

Fighting for the right to tell the truth

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There is a profoundly worrying trend going on at present on Twitter, and elsewhere. There is a very clear trend emerging that represents a deliberate attempt to target expert comment.

There was a particular focus in the last few days. Professor Christina Pagel has, alongside Professor Devi Sridhar, been one of the most objective and relevant commentators on Covid that we have had. She posted this interview that she had done for the BBC:

<https://twitter.com/chrischirp/status/1354129280867979264?s=21>

Unambiguously she is critical of government. But who isn't now?

It got vicious responses:

<https://twitter.com/liamfox/status/1354410172672864262?s=21>

That's Guido Fawkes wading in with typical nastiness, then backed by a Tory MP demanding that the BBC not interview an objective observer. There were other comments, of similar type from those, like Fox, who should be upholders of the freedom of the press.

Which is my point. There may be those who disagree with Christina Pagel, and that is their right. But the objective of those commenting is threefold.

It is to discredit Christina Pagel not because she has no evidence to support her case (because she clearly has) but to do so because her evidence does not support the government.

Then the objective is to intimidate, and it takes a very thick skin to survive this type of abuse (as I know).

And, thereafter the aim is to silence those who might criticise who then appreciate that

they will be treated the same way.

This is, of course, a standard far right technique. Experts are not trusted, because they might tell the truth, as Prof Pagel does. But beyond that the aim is to silence them, using whatever means necessary.

I already noted [this technique being used against Prof Corrine Fowler this week](#). Here it is in use again. The aim is identical, and is to discredit and then silence an opponent of the far right agenda. Unless we wake up to, and fight this now these people will win.

Please show your support to those being victimised in this way. They do need it. They aren't just telling the truth. They are at the forefront of the fight for the right to tell the truth. And that makes them especially important.