

Censorship for Unity

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“Social media has given extremists a new tool with which to recruit and radicalise,” writes British Labour MP Lucy Powell in *The Guardian*.

And just where are people “being exposed to extremist material”?

On Facebook!

“Instead of small meetings in pubs or obscure websites in the darkest corners of the internet,” she explains, “our favourite social media site is increasingly where hate is cultivated.”

Sharing ideas that she opposes is dangerous because they quickly spread. But her main ire

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is directed against private “Facebook groups,” an environment she argues “normalises these hateful views” because “critics are removed from the groups.”

Apparently, the problem with Facebook is that



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it is open — *and* that it is closed. Facebook is something new and dangerous because everybody uses it. Yet, because it allows closed groups, it is something very much like . . . “small meetings in pubs.”

Ms. Powell has, naturally enough, proposed a bill. “The responsibility to regulate these social media platforms falls on the government,” she asserts. “I believe we can force those who run these echo chambers to stamp out the evil that is currently so prominent.”

Like any politician, she talks up unity, of course. She demands the government prevent social media from “being hijacked by those who instead wish to divide.”

But remember, she is a member of a political party that opposes other parties. She is trying to suppress *divisions that exist*. The implication of her agenda is a one-party state, where opposition is suppressed.*

By censorship.

A word she somehow neglects to use.

Online extremism, she writes, “is something we are frighteningly unequipped to deal with.”

I’d say she is frighteningly equipped.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.

* Social media critic Dave Cullen notices that MP Lucy Powell admits that there is a huge personal element here: she is a politician who doesn’t like criticism.