

On the French election: why is it so hard to sell frate...

Published: January 18, 2026, 6:38 am

The French election is a relief, a source of inspiration, a cause for concern and straightforwardly worrying all at the same time.

It's a relief the Pe Pen clearly has no chance of winning the Presidency.

It's inspirational that the party mould can be broken in France, at least.

It's a cause for concern that the French backed racism and the far right so strongly (although they have done it before).

And it's a worry that the left have failed, again.

Macron is, let's be candid, a bit like Blair. It will end in tears. But he's kept Le Pen at bay.

The concern is that although Melenchon did well in the end, the Socialists as such did not (although they were always hamstringed by Hollande) and the day when there is a truly electable left of centre vision seems remote as yet.

The essential fact that society has a choice, between looking out for each other, and acting in bigoted self interest, is still not being laid out plainly enough in front of people. It's the choice we face, but still it is not possible to persuade people that a vision based on decency, concern, care and interest in the well being of others is the real foundation for a truly radical government capable of delivering for all.

It makes me worry about the state of France. Why is fraternite so hard to sell?

And the UK, because Labour seems utterly unable to elucidate such basic thinking. And I have no idea why it is so hard.