

Written evidence from Joshua Alexander Fleming (FOE0054)

I do not believe that hate speech laws need to be updated. **They need to be abolished.**

In its current state, 'hate speech' is merely a cudgel to stifle free debate and **leave discussion of many topics verboten**, as if they were somehow sacrosanct when they're really not. For example: have you ever tried to ask for statistics on how many died in the holocaust? For some godforsaken reason, you can't without getting called a 'Nazi' or a 'holocaust denier', which implies an unwillingness to talk about certain topics without leading to the launching of loaded terms.

Speaking of 'said' loaded terms, not only is there a lack of understanding of what those terms actually mean, but I have to ask if the overuse of those terms leads to the cheapening of the evils that they were once used to disavow. I'm sure we were all read 'The Boy who cried Wolf' when we were little children, right? So why do people have this idea that anyone right of centre are cartoonish levels of evil that want anyone with a darker skin tone than them dead and buried, even though race relations at this current day are better than they have ever been, with more ideologically and fundamentally diverse nations to boot (...for better or worse)?

Allow me to give some other examples:

**“Fascist”:**

What is its actual definition? To describe advocates of an unaccountable one-party state.

Application? Basically anyone that doesn't agree with the status quo at the time.

**“Racist”:**

What should this term be used to describe? Anyone that applies race (nationality) or skin colour as an unrelated quandary to someone's fundamental character (“You're black! You're not as good at this!” / Soft bigotry of low expectations / affirmative action etc.)

Application? Used to silence anyone critical of POC/BAME individual(s), whilst claiming that white people cannot be discriminated against on similar grounds because of their 'white privilege\*' (another unfounded term/claim) and/or because 'historically, they were oppressive at one point!'

[\\*https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/10/white-working-class-boys-perform-worst-at-gcses-research-shows/](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/10/white-working-class-boys-perform-worst-at-gcses-research-shows/)

**“Sexist”:**

[See Race, but with sex instead of skin colours]

...And so on.

**Employees of companies** should not be using social media behaviour as any kind of factor in the fundamentals of their workers. In the interest of impartiality, a personal disagreement between upper management (bosses) and lower positioned workers on a case-by-case basis is hypocritical at best and at worst exchanges the fundamental ability of the workforce for a non-existent increase in short term PR. I’m reminded of the debacle over rumours of the US fast food branch ‘Chick-Fil-A’ discriminating against LGBT customers due to CFA’s donations to the Salvation Army and other Christian charities. Who is actually going to care about the immigration opinions of workers behind the counter, when the food in question is of the best quality it can be?

I’ve also mentioned this in a previous write-up sent to parliament committees, but I fear the thought of **two-tier policing in regards to what is expressed**. In our current situation of heavy curtailments to our liberties in supposed response to COVID (whether those have done anything is a separate debate entirely), I find it rather alarming how BLM/ANTIFA etc. are treated with kid gloves, whilst those with reservations towards the restrictions (or those with needs and illnesses not COVID-related (like cancer(s))) are treated with either contempt, or as if they had committed a higher tier crime, to say nothing of the ideology that those treated more leniently espouse (in many cases, radical communism).

And the funniest bit? **If you seriously thought that these hate speech laws work, you would not be asking the question.** I rest my case on that note, as I am sure I am not the only one who feels this way.

*9/12/2020*