

Gavin Williamson's departure is symptomatic of t...

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Let's not pretend that the departure of Gavin Williamson changes much about the fortunes of the Conservative Party. It might be good to see him go. Many in the armed forces and beyond will, no doubt, be glad to see the back of him. Except they got Penny Mordaunt instead.

And therein lies the issue. The Tory party, and so this government, is utterly bereft of talent. It is instead populated by people who would have little chance of succeeding in any other walk of life. And what they all share in common is the very thing that divides them from each other and those that they govern, which is a common belief that only they and their interests matter.

Williamson, with his charmless, naive arrogance that was based on wholly misplaced confidence in his own competence, and so invincibility, might typify this, but that is the point: the trait is shared across the cabinet and far beyond it within Conservative (and some other political party) ranks.

And this is the malaise within politics. People with ambition, but without a shred of wisdom, nor still a philosophy or a sense of public duty to direct it, now populate many of our political parties, and all of those on the right. But pure self-interest and political aspiration are poor bedfellows. They never combine to create either good policy or sound government because they are compromised from the start by the inherent conflict within them.

The true politician must believe in a cause greater than themselves. But most don't. They are their cause. And just as the belief in the entrepreneur's omnipotence condemns many small businesses to be one person enterprises, so this belief in the politician's self interest as being of paramount concern condemns most modern politics to be about nothing greater than the accumulation of apparent and decidedly transient power by those engaged in the process.

This is a sickening spectacle brought about by the absolute corruption of ethics that neoliberal thinking has created. Gavin Williamson's departure is symptomatic in that

context. He was always just another bit-part player, now to be left bitter and complaining in the sidelines, from where he will, no doubt, re-emerge in the Brexit Party sometime soon.

That's why we need to ignore him: the real issue in modern politics is what he represents, and that is the failure of much of the body-politic itself, most especially on the right. And that is at cost to us all.