

Is there really a problem with left wing extremism in t...

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I posted this comment on Twitter last night:

<https://twitter.com/richardjmurphy/status/1358863117363654663?s=21>

There was, of course, a context for doing this. As [The Guardian](#) noted in the last day or so:

The government has reportedly ordered an investigation into the extreme fringes on both ends of the political spectrum, with a peer tasked with offering recommendations to the prime minister and home secretary.

The review will be led by John Woodcock, the former Labour MP who now sits in the upper chamber as Lord Walney and was appointed as the government's independent adviser on political violence and disruption last November.

Let's be clear: the government is right to note that we face an extremist threat. Fascism is growing in our society. Threats are commonplace. I have no time for them. They are utterly unacceptable, from wherever they come.

But let's also be clear that as far as I can see the only left wing extremists that will be found are likely to be, in the government's opinion, Extinction Rebellion and Black Lives Matter. Both take action to affirm the right to live in freedom of fear.

In contrast, on the right what we are seeing is the active promotion of fear. Oppression of others is the stock-in-trade of the right.

So, we have one supposed extremism wing affirming the right to life free from fear and discrimination in all its forms, and the other extreme seeking to do the exact opposite.

And what that very strongly suggest to me is that we are not comparing like with like. In fact, the analogy is deliberately a falsehood in itself and part of the process of oppression in its own right.

I am not suggesting I always agree with all protest methods used by XR and BLM, because I can have my own views on what is appropriate. But have I ever spotted what might fairly be called extremism in their actions? No, is my fair response to that.

But I do see oppression and violence, and violent threats coming from the right. So shall we not equate the two, whilst always condemning all those who use such methods?

I cannot help but feel that just as the government is cracking down on charities to oppress the proper statement of history to prevent exposure of those who oppressed in pursuit of profit, so too is the government now seeking to use right wing violence as an excuse to oppress those who want to curtail those who still do the same thing. And that is utterly unacceptable, but a clear indication of the world we now live in.