/Model-Branch-Motion-Protest-Nov-2026.pdf

**More Model Motion Resources:**

https://protestisnotterrorism.uk/resources-for-trade-unionists/