

## A coming summer of disquiet

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I don't know what the summer of 1939 was like. Worse than that of 2017, I am sure. But I can't help thinking that they must have features in common.

Wild optimists will have and do now, in both cases, think things will work out just fine, and what's all the fuss about?

Profound pessimists will have and do in contrast believe the end of the world is nigh.

In between realists will appreciate that things are very unlikely to be the same again and that there is nothing that can be done to prevent that.

Thankfully we are not facing war. I count blessings. But I do think we are in a Gramscian moment; the past is behind us and what will replace it has yet to emerge.

I was asked at the Tax Justice Network conference last week what I wanted to happen and I suggested we needed nothing less than a revolution. Not, of course, a bloody one. Nor a non-democratic one. But a revolution nonetheless in the attitude we have in our society to ensuring that all can partake, to delivering social and economic justice, and to ensuring we become sustainable.

This, of course, is not just true in the UK; it is true across Europe and beyond. I happen to see tax justice as being at the core of that but was certainly the most outspoken on the issue.

I happen to think that because the change that is needed is much more important than our relationships with the EU and could, I think, be effected within it, the whole Brexit debacle is a distraction, and maybe even a deliberate one, to push in the opposite direction and to reinforce the status quo when the change that is needed is European wide, and much more important. If, however, leave we must then I am quite sure the opportunity for real change must be grabbed.

Either way it feels like we're about to have a last summer of the old order, where we can pretend all is carrying on as before and we might with luck not face the discomfort

change always brings for many. I think that view naive, and wrong. Change is now inevitable and because of the gross injustice in our society inevitable, whether that is to be eliminated, or forcibly maintained.

As school holidays appear on my planning horizon and with one son already in post exam mode I am very aware of it being summer. But it does not feel like a summer of ease. I will relax. But it will be in an atmosphere of disquiet before the emerging chaos that will proceed whatever comes next does really appear to unfold, as it surely will, from early autumn inwards.

We are in the lull before the storm.