

The UK economy is just a tale of one failed decision af...

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If you ever watched Alan Bennett's 'The History Boys', you will know that [according to one of the characters](#), 'history is just one fucking thing after another'.

I am not wholly convinced by that argument. Bennett, however, had his character get into Oxford on the basis of it. I just happen to think it would be much more appropriate to describe UK political economy as 'just one fucked-up decision after another'.

This morning's news provides some evidence of that. According to the think tank, The Centre for Cities, [as reported in the Guardian](#), the average UK person has lost out on £10,200 since 2010. These things are always estimates, of course, based on a massive range of assumptions, but is it plausible to think that austerity, driven by neoliberal ideology, badly failed the UK over that period? Of course, it is.

And [then the Guardian](#) also notes:

The UK's fruit and flower growers face an "existential threat" from new post-Brexit border checks that could damage business and affect next year's crops, the country's biggest farming body has said.

Apparently, vast numbers of the plants we think to be grown in the UK actually start life in EU-based greenhouses and are imported for onward growth here. And that is all at threat, and no one has reacted to this situation by creating new capacity here (so much for rational markets), so that we now face a food crisis, all thanks to neoliberal-driven Brexit.

And, [according to reports](#) in the FT:

A third of UK universities saw a decline in overseas non-EU applicants in 2023, almost twice as many as the previous year, according to a Financial Times analysis of data from the university admissions service.

The result is that UK universities are under serious financial threat of failure, not least because their fees from UK students have not risen for more than a decade, and

inflation has resulted in universities now making a loss on teaching UK-based students. The consequence is that a massive UK export sector (which is what universities are) is under threat, and there is a very real risk that some universities may go bust - and by no means only those that are educationally marginal. This is all because of failed decision-making coupled with the neoliberal demand that universities compete in a 'market' that is intensely wasteful of resources and totally rigged.

Just to add spice to all this, there is then talk that Jeremy Hunt has maybe £10 billion to spend in the budget. So, guess what? He is planning a tax giveaway even though there is obvious evidence that the national insurance cut this month has done nothing for the party's standing with the electorate. He should be spending either on benefits or the green economy - where economic multipliers would be best - but is instead going to waste this money on more tax cuts that will do nothing much for anyone. That is neoliberalism in action, again.

So, just one disastrous decision after another.

No wonder people are fed up with politics and politicians, most especially when Labour is offering more of the same.

How long must we suffer this incompetence?