

EXCLUSIVE: “Slammed and shut down” – Video interview with outspoken NZ MP

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“The time for emotional blackmail has to end”

The 2022 [Facts4EU.Org](https://facts4eu.org) / CIBUK Video Interviews: No.2

**Challenging topics, important people from the UK
and around the world**

Video Interview No.2 – From Auckland New Zealand, the important NZ MP Simon O’Connor

Today we’re in the New Zealand parliament in Auckland, speaking to an MP whose recent speech went viral on social media. **He’s intelligent, charming, and straight-talking.** The video interview below is co-published with [Facts4EU.Org](https://facts4eu.org) and is also available on YouTube.

The second [Facts4EU](https://facts4eu.org) / CIBUK interview



Simon O'Connor MP is a member of New Zealand's National Party and has been a member of the New Zealand House of Representatives representing Tāmaki for the last 11 years. He is also a member of NZ's Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade committee and is its immediate past Chairman.

He is also a former Chairman and a current Board Member of Monarchy New Zealand – an organisation in favour of retaining New Zealand's status as a constitutional monarchy.

In our exclusive interview below, Mr O'Connor gives his forthright views on a range of issues of interest to the British and world wide audience.

Simon O'Connor MP
Member of the New Zealand House of Representatives
representing Tāmaki
Member of the Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade
committee

Below the video are just some of the highlights from this stimulating interview.

WATCH THE FULL VIDEO INTERVIEW

The direct YouTube link to the video is here

On Her Majesty the Queen and her Platinum Jubilee

- *“We think of her as the Queen of New Zealand here. She’s a remarkable woman. Here is this woman who’s given over 70 years’ service to the Commonwealth.”*
- *“I’m a great believer in constitutional monarchy as the best way to form a democracy.”*
- *“If we held a constitutional referendum tomorrow, the majority would support Her Majesty and would wish to retain a constitutional monarchy here.”*
- *“Even the grumpiest Republican would have to acknowledge she’s done a remarkable job.”*

On Brexit:

- *“I’m quite genuinely torn.”*
- *“The country voted for it and now we support it. In other words how does New Zealand work with the UK, post-Brexit.”*

On the UK-NZ trade deal:

- *“The deal is pretty much done, which is great. I’m thrilled, New Zealand’s thrilled.”*
- *“In the next couple of days we introduce the domestic legislation we require to bring that about. It’s a fantastic first step. You’ll get to have even better access to excellent New Zealand products and we’re going to appreciate a lot of the services you guys provide.”*
- *“Your financial services, your cyber security, all the*

technical side – New Zealand will absolutely welcome that.”

- *“I know the UK’s interested in joining the TPTPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership). We’d love to have that because trade’s important.”*

On defence:



- *“But New Zealand ultimately needs more capabilities... so it was fantastic that you had the new aircraft carrier down here – we’d love to have seen it by the way.”*
- *“It would be better that New Zealand might have better maritime capabilities, that we could join you in those freedom of navigation operations into the South China Sea and more recently you’ve seen China in effect lay claim to the Taiwan Straits. We need to exert international law there.”*

On education:

- *“I do have serious concerns about aspects of “academia” here in New Zealand... There are some amazing academics in New Zealand doing some amazing research, but in a lot of areas they are just activists. They might have the title Doctor or Professor but they’re pushing a point of view – their point of view. Even worse they’re not allowing alternatives to be discussed.”*
- *“Those who have an alternative view are being banned*

from speaking at universities.”

- *“To give an example from only a few days ago it was explicit in the exam paper you were NOT to say anything against the topic, you could only write in support of it.”*
- *“It’s a clear sign of activism and not allowing freedom of speech and thought.”*

On personal freedoms generally:

- *“Look it’s a big problem across the western world generally... The English-speaking western world seems to have lost its head.*
- *“Some of the most basic personal liberties are being tossed out the window, including freedom of speech – the ability to articulate what you believe. Instead you’re being cancelled, you’re being pilloried, you get mobbed by the Twitterati or the media. Slammed and shut down.”*
- *“We need some thought leaders and speech leaders, unambiguous and not afraid to speak out.”*
- *“Even for those who are still uncertain, don’t be afraid to speak your thoughts to family and friends.”*

On the solutions – and the NZ National Party’s views:

- *“The National Party is a traditional centre-right party. We’re actually quite a broad church. Very much for free speech. “We’ve had some attempted legislation recently which my party supported which was to – in effect – enshrine free speech into universities. That was voted down. That was rejected by the Government, sadly.”*
- *“There’s growing alarm in a lot of the western countries of the censorship that’s in place – that you can only have a monological view on things. **Gosh, that ain’t democracy.**”*

On the New Zealand government's extreme response to Covid-19:

- *"The borders are now open. Please come and visit, we'd love to have people back. But people still have to do a Covid test on arrival, we still have to wear masks on public transport, we're still having to wear masks here in the New Zealand parliament when I'm in the chamber."*
- *"There's still restrictions in play but I want to stress: Welcome back to New Zealand."*
- *"Two years ago... most New Zealanders accepted the various rules, and even to a degree the limitations on our freedoms."*
- *"As of today I don't understand why we still need various rules and regulations... in fact we still had people being quarantined in hotels for seven to ten to fourteen days, only a few months back."*
- *"Long and short? New Zealand should have lifted most if not all of its restrictions months ago."*

Visiting New Zealand?



- *"Firstly, welcome! You have to be double vaccinated, you're asked to do a rapid antigen test on arrival."*
- *"You'll still find people are wearing masks in the likes of buses, trains, and so forth."*

Photo on the left: Milford Sound, New Zealand
click to enlarge

On China:

- *"The Chinese people? Wonderful. The Chinese Communist Party? I have no time for.*
- *"I've got no time for Communists. Simple as that really. The first victims of the CCP are its own people."*
- *"China ultimately wants to dictate its own terms."*
- *"I would stress to your listeners that there is a limit."*
- *"The global order that you and I here in New Zealand and the UK are used to is not advantageous to China, so they are trying to extend their influence in different countries so that these countries will vote with them – in the UN and more recently in the WHO."*
- *"That's a concern to us because ultimately we won't have free trade. If China gets its way there won't be free trade." "Human rights – their record is appalling."*
- *"Crushing democracy in Hong Kong, arresting such notable figures as Cardinal Xing – Good Lord – right through to one million plus Uyghurs in concentration camps. It's just bloody awful."*
- *"Imagine if more countries acted in unison to say 'No, this is not acceptable.'"*
- *"Russians and Chinese – they're the first victims of a totalitarian leadership – Xi in China, Putin in Russia.", not run away "I've been sanctioned by Russia – but then the whole New Zealand parliament has. China hasn't sanctioned me yet!"*

In conclusion on freedom of speech and ideas generally:

- *“The time for emotional blackmail has to end. I want to provide you with a safe space for you to provide me a coherent, rational argument.*
 - *“That’s the only safe space there should be. A place where you can safely and rightly put your opinion forward, not run away and hide. That’s our challenge in our western democracy.”*
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