

Corbyn comments - a change to my moderation policy

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This blog has been going for more than a decade.

There have been more than 13,000 posts and over 100,000 comments, every one of which I have read.

To protect my sanity and my time [I adopted a moderation policy](#) some time ago that said you are free to comment but I am also at liberty to delete your comment if I so wish.

I made clear there were some reasons where by default that would happen. They include occasion when I think the comment not legal, but more commonly they arise when then the person is either not trying to make serious contribution to the debate I am seeking to develop on how tax and economic policy can be used to create change to meet the needs of all and not a few, or is being repetitive, or is simply trying to be provocative.

Over many years this has, by and large, been an adequate basis for dismissing those who rather boringly sought to promote neoliberal or pro-tax haven views here when it was very clear that these did not in any way add to the debate I was seeking to develop. Endlessly they told me that if I did not engage with them I would never succeed, my blog would collapse, my reputation would be ruined and the causes I believed in would be forever harmed. When I blocked them some resorted to sending abusive comments, sometimes for months. But on no occasion where they ever proved to be right: the blogged progressed happily without them as did the causes I believed in and worked for.

I regret I am for the time being going to have to extend this policy to those making comment in support of Jeremy Corbyn's candidacy for the leadership of the Labour Party. There are four obvious reasons:

* I know many think Corbyn is the Messiah who has made Labour the ultimate election machine but for the actions of 172 MPs and one or two others, including me, but first if

you say that I've heard it before and second there's no evidence to support either case;

* I know many think Corbyn's the only person who might ever have offered left wing policy in the UK, but objectively he's not. John McDonnell's dedication to government debt management means he is bound to impose austerity whatever he says, which is socially and economically the wrong thing to do at present and far from being left wing. It's an unfortunate fact that I am to the left of both Corbyn and McDonnell and object to being told otherwise by those who have not appraised the evidence and I am not going to spend my time rebutting the claims who have not bothered to properly appraise the evidence each time it happens;

* I know many think anyone who does not think Jeremy Corbyn walks on water is a neoliberal, Blairite or worse, but I know that's not true in my case and that of many others who question his competence but not his values;

* Objectively many have pointed out that try as they might have done to work with Corbyn that was not possible because he never showed any sign of knowing how to do so. I shared that experience and any comment that ignores that fact makes all debate on his leadership credentials impossible in any meaningful way.

I am most certainly not banning constructive debate on what Corbyn actually says or plans to do: that is fine, but I have no time at all to waste with the abuse that I know no Corbynista thinks has ever happened but which the rest of the left is really bored with. And in this context I note that many Corbyn supporters are already offering the same types of comments that the neoliberals once did i.e. that my reputation, cause and so much more will be ruined if I do not now see the error of my ways. The neoliberals were wrong. I did not succumb to their threats and prospered because I did not do so. I am entirely confident that history will be repeated.

But let me make it clear that I am not banning criticism of Owen Smith by saying this. Far from it: if there are issues to be raised make them, constructively. But saying he's in favour of austerity when he's clearly not, or that he's an outright neoliberal when he's obviously not or a Blairite when he clearly isn't will get you nowhere when the reality is that so far he may be offering the most left wing agenda of anyone seriously seeking election as leader of Labour for a very long time (although I'd prefer it to be further left still, and see good reason why it should be, and will be the first to shout with reason if it is not to my liking in due course).

In other words, you can offer as much constructive contribution to debate here as you like.

And you can also offer abuse if you wish but I will not post your comment and will add you to the automatic deletion list that Wordpress conveniently lets me maintain that ensures that from then on I do not even see your comment before it reaches the trash bin.

And if you want to know why I am doing this there are three reasons.

First, I have a life.

Second I am utterly bored at being told that I am now a neoliberal when I have not changed my beliefs in any way at all but simply want to see genuine left wing electoral policy delivered within the UK parliamentary framework.

And then there's this by Hadley Freeman in the Guardian today [which neatly summed up some of my sentiments:](#)

Trump and Labour's hard left both claim to be a cause, but have become cults of personality, ones it is forbidden to criticise. They don't merely object to their opponents — in Corbyn's case, the centre left; in Trump's case, anyone but him. They demonise them. Their supporters say the rise of these fringe groups proves the power of democracy; but movements that demand devotion and prompt vilification are not grassroots democracies — they're cults.

I've never trusted cults.

I didn't trust the cult of neoliberalism and have worked tirelessly to oppose it.

But I will never stand by and see it replaced by another one.

So if you want air time for your cause and are a member of any cult I suggest you go elsewhere. This is not the place for you.