

We are fighting fascism

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There is a problem that the British and US political systems share in common. It is the deeply delusional far-right politics that has in each case entered and captured one of the two main parties within both these supposed democracies.

In the US the rise of Trump has been obvious. The current hearings on the 6 January 2020 storming of the Capitol makes clear, using evidence from Republican sources alone, how profoundly corrupt Trump and those around him were. Former senior administration members say Trump has lost touch with reality. But, and this is the key issue, millions of Americans still believe Trump. They contend that the man who apparently sanctioned the hanging of his Vice President is the victim here, and should be given another term in the White House. And so powerful are they, and the money that backs them, that many elected Senators and Congress members appear to share their view.

The UK situation with the corruption of the Conservatives is not quite as stark as yet. So far they have not invited the violent takeover of government. But, where the Republicans go so, seemingly inevitably, does the current Tory Party follow, so rule nothing out yet.

What both offer is, of course, populist politics. This is largely devoid of meaningful policy content, because those leading both movements know that populism works best when it cannot be nailed down to a position. Instead what it creates is the fear of 'the other'.

Racism drives both parties.

So too does deep seated misogyny.

France comes high on the list of common enemies; the Tories just extend it to the whole EU.

The rule of law is considered flexible. Both seek to capture the legal process for their private gain.

Their economics is dressed up to appeal to the person on average earnings whilst giving most benefit to their wealthy backers. Those on lower incomes who suffer as a result are persuaded this a price worth paying to beat the enemies who line up against them on the left, and elsewhere.

Government paralysis is by political choice: their belief is that they win from chaos. As soon as a crisis appears to subside they deliberately create another.

And all the while they seek to grind down reasonable people, making them by attrition gradually accept that what is exceptional is normal.

Except it isn't. Those of us who are appalled are the sane in this situation. We should be disgusted by what our government is doing, and we are, just as we are disgusted by the media that exonerates them.

So what can be done? Inevitably, there are options available.

One is to not accept what they are doing, from Brexit onwards. Disappointment with Labour's failure to reject Brexit is entirely reasonable in this situation.

Another is to continually point out the Tories' failings. Social media let's us do this. Taking part is to be part of the necessary opposition to what they are doing.

Third is to protest, peacefully. It is encouraging that spontaneous protests around migration related issues are now happening.

Then we need to vote Anything But Conservative. This is not a by-election policy, but one for general elections too.

And after that the pressure for real reform has to be made. A Labour government that perpetuates the system that has permitted fascists to seek control of government would fail us all, because fascism will try again.

Finally, for now, keep talking to Tories - or the people who vote for them. Make clear that the party they say they support is nothing like even that of Cameron and is only remotely related to that of Major, Thatcher and others most Tories recall. The seeds of disquiet have to be sown, because the great hope is that the Tories collapse into factions. This is seemingly inevitable after Johnson goes because there is no one who seems remotely capable of reconciling the factions within the party. It is only by splitting that the Tories might be beaten, but I stress, might be.

And remember, we are fighting fascism. And there is a duty to do that.