

A message to the elite

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The [FT has reported that](#):

Donald Trump's anti-trade stance has been blasted by a pillar of the corporate establishment in an attack reflecting growing alarm in business over the property mogul's dominance in the Republican presidential race.

Jim McNerney, a former top executive at Boeing, 3M and General Electric, said on Tuesday that Mr Trump's hostility to international trade posed a serious threat to US prosperity.

In [another article the FT](#) has suggested that three commissioned surveys by economic forecasters all showed that it was likely that Brexit would impose considerable costs on the UK.

The argument is essentially the same in both cases: it is that voting for something not endorsed by the wisdom of an elite will cost a great deal. And I suspect that, if anything, this will encourage those determined to vote Trump and Brexit to do just that.

I really do not think most people anywhere close to that elite have any clue how far their lives are removed from the reality of living in the US or UK.

It has [taken an article by Aditya Chakrabortty in the Guardian](#) this morning to point out that fights about payments to those with disabilities are about real people's lives, not what happens to George Osborne.

Despite that [obvious fact we had George Osborne saying to the Commons yesterday](#) that he may have made a mistake but he was not going to say sorry: his contempt - the contempt that let him demand the cuts in the first place - was apparent. Indifference was writ large over all he said.

It is an indifference based on a belief that people think there is no alternative to what they are being offered: that those in power think they are the pinnacle of achievement and we should be grateful to them. It is belief that also thinks that the system of power

we have is the only one available. Martin Wolf [succumbs to that in the FT today](#), saying:

It is hard, though, to believe that an innovative and outward-looking China can be contained indefinitely within the straitjacket of an all-powerful party-state. Its political institutions must surely move beyond the “democratic centralism” invented by Vladimir Lenin a century ago.

And yet we have an increasingly centralised system of power in the UK, and elsewhere. Only yesterday, in another gesture that shows the arrogance of those in office in the UK, [it was decided](#) that the UK's opposition parties could keep the funding they need to ensure that they can at least try to provide an effective opposition to the government. But make no mistake, the threat of withdrawing 28% of their funding was deliberate: it was to make them feel like supplicants and to remind them that they are funded by the grace of the government alone. The elite shall rule.

As it will in the country's universities. In [another FT article](#) the issue of gagging of university researchers at the whim of the Cabinet Office, [to which I have referred here](#), is addressed. I suspect that like opposition party funding this will be reversed in some way but the threat will remain: self censorship will become the norm. The elite will have their way. The threat will be enough to achieve the goal.

And to come back to the issue with which I started this post, this is precisely why so many will vote Brexit and for Trump. They almost certainly do not want either really. But they are deeply alienated by an elite whose every uttering is no longer trusted, and with some reason, which is what the IDS resignation's real significance is, for it shows that there was a cold hearted cynicism at the centre of the cuts that were supposedly such difficult decisions to make.

Until that elite - the 1% as it is called - realise just how strong this distrust is then they will not realise the risk that we face, and the backlash that they might unleash.

I do not want Trump.

I do not want Brexit.

I would like wise heads to prevail.

I would like democracy to be restored to its rightful place.

I want freedom of speech.

I want government that genuinely seeks to act in the interests of all people, and most especially those in need.

But we are not getting that type of government. We are getting small minded, oppressive, indifferent government in the interests of a few who aren't even wise

enough to see the risk in doing that.

Is it really surprising that as a consequence people are saying they have had enough?

It really is time for the elite - from wherever it comes - to realise that. And act. People have had enough. And the mechanism they might use to say so has very grave consequences, way beyond the short term.