

It seems that Sunak might want to 're-educate' me

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I have [posted this thread on Twitter](#):

In 2016 I took my sons, then in their mid-teens, to Munich on holiday. We had a great time. And amongst the places we went to was Dachau. This was the first German concentration camp, located now, as then amongst suburban streets.

We had not been in the camp information centre for long when my elder son, having read about the first internees in the camp in 1933, suggested to me that 'They would have put you in here Dad'.

It wasn't too hard to see how he reached that conclusion. The early internees were political opponents of the Nazis. Left wingers, priests, academics, trade unionists, writers. All of them might have been described as vilifiers of the Nazis. I would have been. My son was right.

In that context reports today that Rishi Sunak plans to deradicalise people who 'vilify' the UK through the Prevent programme are deeply worrying. When the Tories think they define what Britishness is, this is most especially the case.

I have noted that Sunak's campaign has insisted the policy would not see people critical of UK Government policy referred for deradicalisation. But, they would say that, wouldn't they? The fact that it even needed to be said makes clear just how unacceptable the idea is.

And evidence from the way in which they have treated those who have sought to appropriately represent the British role in slavery and the abuse implicit in our past history of empire is the clearest possible indication of how little their word can be relied on on such issues.

What we have here is a person saying that disagreement with Britain will require that

the critic be re-educated. Just to contextualise, since I believe Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have the right to leave the Union I have no doubt that I fail this test.

And that is indicative of how pernicious this is. What we have is a supposedly mainstream politician suggesting it a crime to vilify Britain when many, quite reasonably, question its claim to even be a country.

Is there a threat in this proposal? I think so. I find it very deeply chilling. I think it indicates just how far down the road to fascism we are.

Be worried. Dachau is set in a nice Munich suburb. That's where fascism happens, right next door to people who no doubt thought it never could, or would.

Except it did. And it could very easily do so here too, especially when ideas like this can be discussed by candidates to be prime minister.