

## Labour can't win by proving it's neoliberal

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As [the Guardian says this morning](#):

*Ed Miliband's project, and Labour's election hopes, depend on the economic vision that Ed Balls sets out in his speech*

And so far the big trailed promise [is that it will ask](#) the Office for Budget Responsibility to audit all its tax and spending commitments before the next election.

The trouble is there are some real problems with that.

First, the OBR has no authority to do this.

Second, there appear to be no plans of substance: it's not the tax and spending plans that matter so much as the industrial policy at this point in time.

Third, what is the point of asking a body dedicated to the mantra of neoliberal logic to approve Labour's plan unless that plan is to provide more of what the Coalition has offered, which is, in itself an effective forfeit of the economic debate?

As [Neal Lawson has said in the Guardian this morning](#):

*Labour's one-nation mantra can't disguise a clapped-out party*

As he concludes:

*So Labour in Brighton will be going through the motions. It will showcase the madness of doing the same thing while expecting a different outcome. The tragedy is we need a radical party — that can set limits to the free market and democratise the state; that knows sustainability and equality must go hand in hand; that has answers to the anxiety and insecurity of modern life; and that prefigures the good society by trusting in people, empowering them and practising an everyday politics of love and compassion. The tragedy is not just that so much more is needed, but that so much more is possible.*

Neal is right. We need so, so much more. I am sure it is possible. And yet we haven't got near it as yet.

And in the meantime ordinary people suffer, day in and day out.

And that's what really angers me. There is work to be done. Jobs need to be created. Poverty needs to be lifted. Taxes need to be paid. Wealth needs to be redistributed. Homes must be built. Energy needs to be saved. Public services need delivery. Honest business needs a level playing field on which to compete. Peace needs to be made. Hope has to be delivered. And that's not what's being promised in Britain right now.