

Johnson is a threat to society, seeking to deliver That...

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It is clear that some thought a suggestion I made this morning was excessive. [I said](#):

Brexit created a shibboleth in our society. This election is confirming it. And on one side there are people who lack all self respect and decency. You could not vote for Johnson otherwise. I hate to say it, but the divide is now as blunt as that. And it needs to be said.

I had previously argue that:

[Johnson's] refusal to play this election by the normal rules of decency, fair play, mutual self-respect and integrity confirm that [he] really is a man willing to cheat, lie and sabotage his way to power at any cost. We have not seen a politician so brazen before. I hope we do not again.

My assumption was that this should be apparent to all. I happen to think it should be. In that case, I presumed my conclusion followed. Given these so obvious failings, and that Johnson has made clear that they will be implicit in his approach to government, I suggested that any vote for him and his party, for whatever the reason, represented an endorsement that should be obvious to all. And I suggested that was only possible if those making the choice so lacked either self-respect or integrity that they were willing to be ruled in this way.

I accept the approach was not subtle. But it has the merit of honesty. This is what I think. And the issue has almost nothing at all to do with Johnson's politics.

I stress, I have friends with whom I do not share political opinions.

Since my university days I have been more than willing to socialise with people from political parties I do not support, including Tories, some of whom I have liked along the way.

And despite the suggestion that I am deeply partisan, I remain of the view that I can think of at least five parties in this election I might vote for, dependent on the seat.

I would suggest then that I am far from small minded. I would also suggest that whilst it is undoubtedly true that I have little liking for the Conservative Party's approach to society in general, and its current leadership in particular, the issue I am raising is not about that. I would have the same concern if this behaviour came from any other party. Indeed, I do have it with regard to the Brexit Party and did also with regard to UKIP. As evidence note the context in which I commented: this was a response to the blatant game playing around participation in the Leader's Debate on climate issue, in itself an issue far too important to be game played.

The issue is not particularly then. It is instead existential. In a country without a written constitution, and where checks and balances are very largely in place solely because of the willingness of all in the political process to respect all others engaged in that process (as was apparent in the debate last night, where differences were real, but expressed within a context of sufficient mutual respect) Johnson is the most obvious exponent of the case for abandoning all such self-imposed checks and balances that have been adopted for the greater good in pursuit of his own gain. And I do stress, his own gain. There is little evidence that he is collegiate in any meaningful sense, at all.

Johnson's behaviour is deliberate. It is intended to be offensive. He thinks cheating acceptable. He is deliberately contemptuous. And fair play is a concept that appears beyond his embrace.

Of course, those may all be simply personal failings. I will not discuss whether nurture or nature has a part in that: I am not interested. I am simply noting the possibility that he may not understand that there are alternative modus operandi.

That, though, does not forgive those who vote for Johnson, in my opinion. If you know a prime minister in waiting has these faults and vote for him anyway then you endorse that behaviour, and the consequent risk to our system of government that his behaviour represents.

This is not being conservative.

It has nothing, as far as I can see, to do with being Conservative.

It has everything to do with respecting others, society and our political processes. It is about believing we have something in common, or not.

In that sense it is about a Tory claim that was also shocking in its day. That was Thatcher's suggestion that there is 'no such thing as society'. Johnson is the product of that thinking. I found it repulsive when Thatcher made that claim, which was, again, the antithesis of anything that anyone could reasonably think conservative. Now we have a prime minister seeking election to prove the point and, I suggest, to seek to shatter society in the process.

I stand by my comment.

I do not understand how anyone who believes in society can vote for Johnson. But that's not because he's a Tory. Or because of his policies. It's because he's a racist, homophobic, misogynistic, lying, cheat who thinks such behaviours are acceptable both personally and in office and in my opinion they never are.