

# When Gillian Tett appears to endorse the end of democra...

Published: January 13, 2026, 6:42 pm

---

Gillian Tett and Paul Mason are [interviewed in the Guardian](#) this morning. Paul Mason is his usual sound self. What worried me was Tett's response to the economic crisis. The relevant quotes are:

*Were you surprised to see two European leaders replaced by technocrats?*

**Gillian Tett:** No — the situation calls for very firm, forward-looking action that is almost impossible in a rowdy democratic political system at the moment.

The problem is you neither have anybody who has the authority to force a solution, nor do you have sufficiently free markets and genuine democracy to get a bottom-up solution. So you're caught in this limbo-land where you stagger from one mini-crisis to another.

I could give the benefit of the doubt, but this seems far too dangerously like an endorsement of a totalitarian solution to the economic crisis for my liking.

A democratic solution is possible. I fully admit it will require courageous politicians, which is exactly why I have written *The Courageous State*. But even hinting at totalitarianism now is exceptionally dangerous.

I hope Tett retracts the hinted suggestion, very soon. But maybe she won't. As Larry Elliott argued within the last week, the suspension of democracy in Europe and the passing of power to a tiny elite of technocrats