

I've been taking a break from the podcast recently. I've been more busy than usual, due to the lockdown easing and things starting up again. But at the same time, I've felt as if my mind needed a rest.

I think all of us have been affected psychologically by this crisis, and my emotions have been swinging up and down dramatically over the past week or two. But in one way I think that's because I've been developing a much more spiritual attitude to what's been going on. I've been doing a bit of self-hypnosis and meditation.

Maybe in allowing my mind to have a rest from activity, it's almost as if the darker part of my psyche, the fearful and angry side, has been fighting back in bursts.

Or maybe it's just long-repressed feelings being released.

Today's particular podcast expresses some quite dark thoughts, things which I think really need to be said. I've already written notes for another podcast, which is much more positive. The last thing I want to do, is to drag anyone down. I think this is a time when we all need to be uplifted.

But it's also important to recognise that there are some dark things going on. And only when we face that darkness can we start to overcome it.

The thing that motivated me to start speaking out in this way was the realisation of how serious things were. When the Covid crisis started getting really serious, I very quickly realised that my life would probably not be going back to normal.

I understood quite quickly that this was about getting us all vaccinated. And I knew that I was not going to allow that for myself.

I also noticed that some of my friends were starting to anxiously express hopes that there would be a vaccine soon. It seemed that the battle was lost, almost before it had begun.

I've had vaccines before, but it seemed to me that the pressure for vaccination, the race to find a Covid-19 vaccine was being overplayed. The disease wasn't smallpox or diphtheria. Something didn't seem right, from the very start.

And that's even more the case now. Early on in the crisis, back in February, I could see that resisting the pressure to take the vaccine would result in people like me being seen as "unclean". I love climbing, but I was so certain that I would not be allowed back to the climbing centres, that when the lockdown was starting and my climbing friends were eagerly discussing home training routines, I just couldn't bear to join in. I disengaged myself from them and started my podcast instead.

I didn't care if no one was listening. I just felt the need to speak my truth.

As Covid-19 infection rates fell so steeply that an Oxford professor working on a vaccine was quoted in the press saying that there probably wouldn't be enough infected people left to test the vaccine, there was a glimmer of hope that maybe the mass vaccination coercion plans might have to be scrapped.

But it takes more than that to push back the New World Order. As lockdown restrictions have been gradually eased, the creep of face masks has increased to a crescendo. Prominent scientists have done blatant u-turns, advising initially that face masks did not offer protection against Covid-19, and then suddenly changing their advice, as governments write face masks into various "emergency" laws.

In Spain, people are now not allowed to go outside without wearing a face mask, or they could be fined 600 Euros.

In Scotland, face masks have been made mandatory on public transport and in shops, the week after it was announced that the number of deaths from Covid-19 in Scotland had fallen to zero.

I find the arbitrariness of these laws chilling, reminiscent of how a dictatorship would behave. It seems clear to me that this is part of a coercion strategy for the forthcoming Covid-19 vaccine.

And it seems to be a global strategy. Portugal, which brought in emergency measures but stopped short of the draconian measures imposed by other countries, and which had a relatively low number of cases and deaths from Covid-19, made face masks mandatory on the 1st July. It just doesn't make sense – unless it's seen as governments having pressure on them to impose these measures. The governments

themselves may have no idea that this has anything to do with the vaccine.

I don't think this is all coming from Bill Gates. I don't know exactly where it is coming from, and that's the scary thing. There are so many chilling parallels with Germany in the early 1930s, and I think most people fail to see it because there are no jack boots or Hitler salutes or marching in the streets.

I keep thinking about the Del Amitri record "Nothing Ever Happens", about the line "They'll burn down the synagogues at 6 O'Clock, and we'll all go along like before."

It's a brilliant line, but it shouldn't be taken literally. Things are never that predictable. If Hitler was reincarnated and wanted to bring in the Fourth Reich, he'd be very careful to set up things differently, so that people wouldn't know what was happening until it was too late.

When I've voiced my objections to face masks on social media, a couple of people have said, "Just go along with it – it's just a bit of cloth!" People probably said similar things to Jews when the Nazis made them wear Yellow Star badges in the 1930s.

Of course, that was different, because the Yellow Stars were brought in to make Jews easier to identify. In the concentration camps, the pink triangle was used to identify male homosexuals. Brown triangles were used to identify Romany people, red identified political prisoners, green identified criminals, blue was for immigrants, purple for Jehovah's Witnesses, and black for so-called asocial people, including prostitutes and lesbians.

By that time of course, it was far too late to do anything about it.

That's why I think when laws become coercive in this way, involving personal infringements, especially irrational ones, we really have to push while we still can.

It might already be too late. This is a juggernaut that is careering downhill at speed. We are already seeing the way that the masked are being encouraged to turn against the unmasked. The president of the Royal Society, Professor Venki Ramakrishnan, has said that not wearing a

mask in public environments indoors should become as socially unacceptable as drink driving or not wearing a seat belt.

Once again, we're seeing that authoritarian practice of using social disapproval to impose controls.

Once the vaccine is considered ready to launch on the world's population, people who refuse it will be forced to continue wearing the face masks. They will become symbols of the "unclean". I don't think we'll be herded into concentration camps – I hope not anyway! – but I think the whole world is set to become a kind of concentration camp, with only a small elite profiting from it. That might seem crazy, and I really hope that it is. But I fear that it might not be.

It will start gently, with everyone happy to receive a Universal Basic Income. But in order to receive the UBI, you will have to have a full medical MOT, which will include vaccinations. You'll also have to have a clean Social Credit Record, which after a while probably won't depend on your saying nice things about minorities.

Instead, you'll have to say good things about the government – the world government. And it won't be enough to just like the right posts on social media – you'll need to actively display your support for them.

In 1935 the Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of their nationality, and set up conditions where non-Jewish Germans had to toe the line in order to get their citizenship certificates.

The book *Travellers in the Third Reich*, by Julia Boyd, quotes the First Secretary at the British Embassy in Berlin, Ivone Kirkpatrick. He said in 1935:

"Every German will be obliged to toe the line in order to get his citizenship certificate and when he has got it, he will have to continue to be a fervid supporter of the Government for fear of losing it."

I think this is the way that things are starting to go now. But there will be no countries to escape to. I've spoken before about how "progressive" Germany was as a country in the 1920s, at least in the cities. Women were allowed to vote in Germany from 1919, and by 1932, there were 112 women elected to the Reichstag.

There were great advances in architecture, with the Bauhaus designed by Walter Gropius. There was a lot of intellectual and cultural activity. There was even a Museum of Sexology.

But when the Nazis took power, things changed rapidly.

We should take heed of these warnings from history. Just because jackboots are not so fashionable these days doesn't mean it couldn't happen again.

I told you I was having dark thoughts!

I was interested to read about the letter published in Harpers, calling for justice and open debate, and signed by almost 150 prominent writers, including Noam Chomsky and JK Rowling. I was pleasantly surprised by this move, even though I don't agree with the tone of the letter, as it's rooted in divisive political polarisation.

But when it gets beyond the politicising, it makes some very chilling points. It says:

"...it is now all too common to hear calls for swift and severe retribution in response to perceived transgressions of speech and thought. More troubling still, institutional leaders, in a spirit of panicked damage control, are delivering hasty and disproportionate punishments instead of considered reforms. Editors are fired for running controversial pieces; books are withdrawn for alleged inauthenticity; journalists are barred from writing on certain topics; professors are investigated for quoting works of literature in class; a researcher is fired for circulating a peer-reviewed academic study; and the heads of organizations are ousted for what are sometimes just clumsy mistakes."

I find these words chilling, because once again, it is so reminiscent of the Nazi regime in the 1930s, when academics with anti-establishment ideas were dismissed or forced to resign.

The letter continues:

"We are already paying the price in greater risk aversion among writers, artists, and journalists who fear for their livelihoods if they depart from

the consensus, or even lack sufficient zeal in agreement."

Yet another chilling reference to enforced enthusiasm for the party line.

It's a shame that it's taken a social media beating to wake up some of these writers to the dangers of this kind of creeping loss of freedom, which so many people just take for granted. I hope that this letter inspires further protests, because the time to speak out is long overdue.

One prominent writer who didn't sign the letter, at least not yet, is the historian Neil Oliver. He recently resigned from the position of president of the National Trust after expressing admiration for another historian. That other historian was David Starkey, who made a really nasty comment about black people recently, in an interview.

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I personally have never liked David Starkey, and it's not because I'm black – I just always found him very arrogant. I think the comment he made about black people was vile, but he has made an apology for it, a significant apology. On that basis, I would give him a second chance.

Neil Oliver actually tweeted his admiration for Mr Starkey before the interview where Starkey made those comments .

But what got Neil Oliver into trouble was that he didn't remove the tweet after Starkey made those comments. Apparently lots of people were so outraged by this that Neil Oliver's position as president of the National Trust became untenable.

I think this kind of outrage at someone – not because of what they have said or done, but because they show love for someone who you don't like, is – well, it's the definition of tribalism. And it's very immature.

I probably behaved like that myself when I was much younger, and if I did, it was because of fear and insecurity. When I was young we didn't have social media, so I can't really say how I would have behaved if I'd been on Twitter in my 20s! But I do think it's often fear of someone's opinions that causes people to act like this. If people were more relaxed and tolerant, the person they despised might actually learn from them.

Or maybe, they might learn from that person that they despise! And that might be what they're really afraid of.

The whole incident reminds me of something that happened when I was five years old, and the fact that I still remember it today shows what a shock it was at the time. It happened when I was at primary school, and I have to say that I did have a lovely time at primary school. I had lots of friends there, despite this particular incident!

It was break, and we were all in the playground. By the way, this was in the late 1960s! We were playing a rhyming game, where each person in turn had to say a made-up word that rhymed with the last word that had been said. We were laughing at how funny the words were. Someone said "wum" and another said "fum". It was my turn next, and I said "bum!", not realising the real meaning of "bum". I was so naive and innocent! Everyone said "Oh-oh! She said a bad word!"

I was really shocked and horrified – I had no idea what "bum" meant! Luckily the teachers decided that I hadn't done anything wrong!

But when I see this kind of social media outrage, which often spills out into the wider mainstream media, not because someone has said something considered offensive, but because someone has expressed admiration for someone who has fallen out of favour, it really seems as immature as that group of five-year-olds back in the 1960s.

[up to here]

I haven't watched TV for years, but because Neil Oliver has been in the news a few times over the things he's said recently, I decided to watch some interviews with him, just to see what all the fuss was about. I was pleasantly surprised to find that not only is he not just a pretty face! He has a very good brain, a wide and thoughtful understanding of history, and more importantly, some very complex and challenging opinions which he's not ashamed to share. I find that very refreshing, especially from someone in the public eye.

One thing that drives me mad is when a bland celebrity suddenly decides to voice a trendy opinion, especially if it's in a preachy way, simply because they think it will help their career and bring them more adulation from their fans. It takes much more guts for someone well known to

express an unpopular opinion, and Neil Oliver lost many fans when he came out as a Unionist, a Scot who didn't want Independence.

I did vote for Independence in 2014. My mum didn't. I still continued to love and respect her! It's sad that many of us have become so fragile that we can't bear it if someone has a different opinion to ours. I don't agree with everything that Neil Oliver says, but I admire him for having the guts to express challenging opinions, especially as someone in the public eye.

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Another person who has been caught in the fallout from David Starkeygate is Darren Grimes, of the Reasoned channel on YouTube, who presented the interview with Starkey. I haven't watched that interview, but apparently Grimes didn't challenge Starkey's offensive comments, and he only distanced himself from them after being slated on Twitter. Grimes is also taking legal action against the BBC after comments on Radio 4 that negatively misrepresented his channel.

I've actually watched Reasoned several times, although as I say, I didn't watch the Starkey interview. I usually enjoy Darren Grimes's interviews because they tend to be challenging and stimulating, rather than the bland establishment propaganda churned out in the mainstream media. The one thing that irritates me about Reasoned is the way that Grimes frequently champions conservative ideas, because I absolutely loathe party politics, left or right. But it doesn't stop me watching the interviews if they have an interesting guest.

And I will continue to watch them – if the subject matter looks interesting.

[up to here]

I read an article about an Alaska State lawmaker who was forced to apologise after comparing coronavirus State measures to Jews being forced to wear the Yellow Star during the Holocaust.

The article was published was back in May. Apparently after legislation was brought in requiring state lawmakers to undergo a health screening, after which those who were found to be Covid-free would have to wear a health sticker, Republican State Rep Ben Carpenter addressed an email to

every member of the Alaska House of Representatives. The email said:

"How about an armband that won't fall off like a sticker will? If my sticker falls off, do I get a new one, or do I get public shaming too? Are the stickers available as a yellow star of David?"

Two Jewish lawmakers quickly rebuked the comparison, one saying:

"Ben, this is disgusting. Keep your Holocaust jokes to yourself."

Carter apologised, but it seems to me that his comment was taken completely the wrong way. He was actually making a valid, if exaggerated – probably deliberately exaggerated – observation.

If we continue to block the voicing of such opinions, we really are on the road to hell.

I hope I've not been too depressing in this post. I know that there are a lot of people who strongly disagree with the increasingly draconian measures that are being imposed, and some of them have changed their opinions during the crisis, being fearful about the illness at first, and then becoming increasingly angry about the restrictions as time goes on.

When I started on this path, I really felt very much alone. Everyone in Scotland, including all my friends and family, seemed to be terrified about the virus and cheering on the restrictions. But I've since found out that I'm definitely not alone.

I think that there are ways for us all to overcome this situation, and I'll talk about some of them in my next podcast.