

## Freedom from fear

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There is almost nothing good that comes from knowledge of the Windrush affair.

There has been deep, intense, racism at the heart of the British government targeted at citizens of this country by a white, privileged elite who have exploited innocent victims to further their own political careers without concern for the consequences.

Ministers have blamed their civil servants for implementation of their deliberately hostile policies.

Lives have been ruined without apparent conscience or any real remorse amongst those who knowingly created the policy that ensured this happened.

People have been held prisoner in their own country.

Or have been denied access to their home.

The most basic of human rights - which ministers are supposed to uphold - have been deliberately denied.

And there has not been a single resignation.

Not one.

I feel ashamed of this country.

I feel even more ashamed because I know some, maybe many, will feel, nothing of the sort. There is racism in this country. That there is explains the actions of ministers: they were playing to it. And they still do.

This in itself is a cause for national shame. But it is not the only such cause. After decades of supposed modern enlightenment we still suffer institutional sexism. This year's disclosures on unequal pay are evidence of that.

And there is institutional economic discrimination. Those who need the social safety net that our society should provide, precisely because hardship can befall anyone, have been deliberately victimised by the wholly unnecessary policy of austerity.

So too have those with disability been targeted.

As have the young, because the children of those implementing the policy are unaffected.

Long ago it was apparent the the politics of neoliberalism had the potential to be brutal. And so it has proved. But that has not stopped those promoting it. Indeed, it seems to have encouraged them, if anything. Once one brutality had been delivered and seemingly accepted they tried another, as if addicted to the shock it might supply. Until we got to Brexit, when it has become apparent to some at least (but not yet all) that the brutality has turned in on almost everyone. That is why we are so divided on the issue.

The question is, can we stop it?

Only with a new culture. That is a culture that delivers freedom from fear. That is the freedom to live because we know that collectively we are secure.

That there is housing for all.

A guarantee of income, for all.

And education, health care, and work.

As well as a right to live as the person you are.

Don't call that socialism because this has nothing to do with the ownership of the means of production, as such. This is about the liberty that only commitment to others and community and place can deliver. This is not about materialism. It is about our very essence.

It is about freeing what has been oppressed. It is about a breaking the shackles of a culture that wants to divide, contain, and oppress.

It is about liberty found through mutual commitment.

It is the antithesis of the fascist tendencies that stalk our country.

It is about freedom.

It is about hope.

It is about opportunity.

Things that people got in the Windrush for, I suspect.

It's time we delivered.