

We do not enjoy the public good that democracy is meant...

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What gets me about the fiasco of the Rwanda asylum Bill that passed the Commons last night, but which is very unlikely to pass the Lords and so reach the statute book before an election, is the sheer waste of time it involved.

Let's assume that democracy is a public good, created to advance the well being of us all through the delivery of the best government possible. Note, I do not say the best government. I add the word 'possible' for very good reason. But that still leaves my suggestion as one of hopeful, positive aspiration.

And then we get to the Rwanda Bill. What it shows are at least three things.

The first is Tory MPs total contempt for the gainful use of their time. There is no chance that this Bill will work. Worse, it cannot in any way change any issue the UK has with migration. And yet, Tory MPs were willing to dedicate countless hours, and create enormous stress, on an issue far removed from the needs of the country.

Second, the Bill laid bare the modern right wing politician's contempt for the rule of law, which this Bill marches all over. Ego, dogma, naked nationalism and disdain for 'foreigners' matters more to them.

Third, the Bill reveals the danger in first-past-the-post electoral systems. A supposed coalition of right wing interests was elected to office when no such coalition actually existed. The result is disorganisation and chaos. A negotiated government between parties honestly open to disagreement with each other would be so much better than this.

The consequence is that far from delivering the best government possible, our failed democracy yesterday made clear how desolate is the UK's political terrain.

And whilst I would not suggest Labour is as bad as this, that is only because it has ruthlessly purged any element of coalition from its ranks, leaving those on the left of UK politics largely without hope of representation. That is no more what democracy is about than what the Tories are doing.

So, do we enjoy the public good that democracy is meant to be? Clearly not.