

Stay Calm and Censor On: Elon Musk Summoned to Parliament to Answer for His Pledge to Restore Free Speech

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I previously wrote about [Hillary Clinton’s call on European countries to pass censorship laws](#) to force social media companies like Twitter to regulate speech even after Elon Musk’s pledge to restore free speech to Twitter. Now the Parliament has called on Musk to testify and to explain his alarming pledge to restore free speech.

The Biden Administration’s Disinformation Governance Board head, [Nina Jankowicz](#), [previously called upon Great Britain](#) to impose state censorship rules. That call has grown since Musk’s purchase. Until now, a unified front of corporate censors was able to maintain an extensive system of censorship with the encouragement of politicians and pundits, including [Joe Biden](#) and [Democratic members](#).

The head of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee in the House of Commons, Conservative MP Julian Knight has assured her countrymen that they can stay calm and censor on. She [issued a letter](#) for Musk to appear before the committee to answer for his terrifying suggestion of free speech:

“At a time when social media companies face the prospect of tighter regulations around

the world, we're keen to learn more about how Mr Musk will balance his clear commitment to free speech with new obligations to protect Twitter's users from online harms."

We've invited [@ElonMusk](#) to discuss the future of [@Twitter](#) in Parliament.

Chair [@JulianKnight15](#): "Appearing before the Committee will give Mr Musk an ideal opportunity to set out his proposals in more depth and we would look forward to welcoming him."

📷: <https://t.co/HpYduMAcZY> pic.twitter.com/UTU2wu1jnV

— Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee (@CommonsDCMS) [May 4, 2022](#)

Like the EU's censorship plans under the Digital Services Act, the proposed [Online Safety Bill](#) would introduce state censorship through the purview of Ofcom (The Office of Communications), the broadcasting regulator in Britain. It would allow the company to fine firms up to [ten percent](#) of their global revenue should they violate ill-defined "harm" standards.

If passed, Clinton and others hope that the Europeans can replace corporate censorship with good old-fashioned state censorship. This includes confiscatory fines for anything deemed "[grossly offensive](#)." The bill would allow countries like Great Britain to impose censorship on the rest of the world.

The decline of free speech in the United Kingdom has long been a concern for free speech advocates ([here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#)). Once you start as a government to criminalize speech, you end up on a slippery slope of censorship. What constitutes hate speech or "[malicious communications](#)" remains a highly subjective matter and we have seen a steady expansion of prohibited terms and words and gestures. [Even having "toxic ideologies" is now a crime.](#)

Great Britain would now make censorship one of its greatest exports. To do so, they first have to stomp out advocates for free speech like Musk by threatening to bankrupt his company if it tries to restore free speech to the Internet.

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