

Hopeless, powerless, poverty

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There was a despondent mood around this blog yesterday. Even I suffer from that sometimes, and I am an optimist by nature. But optimism does require a basis. What might that be?

If there is despondency it has a cause. I will simplify my argument by suggesting just three.

The first is the concentration of wealth that is in turn increasing the power of a tiny elite. Trump's government is the perfect example of this.

Second is the sense that politics has ceased to represent most people in the face of this concentration of wealth and power. There is a feeling that politics has as no mechanism to respond to the carefully crafted narrative that the hired hands of this elite are willing to promote.

Third there is a resulting sense of hopelessness for many. They despair at their own thwarted prospects, and those of their children. They find it hard to comprehend how rapidly what once seemed reasonable aspirations now look like implausible pipe dreams: home ownership is one example; a reasonably secure pension another. What feels like survival is now an aspiration that has been unwillingly imposed.

Put it in three words: hopeless, powerless, poverty. It may be relative poverty, but that does not matter: perception is key here. And that's the condition that too many think they face. It's the condition that must be addressed if democracy is to survive. It's the condition to which the left needs an answer.

I will be working on it.