

The police state comes to the fore in Jersey. Is it tim...

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Senator Philip Ozouf has been playing nasty, and true to totalitarian form, in an interview on the BBC with Deputy Montfort Tadier this morning.

As readers of the blog over the weekend will know, [Tadier has said there is tax evasion on Jersey](#) - which is no news to anyone. As HMRC said in a report published in March:

So, outside Jersey it is widely recognised that there is substantial tax evasion facilitated by the Island. Ozouf denies it and has demanded Tadier retract and apologise to the people of Jersey, with threats attached. This morning the threats got nastier. [He said to Tadier live on air](#) (and I think the transcript is about right, although he made it last longer, and the end was spoken over):

"You claim to have knowledge of wrongdoing. If you aren't passing it across to the financial crimes unit, you are wrong"

The threat is obvious. So now Ozouf, [who has already shown he clearly does not believe in democracy](#), is now using the Jersey police state, previously used against Senator Stuart Syvret, to now threaten Deputy Tadier. Ozouf knows, as any reasonable person knows, that systemic proof does not require a police report, and that is what Tadier is referring to - systemic failures. But Ozouf is deliberately manipulating this to create a climate of fear that prevents discussion of the role of the finance industry. This is not just bullying; it is state bullying to oppress free speech. As Ozouf also said in the interview:

Loose tongues cost jobs in Jersey

That means that not only is Jersey now, in its ruling elites eyes, a single party state where opposition is not allowed, it is also a place that threatens free speech that states what is obviously true.

But let's also be clear about this. As the Kilbrandon Report of 1973 - which is still the

key source on the issue of relationships between the UK and Jersey - says:

The Crown has ultimate responsibility for the good government of the Islands

And as [parliament noted in 2010](#):

Kilbrandon explains that the basis on which the Crown has ultimate responsibility for the good government of the Crown Dependencies stems partly from the fact that, with the UK, they are all part of the British Isles. Whilst this did not make uniformity essential, it was "nevertheless highly desirable that the institutions and the practices of the Islands should not differ beyond recognition from those of the United Kingdom". All parties were in favour of the Crown Dependencies expressing their individuality, but it was recognised that "the British Islands were an entity in the eyes of the world, and the United Kingdom Government would be held responsible internationally if practices in the Islands were to overstep the limits of acceptability".

Threatening the use of local police to stop free speech on a matter of significance, when it is raised by an elected member of the local parliament, has to be overstepping the limits of acceptability.

Will the UK act? I think it is time to do so. The destruction of free speech and democracy in Jersey has to be a step too far.