



Neoconservative U.K. Think Tank Urges Gov to Silence Politically Incorrect Conservatives

Could you imagine getting 15 years in prison for relating true but politically incorrect ideas online? This could happen if a British think tank and government agency have their way.

Among the groups the U.K. government identifies as “terroristic” are certain Islamist organizations and two labeled neo-Nazi, and sharing material online from such entities is punishable by up to 15 years in prison. Yet what some call “hateful propaganda from other groups” is “met with far lower sentences,” the *Independent* [writes](#).

In fact, a report by the neoconservative think tank the Henry Jackson Society (HJS) — compiled with the apparent blessing of the Commission for Countering Extremism, a government body — complains that Internet postings by non-prohibited groups may not be “properly” censored by social media.

“Nikita Malik, director of the think tank’s Centre on Radicalisation and Terrorism, said some companies rely on government lists of banned organisations when deciding what to remove,” the *Independent* relates.

Malik’s complaint is, apparently, that punishing (persecuting?) “right-wing” groups based only on hate-speech law isn’t enough — she wants them silenced via terrorism charges, which bring more severe sentences.

As for now, the sharing of non-terror-related, allegedly hateful online content can only be punished using laws against “malicious communications, hate crimes and causing ‘gross offence,’” the *Independent* also informs. Britain’s Terrorism Acts cannot be brought to bear.

This displeases the HJS. Its report claims that “Islamists” convicted of online offenses receive prison sentences three times longer than “far-right” groups do. But it draws a false equivalence, as it exploits a “far-right” bogeyman myth.

As Robert Spencer and Pamela Geller [write](#) at the online PJ Media, the HJS “continues the left’s practice of equating words with deeds [e.g., jihadist violence], while discounting actual violence from hard-left groups such as Antifa. In reality, whatever ‘real and significant harm’ results from ‘offending’ online, none of it could possibly be as ‘real and significant’ as actual wounds inflicted by genuine thugs, and the preponderance of those in the political realm are on the left these days.”

Spencer and Geller themselves are victims of this leftist double standard as the HJS actually cites them as “extremists ... who had been prevented from entering Britain because of extremist concerns but are allowed to remain on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.”

That the powers-that-be want Spencer and Geller silenced speaks volumes. Agree with them or not, their mission is merely to warn of the Muslim jihadist threat; they’re passionate and politically





Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on January 27, 2020

incorrect, but never advocate violence or hatred toward any group.

So if they should be silenced, who's next? Note that radio host Michael Savage has also been banned from Britain (for political reasons). Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a black woman and practicing Muslim for half her life, recently appeared in a PragerU video [stating](#) that Islam is *not* a "religion of peace." Current practicing Muslim Dr. Mudar Zahran stated in a [2015 interview](#) that the Occident was facing the "soft Islamic conquest of the West" and that Muslim "refugees" should be kept out of Europe.

Also, bearing in mind that governments and corporations often use "hate lists" compiled by groups such as the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) when deciding whom to ban, know that the SPLC once put me on its HateWatch page for using in print the term "lynch" (yes, seriously). And PragerU itself has been censored by YouTube.

In other words, the "hateful" will ultimately include everyone the Left hates.

Nikita Malik spoke of her desired censorship euphemistically, saying that while many of those targeted will still be able to preach to their choir, "we're trying to reduce amplification techniques." She stated that she wants to prevent the "hateful" from reaching "new people" by denying them access to social media, which is today's public square.

In fact, what the HJS is proposing smacks of China's "social credit system" (a euphemism itself). As the *Independent* also tells us, "The report, which was commissioned by Facebook, proposed a 'harm classification system' to improve consistency across different kinds of extremism."

"The system ranks people convicted of online-based extremism into six bands of threat according to 20 indicators, including audience size, the glorification of violence, prejudice towards minority groups and a lack of remorse," the paper continues.

Now, remember that the above criteria won't be applied by desert mystics, but by government bureaucrats and/or Big Tech censors. Do you trust their good will and judgment?

Note that some leftists have already [attempted](#) to classify certain Bible passages as hate speech, and a Finnish politician [was interrogated last year](#) on this basis. Given this bias, we should ask: Could positive commentary about Crusader battles (which were oriented toward warding off Muslim aggression) be considered "glorification of violence"?

Moreover, what constitutes "prejudice towards minority groups"? Leftists often claim, for example, that saying homosexual behavior is sinful or that a man can't really become a woman qualifies. On the other hand, demeaning devout Christians (a minority today, especially in Britain) as "homophobes" and "haters" is never thus categorized.

Instructive here is that a "prejudice" is not just an unfavorable opinion on something, but "an unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought, or reason," to [quote](#) Dictionary.com. Prejudice means to *prejudge*.

So the relevant question is: Who is actually doing the prejudging "without knowledge, thought, or reason"? Relating to the earlier example, is homosexuality really sinful (being morally wrong in God's eyes)? If not, then Christians very well may be prejudiced. If homosexuality is sinful, those calling Christians "homophobes" may be prejudiced. And under Britain's proposed hate-speech standard, determining who should be punished (if anyone) *hinges on this very question*.

Or it should, anyway — except that the Truth of the matter is never addressed. Rather, assignments of prejudice are now made based on fashions.



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on January 27, 2020

Thus, while people sometimes equate these “hate speech” prohibitions with medieval anti-heresy laws, this is a fatally flawed comparison. For you may agree or disagree with 1100 A.D. Europeans’ conception of Truth, but the *Truth* absolutely was their focus as they combated what they considered harmful lies.

But today’s thought police don’t even pretend to be using the Truth-lies model of speech control. Instead, these moral relativists’ yardstick is, again, the (emotion-born) fashions of the day.

This blindness to Truth that breeds descent into lies is evident in another way here. The aforementioned Commission for Countering Extremism had enabled the HJS report mentality, calling for [“the government to adopt a proposed definition of ‘hateful extremism’](#) in order to standardise efforts across different ideologies while protecting freedom of speech,” the *Independent* further reports. This request reflects self-delusion.

Extremist speech is also speech. As soon as you draw lines — under the pretext of stopping “hate” or *anything else* — you no longer have “free speech,” whose *very purpose is to protect unpopular speech*. Oh, you may be justified in your concerns; words are powerful, after all.

But you’re still advocating something other than free speech.

And whatever path we choose, we shouldn’t lie to ourselves about what we’re doing.

Image: Thomas Pajot / iStock / Getty Images Plus

Selwyn Duke (@SelwynDuke) has written for The New American for more than a decade. He has also written for The Hill, Observer, The American Conservative, WorldNetDaily, American Thinker, and many other print and online publications. In addition, he has contributed to college textbooks published by Gale-Cengage Learning, has appeared on television, and is a frequent guest on radio.



Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative,
non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



Subscribe

What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.