

Turning Point UK: Conservative Hooligans

20.06.24



Red Flare

Unmasking the far right

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Executive Summary

- > Our investigation reveals that Turning Point UK (TPUK), which has been backed by many leading Conservative Party figures, is involved in violent disorder at protests and has activists currently in prison.
- > Red Flare infiltrated TPUK and saw members of the group's secret "elite" Direct Action Team offering to sell weapons to other members ahead of protests which subsequently saw outbreaks of violent disorder.
- > TPUK has extensive links with other far-right groups that have been involved in street violence and racist attacks stretching back decades.
- > In November 2023, TPUK mobilised for far-right protests which caused widespread violence and disruption across Westminster, leading to 126 arrests and Suella Braverman's subsequent resignation as Home Secretary.
- > TPUK's honorary president, Conservative candidate Marco Longhi may have misled the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards about his relationship to the group.
- > We discovered that TPUK has spent nearly £30,000 on anti-Labour and anti-SNP Facebook adverts including over £7,000 on trying to stop Rebecca Long Bailey from replacing Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader, by making a defamatory claim that Corbyn "accepted cash from Hamas and supports ISIS".

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What is Turning Point UK?

Turning Point UK (TPUK) is a far-right campaign group based in the UK which was originally intended to replicate the success of its parent organisation Turning Point USA (TPUSA). TPUK was launched by TPUSA founder Charlie Kirk and former communications director for TPUSA Candace Owens in 2018 at an invite-only event at the Royal Automobile Club in central London. The UK branch's launch was supported by Nigel Farage, who claimed to have worked with Kirk to bring Turning Point to the UK.

Initial TPUK figureheads included former chairman George Farmer, son of Conservative Party donor Michael Farmer, and John Mappin of the Mappin & Webb jewellery dynasty. At the launch, Mappin, whose family business has been responsible for the maintenance of the Crown Jewels since 2012, was referenced by Kirk as a contact point for prospective donors. When it was launched, TPUK was run by young Conservatives who had been involved in the Vote Leave campaign. Darren Grimes, who was fined £20,000 for breaking EU referendum spending laws, was involved. As was Tom Harwood who ran the student wing of the Vote Leave campaign and Leave Means Leave digital strategist Steve Edginton. TPUK's launch was reportedly attended by right-wing figures including Leave.EU campaigner Andy Wigmore, InfoWars editor Paul Joseph Watson and Breitbart editor James Delingpole.

TPUK was immediately endorsed by several leading Conservative Party figures. Priti Patel, five months before her appointment as Home Secretary, congratulated TPUK on its founding, describing the group as "a new generation standing up for political & economic freedoms & Conservative values & beliefs". Jacob Rees-Mogg, then chair of the Eurosceptic European Research Group caucus of Conservative MPs, praised TPUK on its founding in social media posts which have since been deleted. Prominent Brexiteer and Vote Leave campaign founder Baron Daniel Hannan spoke at a TPUK event in 2020, just two months after leaving the European Parliament.



Happy #TransDayOfRemembrance.

There are only 2 genders.



14:17 · 20 Nov 23 · 9,649 Views

53 Reposts 5 Quotes 335 Likes 1 Bookmark

TPUK post on Trans Day of Remembrance, a day commemorating victims of transphobic murders

TPUK's honorary president is Marco Longhi, who until May 2024 was the Conservative MP for Dudley North. Other Conservative Party figures who have endorsed the group include Minister of State for Indo-Pacific, Anne Marie Trevelyan and Minister of State for Northern Ireland and the Cabinet Office, Steve Baker (Baker was serving as the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Exiting the European Union at the time). Chris Green and Bernard Jenkin both endorsed TPUK while sitting as Conservative MPs.

According to TPUK, the group's primary purpose is to "challenge the often far-left bias in our educational institutions". TPUK are proponents of the Cultural

Marxism conspiracy theory, which alleges a concerted effort by civil society figures and institutions to replace conservative values with progressive ones for the purpose of destabilising society. The theory is rooted in anti-Semitism and has been described as a contemporary update to the “Cultural Bolshevism” conspiracy theory.

TPUK’s launch was met with ridicule after a coordinated campaign of parody accounts and trolls disrupted its messaging on social media. The group has since failed to establish a foothold in student politics despite numerous attempts. TPUK has undergone a change of leadership in recent years. The current chief executive officer is Jack Ross and the chief operating officer is Nicholas Tenconi, recently appointed as deputy leader for the UK Independence Party (UKIP). Unlike its US parent organisation which focuses mainly on university campus-based activism, TPUK has struggled to recruit students and shifted its focus towards street protests. The group’s active membership now consists largely of middle-aged men, many of them with close connections to other violent far-right groups.

Although much of TPUK’s social media output has focussed on “culture war” issues such as promoting “free speech” and fighting “wokeness”, the group has also made attempts to broaden its appeal. It has supported causes such as anti-Irish bigotry, when it voiced support for burning Irish flags on loyalist bonfires in Northern Ireland, and Zionism, by organising repeated counter-demonstrations at pro-Palestinian marches. The group

has also campaigned for tougher controls on immigration, reinstatement of the death penalty, leaving the European Convention on Human Rights, and bringing back national service (now adopted as a campaign pledge by the Conservatives).

Despite lacking ideological coherence and functioning initially as a conservative youth group, TPUK’s anti-immigrant, transphobic, British nationalist positions, its support for scrapping fundamental human rights, and its connections with overtly fascist groups places TPUK on the far right of political groups currently active in the UK.

Turning Point USA

Turning Point USA (TPUSA) is registered as a non-profit with the purpose of promoting right-wing politics in educational institutions. It focuses primarily on university-based activism through its campus chapters and youth leadership summits. TPUSA also publishes a list of professors and school board members who “discriminate against conservative students, promote anti-American values, and advance leftist propaganda in the classroom”. The group has faced criticism for its promotion of Islamophobia, internal racism towards staff members, and links to white supremacists.

Links to the Conservative Party

Since its founding, TPUK has fostered close links with the governing Conservative Party through endorsements and personal connections. The group's founding chairman, George Farmer, is the son of ex-Conservative Party treasurer Lord Michael Farmer. Both father and son are alumni of Oxford University's Bullingdon Club, the notorious members-only "dining club" that lists David Cameron, Boris Johnson and George Osborne as former members.

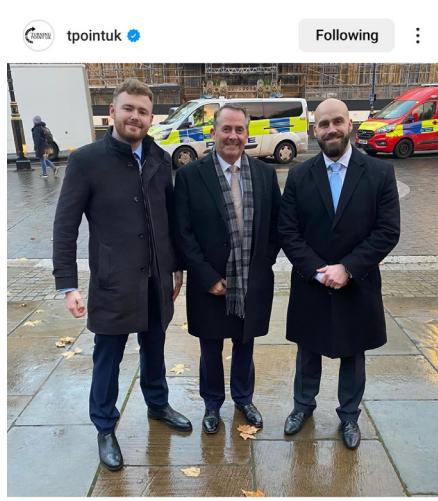
George Farmer, who is married to TPUSA's former communications director Candace Owens, was social secretary for Oxford's Conservative Association when it was disowned by the university over racist jokes made at a hustings event. His father reportedly supported the group with a large donation to cover losses resulting from the scandal. Through this position George Farmer met former Conservative chairman and then soon to be Secretary of State for Defence Liam Fox, who attended a black tie dinner organised by Farmer in June 2009.

Current TPUK CEO Jack Ross has also formed close connections with Fox and other leading figures on the right wing of the Conservative Party. Ross's position as the child of prominent disability campaigners Rachael Ross MBE and Ken Ross OBE, both of whom were awarded honours under Conservative governments, has afforded

him close connections to political elites. Analysis of Ross's publicly viewable social media profiles paints a picture of a young man socialising and networking his way into the party hierarchy.

Like his earlier counterpart, Jack Ross has formed connections with Fox. Ross has been hosted at 10 Downing Street and as a guest of Fox in Parliament on numerous occasions for his contributions to the National Down Syndrome Policy Group, a campaigning organisation founded by his parents. Ross also founded the humanitarian NGO Vans Without Borders, which earned him an invite to the Royal Box for the State Reopening of Parliament as a guest of Fox in May 2022. TPUK has attended rallies alongside Fox and publicly supported his positions on abortion, trans rights, and defence spending.

In 2023, Ross stood as a local election candidate for the Conservative Party in Horndean Murray, East Hampshire. In 2021, he canvassed for Portsmouth Conservative candidate Paul Sweeney. His research work for the Conservative think tank, The Bow Group, has gained him further contacts across the party. Ross was pictured with Sir John Redwood, former Minister of State for Corporate Affairs under Thatcher and then Conservative MP for Wokingham, at one of The



555 likes
tpointuk Great to see Dr Liam Fox at the rally outside Parliament supporting the Down Syndrome Bill!... more
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Left to right: Fox with Ross and Tenconi at Down Syndrome rally, Ross as Fox's guest in the Royal Box for the state opening of Parliament, TPUK graphic in support of Fox



Tenconi and Ross meet with Marco Longhi in Portcullis House, September 2023

Bow Group's Christmas dinners in 2023. In 2024, Ross was pictured attending the Royal Albert Hall alongside former Home Secretary Priti Patel as a guest in the box of the Leader of the House of Commons, Penny Mordaunt.

Ross's Facebook profile header shows him pictured with Rees-Mogg, Conservative peer Shaun Bailey, former Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Home Secretary James Cleverly.

TPUK's honorary president is Marco Longhi, who was the Conservative MP for Dudley North until May 2024. Longhi was appointed in November 2022 in recognition of his right-wing political stance, including his membership in the so-called Common Sense Group of Conservative parliamentarians, who accused the National Trust of being "coloured by Cultural Marxist dogma" following its report on the connections between Trust properties and historic slavery. Longhi is a prominent contributor to culture war politics and supported England fans who booed players for expressing solidarity with Black Lives Matter during the Euro 2020 football tournament. In a video message recorded for TPUK when he was awarded the presidency, Longhi praised the organisation for

challenging the "left-wing, woke, quasi-Marxist agenda" and encouraged other MPs to join.

In November 2023, Longhi was called to a meeting with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards after a member of the public complained that he had failed to register financial interest relating to his position in TPUK. In response, he wrote that he had "no duties within TPUK", had not participated in any meetings and that "no activity at all arises from [his position]". During the meeting he stated:

I was approached by Turning Point UK to see if I would become their honorary President. This was done over a meeting I believe I had with them at some point here in London, over the shake of a hand. I looked very briefly into the activities they undertook, I know there's been several other Members of Parliament, including some very senior ones, former cabinet ministers, who were... [sic] and I thought that's fine, they seemed to be championing free speech. In my role, and this is in my letter, the first point I'd like to make is it's an honorary role. It is not an executive role. I make that point because I would interpret that as being a subtle difference, and I interpreted it as the sort of informal, patronage type of role, figurehead type role, that anyone would have.

Longhi then went on to detail his interactions with TPUK:

I've never since engaged with them. I do not attend any of their meetings, any of their deliberations. I have no part in their AGMs or anything like that... There is zero remuneration. There is zero influence: them on me or me on them.

Red Flare can reveal that Longhi failed to mention he had met with Ross and Tenconi at Portcullis House just one month previously, in September 2023 (above). On 13 September 2023, TPUK posted a photograph of Ross and Tenconi with Longhi, in a post which said: "Great to see our President @marcolonghi4dn today in Parliament. Marco is a true bastion of conservatism." Longhi met with the pair again in May 2024, shortly after his decision to ban asylum seekers from his surgeries provoked outrage in Parliament.

Former Leader of the House of Commons Jacob Rees-Mogg participated in a transphobic video interview with Tenconi at the Conservative Party conference in



Tenconi interviewing Jacob Rees-Mogg at the 2023 Conservative Party conference

2023 (above). Also appearing in the video was Desmond Swayne, previously Minister of State for International Development, and Lee Anderson, then deputy chairman for the Conservative Party. Anderson had previously met

with Ross in Portcullis House in February 2023, where he gave an interview in opposition to drag shows.

Concerns have been raised about TPUK in Parliament by Vicky Foxcroft, Labour MP for Lewisham, following the group's protests in Honor Oak, South London (covered on page 14). On one occasion Foxcroft asked PM Rishi Sunak to condemn TPUK's "attempts to spread hatred and division." Sunak did not address the incidents in question but stated that "people should be allowed to gather and associate freely within the bounds of the law." He added that it was important that "the material that children are exposed to in classrooms is sensitive and age appropriate." On another occasion Foxcroft asked Home Office minister Sarah Dines if she was concerned about TPUK and its funding sources. Dines did not address the Honor Oak protests or comment on TPUK.

Non-party campaigning?

From October 2019 to the day of the 2021 UK local elections, TPUK appears to have functioned primarily as a mechanism for what the Electoral Commission describes as “non-party campaigning” - running political Facebook adverts without being formally connected to a party. This has helped it build up a considerable online presence with over 85,000 Twitter users and 183,000 Facebook users following a constant stream of reactionary content.

TPUK’s online growth has come at some expense: TPUK spent nearly £30,000 on Facebook adverts between October 2019 and 6 May 2021. One advert alone cost £7,000 and was posted in opposition to Labour leadership candidate Rebecca Long-Bailey. It included a defamatory claim that outgoing leader Jeremy Corbyn “accepted cash from Hamas and supports ISIS”. It is not clear where the money TPUK spent on online advertising has come from,

as the group’s public crowdfunding drives have raised less than £7,000.

Freedom of Information requests made by Red Flare reveal that in November 2019 the Electoral Commission contacted TPUK warning them they may be “non-party campaigners” (NPC) and that there were “certain rules relating to campaign spending and the receipt of donations … which must be adhered to by NPC’s”. The commission provided TPUK with a copy of the rules for such activity, but TPUK did not register with the commission. Non-party campaigners can only accept donations from individuals or organisations that are based in the UK and cannot accept money from political parties. Not long after the last political Facebook adverts, Nicolas Tenconi joined TPUK as chief operation officer and the group appears to have taken on a second life as a far-right protest group.

Street activities

TPUK's activities now include confrontational street protests, which have occasionally led to outbreaks of violence. The group's network of university campus chapters is largely inactive, with its online campus directory having been taken offline in 2020. Its recent focuses include protesting drag events, counter-protesting leftist events, interviewing members of the public for the purposes of "exposing" leftists, and "statue defending", a phenomenon popularised in response to Black Lives Matter protests where groups stand around national monuments and claim to "defend" them from perceived threats from protesters.

Red Flare infiltrated TPUK and can exclusively reveal the group operates a secret "Direct Action Team" (below), a

small, vetted group of activists described as the "elite" of the organisation.

Language used in the team's internal communications is militaristic, with COO Tenconi describing activists as "soldiers". Sub groups of the Direct Action Team include a stewarding group for event security, a group for anti-Palestinian Zionist activism, and a "Defenders of Christ" group open only to baptised Christians. Prospective activists interested in joining can sign up to a donations scheme ranging from a £2 monthly "ambassador" to a £100 monthly "donor" with varying access to exclusive content and early invites to events.

The image contains three screenshots of WhatsApp groups:

- TPUK Direct Action:** A group with 68 participants. The bio states: "TPUK DA is the elite action team engaging in pop up protests against the woke mob, radical lefties, grooming of innocence and illegal immigration. We lead the charge in taking our culture back! 🇬🇧". It was created by Tenco Ltd on 28/02/2023.
- TPUK Direct Action (Group Info):** Shows 18 messages. One message from Tenco Ltd reads: "In line with campaigns for next year-please could all the baptised Christians, those who consider themselves Christian/defenders of Christ in the group give this msg a 🙌". Another message says: "I will be in touch in due course." and "Please and thank you." A third message wishes "Merry Christmas and God bless to you and your families 🎄".
- Anti extremist counter...:** A subgroup with 1 participant added by Tenco Ltd. It includes a note: "listen to them. Tap to learn more." and a message from Tenco Ltd: "Tenco Ltd created group "Anti extremist counter demo campaign"". It shows activity on 14 November 2023 and 15 November 2023.
- Tenco Ltd:** A subgroup with 3 participants. It shows a message from Tenco Ltd: "Great to have everyone in the group. We are working on the dates and deets everyone will need. Will communicate asap. Thank you all 🇬🇧🇬🇧". It also includes a message about the Palestinian lobby protesting ahead of a vote.

WhatsApp groups for TPUK's secret "Direct Action Team" and subgroup

Links to far-right groups

See you all tomorrow!

However, any Nazis or National Front types aren't welcome. Our ancestors fought the Nazis and those who support this twisted ideology are as bad as Hamas supporters

TPUK Twitter, 03/11/23

Turning Point has been careful to publicly distance itself from other far-right groups through its social media posts and statements in the press. In November 2023, CEO Jack Ross wrote an article in *The Express* condemning the labelling of groups who organised to "protect" war memorials from pro-Palestine protesters as far-right. The group has also been careful to avoid the racist and Islamophobic reputation of its parent organisation by publicly endorsing a multiethnic society centred around its interpretation of British values and expressing its admiration for the "values of Islam." Instead, TPUK justifies its anti-immigrant rhetoric with the perceived failure of multiculturalism, a common position held by the civic-nationalist far right which sidesteps the social stigma and legal pressure exerted on ethno-nationalist groups in the UK, where there is widespread aversion to fascism.

Despite these claims, TPUK is heavily linked with violent and racist individuals and far-right groups.

Red Flare can exclusively reveal that several members of TPUK's 'Direct Action Team' have set their WhatsApp avatars to be the logos of violent far-right groups (below). These include the Pie & Mash Squad, a group of far-right football hooligans responsible for violence towards anti-fascists, and the South East Division (SED) of the Democratic Football Lads Alliance (DFLA) which has attacked anti-fascists in the past. The Pie & Mash Squad emerged from the English Defence League (EDL) and played a key role in the wave of violence between far-right activists and anti-fascists from 2014 to 2016. This period culminated in pitched battles between the far right and anti-fascists in Dover, Kent in January 2016, leading to 62 convictions and more than 80 years of custodial sentences.

The Pie & Mash Squad also led a violent campaign by far-right football hooligans which attempted to shut down the Clapton Ultras, anti-fascist supporters of Clapton FC, a non-league team from East London. On two occasions, mobs of far-right hooligans attacked Clapton supporters, once in Southend in December 2014 and again in Thamesmead in August 2015. The Pie & Mash



Violent far right groups represented in the WhatsApp avatars of members of TPUK's 'Direct Action Team'

Squad's social media accounts posted threats ahead of the attacks and celebrated the far-right violence.

The leader of the Pie & Mash Squad, a former Cardiff City hooligan Joe Butler, aka Jeff Marsh, is now the Wales regional organiser for fascist group Patriotic Alternative. Butler has a series of convictions for stabbing football fans and attacking women.

The SED is mainly composed of Tottenham Hotspur and West Ham hooligans. DFLA supporters attacked anti-fascists in Sevenoaks, Kent who were protesting against a conference being held by far-right group Generation Identity in April 2018.

The SED played a role in mobilising far-right hooligans for the "statue defender" protests in central London in June 2020. Later that summer it joined a far-right protest in Nottingham, attended by neo-Nazis, where it was involved in a confrontation with anti-fascists.

TPUK has a particularly close connection with the DFLA-linked Patriots of Britain (PoB) group. PoB activists are regular attendees of TPUK's events, both public and closed. PoB also shares TPUK demonstration callouts on its Telegram channel as well as more explicitly racist content, such as videos created by the fascist British Democrats (which split from the British National Party) that promote the Great Replacement conspiracy theory. One neo-Nazi particularly active within PoB is Lance Wright from Romford, Essex. Wright was a regular attendee at neo-Nazi music events organised by the Blood & Honour network and there are numerous photographs of him making Nazi salutes at such events available online.

PoB operates a closed Facebook group, where members post racist and anti-Muslim memes and videos. In one post a member filmed himself approaching a hotel used for housing migrants, shouting and beckoning for residents and security guards to come outside and fight him.

Activists from across the far right have also been brought together by TPUK's protests. Phil Curson, SED member and veteran of the National Front and violent neo-Nazi group Combat 18, was present at two TPUK

demonstrations at Honor Oak on 25 February and 25 March 2023. Curson was jailed in 2003 for his part in a near-fatal racist stabbing when two teenagers were hospitalised by a gang wielding a knife and knuckle-duster. Also present at these demonstrations were Blood & Honour attendees Lance Wright and Danny Smith, former Basildon BNP and For Britain councillor Christopher Bateman, SED members Scott Cooke and Charlie Faukes, and DFLA member Paul Howell.

tpointuk
The Golden Chippy

2/3

Heart Comment Share

Liked by realjackross and 3,010 others

tpointuk Patriots support the Golden Chippy in Greenwich.

We will always stand up for British culture. 🇬🇧

[View all 95 comments](#)



TPUK post showing activists protesting in front of the Golden Chippy. The unblurred photo shows Patriots of Britain members Dave Oldershaw (also in the DFLA), Samuel Westlake and James McCleary

TPUK has also platformed a number of controversial figures. Rikki Doolan, a preacher who has stated that women should be “subject to the man” in marriage and campaigned against the use of public buildings for prayers during Ramadan, spoke at a number of their demonstrations.

TPUK is heavily linked with former actor Laurence Fox and has provided security at campaign hustings for his right-wing Reclaim Party. Fox's descent into far-right politics began in 2019 after a *Times* interview in which he stated that he had been “totally radicalised” by YouTube videos warning against “political correctness” and “woke culture”. He has been temporarily banned from Twitter a number of times for posting tweets which violated rules against hateful conduct, including one where he posted an edited version of the Progress Pride flag twisted into the shape of a swastika. On St George's Day 2024, Fox joined Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (aka Tommy Robinson) and Tenconi on stage at a rally which saw clashes with police and six arrests. The following month Fox appeared

on Yaxley-Lennon’s podcast. During Fox’s 2024 campaign for London Mayor, TPUK offered money to its activists in return for gathering nominations. Fox was subsequently barred from standing due to nomination forms being filled out incorrectly.



Tenconi with Phil Curson at a TPUK demonstration at Honor Oak

Violence at actions

Leftists are vile.

They openly promote violence.

TPUK, 26 July 23

Despite publicly condemning the alleged violent tendencies of left-wing activists, TPUK activists have repeatedly physically attacked people at its demonstrations. At its 24 June 2023 demonstration against a Drag Queen Story Hour at the Honour Oak pub in South London, TPUK activists arrived at 5:45am and attacked counter-protesters who had assembled in front of the pub. Reports from the incident state that Tenconi led protesters towards the counter-protesters, offering to fight them "one-on-one". A window of the pub was smashed and a number of counter-protesters required medical treatment.

In early June 2023, TPUK activists attempted to disrupt a Stand Up to Racism meeting being held in a church in Brockley, London. Ross, Tenconi and a number of others including Callum Gibson and Samuel Westlake arrived outside the meeting and began verbally abusing the attendees with shouts of "paedophile". Police officers quickly arrived at the scene and a line was formed

between the group and the church. Meeting attendees reported that some of the TPUK members were drunk and could barely stand.



Location: Honor Oak Pub, SE23 1RH. Date: 29/04/23. Time: 10am.



Tenconi standing with Samuel Westlake outside a Stand Up to Racism meeting in Brockley, South London

Boateng holding a megaphone at Honor Oak on a TPUK graphic



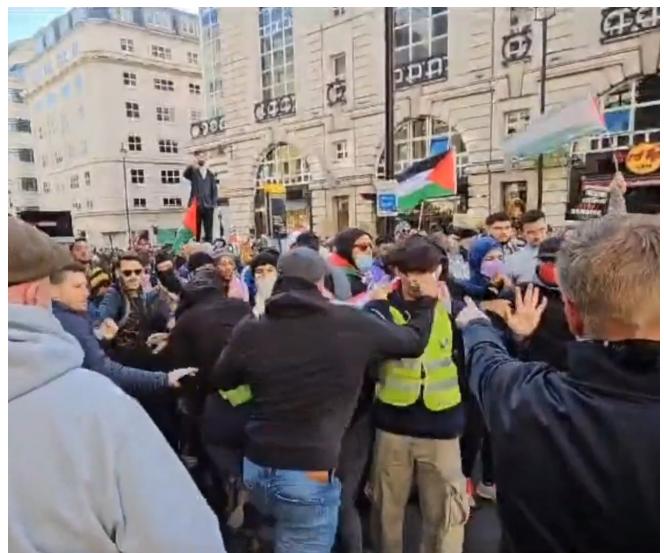
Boateng confronting SWP activists in Brixton

On 14 June 2023 TPUK activist Marko Boateng attacked a Socialist Workers Party stall in Brixton, South London. Video footage shows an irate Boateng pacing in front of the stall and shouting in the faces of attendees, calling them “paedophile pieces of shit”. Witnesses report that Boateng headbutted one of the stallholders, who required hospital treatment.

On 14 October 2023, a group of counter-protesters attempted to provoke pro-Palestine protesters in Central London by waving England flags and shouting “fuck Palestine, English till I die”. A brawl broke out after the group, which included Dave Oldershaw and TPUK activists Samuel Westlake and Callum Gibson, threw punches at protesters attempting to steal their flags. Westlake removed his belt to use the metal buckle as a weapon. During the incident Gibson punched a Palestine Solidarity Campaign steward who had stepped in to break up the melee, knocking him to the ground. For this and his role in the violence at Honor Oak, on 9 May 2024 Gibson was sentenced to 18 months in prison on two charges of violent disorder. A video of the brawl was posted on TPUK’s twitter account labelled as a “TPUK exclusive”.

Red Flare can exclusively reveal that in a WhatsApp group used to coordinate a counter-protest against pro-Palestinian demonstrations in central London on 28 October 2023, members of the Direct Action Team offered weapons for sale and bragged about assaulting protesters. One member bragged about his history as a Millwall football hooligan and offered to sell knuckle dusters to the group for £20. The activists described a “fight that was to come” and compared their actions to “Custer’s Last Stand,” referencing the killing of colonial general George Custer by a Native American army.

In the build-up to a national pro-Palestine demonstration in November 2023, which coincided with Armistice Day, then Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Home Secretary Suella Braverman emboldened far-right groups to take the streets by implying that protesters would seek to vandalise war memorials. Braverman described the planned pro-Palestine protest as a “hate march” that would offend “millions of decent British people”. TPUK threatened a large-scale mobilisation in opposition to the march and called for supporters to take to the streets.



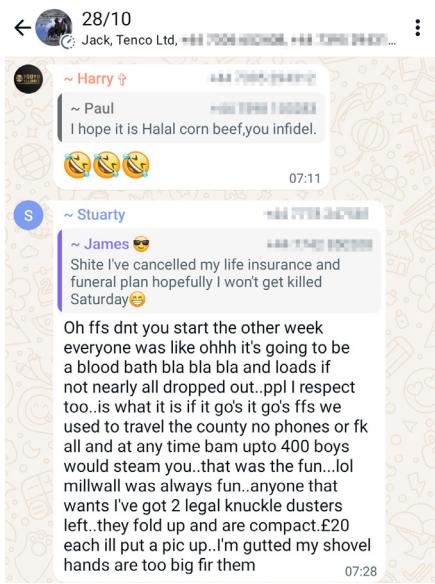
Gibson punched a steward at a pro-Palestine protest on 14 October 2023, he was subsequently jailed for 18 months



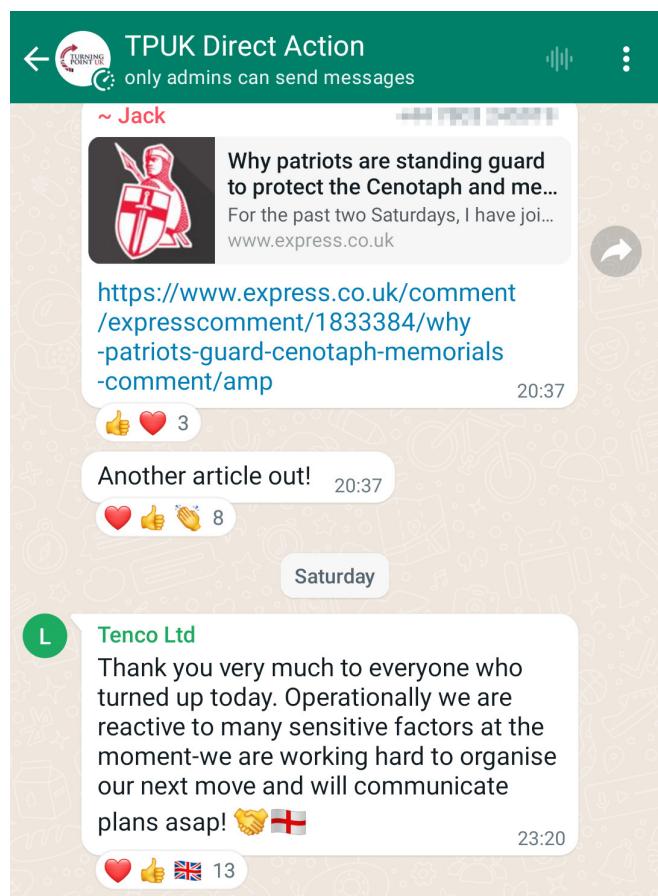
Westlake brandishing a belt, with Dave Oldershaw on the left

In a series of tweets addressed to the Metropolitan Police, TPUK issued an ultimatum: “If you ban the pro-Palestine march we’ll call off all our people and contacts for Saturday.” This came despite PSC organisers vowing that the demonstration would not disrupt remembrance ceremonies.

On the day, TPUK assembled in Parliament Square Gardens. The ensuing chaos saw far-right mobilisations causing widespread violence and disruption across Westminster, leading to 126 arrests. TPUK’s tweets were subsequently deleted, with Tenconi hinting at the need for sensitivity in the ensuing media storm. Braverman resigned as Home Secretary.



A member of the Direct Action team offers to sell knuckle dusters to group members



Tenconi privately reflecting on TPUK members' attendance at far-right mobilisations in Westminster on 11 November 2023

Key activists



Jack Ross - Chief Executive Officer

Jack Ross (aged 26) is listed as a “Research Fellow for the Union” on the website of the TPUK-linked Bow Group, the world’s oldest conservative think tank. He also volunteers for his parents’ charity, Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association. Ross is a prominent campaigner for the acquittal of British soldiers accused of killing civilians in Northern Ireland. Speaking at a Justice for Northern Ireland Veterans rally, he voiced his support for Dennis Hutchings, an ex-soldier who died while on trial for the murder of John Pat Cunningham, a man with learning difficulties who was shot dead by a British Army patrol in County Tyrone in 1974. Ross is a member of the TPUK-linked Cape Independence Advocacy Group, a controversial organisation that has been criticised for allegedly attempting to recreate a white ethnosestate in South Africa. He has been featured on ITV, and in *The Express* and *The Telegraph* for his political views and humanitarian work. As CEO, Ross acts as the public face of TPUK.



Nicholas Tenconi - Chief Operating Officer

Nicholas Tenconi (aged 40) describes himself as a “Defender of masculinity, Christianity, and conservative values”. He is a self-employed personal trainer who operates a lifestyle coaching business, Tenco Training, out of TNT gym in Reading. In 2011 he failed Army Officer Selection training at Sandhurst Academy. Tenconi is openly misogynistic, having said that women can be at blame for abuse for dressing “like a whore on nights out” and that he “dated volatile, unstable psychos because it was fun”. He is an advocate of the Great Reset conspiracy theory, which proposes that a secret network of elites are conspiring to achieve world domination and a “New World Order” by weaponising the COVID-19 pandemic. Tenconi has met and expressed his admiration for numerous high-profile conservative figures including vaccine critic Robert Wallace Malone and Kyle Rittenhouse, the then-17 year old known for shooting dead two Black Lives Matter protesters in Kenosha, USA. In May 2024, Tenconi was made deputy leader of UKIP. In his capacity as COO, Tenconi acts as the primary organiser for TPUK’s actions.

Analysis

TPUK's inability to build a far-right presence on university campuses shows the limitations of attempting to import activist models from the US. The group's attempt at recruiting a new generation of conservative activists from university students by applying a formula tried and tested in US political spheres has been unsuccessful. With the polarisation between right and left in universities occupying a much smaller space in the political makeup of the UK, TPUK has failed to attract the momentum and funding of its US branch. TPUK's subsequent shift from campus to local and national politics is indicative of both the resurgence of far-right street politics in the UK and its own failures.

Instead, TPUK has bridged the gap between the right wing of the Conservative Party and often violent far-right street movements. Through the rising profile of Jack Ross, honorary presidency of Marco Longhi, and endorsements of high-profile Conservative politicians, TPUK has boosted its profile within the Conservatives and other right-wing parties.

This relationship can be mutually beneficial: TPUK's reactionary rhetoric and avoidance of politically correct posturing presents an attractive prospect for parliamentarians seeking a vehicle to champion their views. Key figures within the Conservative Party have taken advantage of this opportunity, with TPUK offering a large online platform to members of the Tory right willing to associate themselves with the group.

Evident in UKIP's appointment of Tenconi as deputy leader, involvement with TPUK has potential for political advancement. Tenconi stated in a speech marking his appointment that he had been left "politically homeless" after a "smear campaign against [his] character" conducted by "left-wing activists" prevented him from progressing in the Conservatives. Despite UKIP's status as a spent political force, its appointment of a violent activist with conspiracy theorist tendencies is still significant. Ross, the less controversial of the two leaders, has greater potential for advancement in the Conservatives.

As a prominent example of the limits of online politics, TPUK has attempted to enlist hardline elements of the far right in an effort to create an offline street presence. By organising regular counter-protests, TPUK has given committed activists from previous far-right street movements, such as the DFLA, a means of continuing to engage in street activity. TPUK has failed to mobilise numbers comparable to the "statue defender" protests. Although the group constitutes a significant node within a broader, and increasingly networked far right, particularly on social media, TPUK has been unable to convert its online presence into numbers on the streets. Participants at TPUK's protests have largely come from the dregs of the "Free Tommy" movement and the remnants of the DFLA in London. TPUK has provided these activists with opportunities to attend confrontational street protests against marginalised groups, while distancing itself from more-or-less overtly fascist groups. But many of the faces present at the group's demonstrations reveal that it still relies on violent neo-Nazis for support. The group has also been particularly vicious in its persecution of LGBTQ+ people, using violence and intimidation against queer activists.

Currently, TPUK is limited by its poor engagement and inability to retain committed activists. Its small leadership team holds most of the decision-making power within the group, and its efforts to simultaneously appeal to both mainstream and hardline elements have alienated many from both camps. TPUK's support base and attendance at its protests pales in comparison to violent far-right street movements of the recent past and present, notably the EDL and the DFLA and its associated milieu. It is significant that TPUK has repeatedly used street violence while simultaneously growing its profile within the Conservative Party. Anti-fascists should be concerned by the legitimising effect this might have and watchful for future inroads between the Conservatives and the wider civic nationalist far right, especially under an unpopular Labour government.

Red Flare

We are anti-fascist investigators, using open source and investigative methods to expose and oppose the far right in Britain. We work with journalists to publish stories about far right groups, their organisers and activists.

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