

Fascism is the danger we now face

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There were ugly scenes near parliament last night. Keir Starmer and David Lammy were threatened. People said Keir Starmer should be hung for supporting paedophiles, which he very clearly has not. The mood of those making the accusations was ugly and the threat of violence very real.

As everyone of fair mind knows, none of this would have happened without the accusation having been made by Boris Johnson that Keir Starmer had failed to prosecute Jimmy Savile. This accusation was false. As is very clear, Johnson has yet to apologise for making it, because of which his head of policy resigned.

As Starmer said at Prime Minister's Questions last week, Johnson knew what he was doing when he used a trope usually associated with fascist groups. There was no mistaking his intention. And now we see the consequence.

The time to recognise that we face a threat from fascism has arrived. I have been saying this for a while, and only with care, and with good reason. Starmer has been right to name it. I am told that John McDonnell made the same accusation in a speech he made last Saturday, and again, I think correctly. We cannot beat this enemy unless we name it.

Fascism is, of course, government against the will of the people. That is, of course not to deny that some will support it, and that through threat others will have their opposition silenced. That does not change the fact that this is government against, and not for, the people.

Such a government is for corporate interests. Again though, it is not for all corporate interests. It is for those who are willing to align with that government. That this has been happening is all too obvious during the course of the coronavirus crisis.

What characterises such governments are a number of things. There are persistent, repeated, and very obvious lies that are told time and again until the point arrives where they are accepted as truth even though they very obviously are not. This is

happening and people like the Speaker in the House of Commons are refusing to prevent it. Parliament now upholds the liar and oppresses those who seek to hold them to account. That is a very dangerous position to have reached.

There is a suspension of the rule of law. The refusal of the Met to investigate so many issues, including the Downing Street parties, looks very like that.

There is a simultaneous abuse of the law to oppress those seeking to protest. The behaviour of the Met at the Sarah Everard vigil was an example of that.

The threat of violence goes further. Many might have thought that Johnson was joking when he said that it would take a brigade of tanks to remove him from Downing Street, but I am not at all convinced that he was.

And then there is the erosion of freedoms, whether to vote, or to move at will, or to protest, or to live free from fear. These are happening, steadily.

And whilst all this is happening the threats grow. They were seen on the street yesterday. And not by chance. Johnson incited what happened, and still will not apologise.

I hope Starmer returns to this issue at Prime Minister's Questions tomorrow. He has, once more, to call this out. He has to name it for what it is. We have to say what we are facing and fighting now. It is fascism, and Johnson is in favour of it, despite which his Cabinet will not quit.

Fascism is the danger we now face.