

Funding the Future

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I posted this poll on Twitter yesterday, thinking it topical:



Take it as read that I know all the problems with selection bias in Twitter polls, although I suspect that not much of an issue in this case. Then note the result.

I was surprised how many people do not care. The apparent randomness of Easter is, I suspect, fine with those for whom it does not lengthen or reduce the holiday season, and those in education who have to plan around the absurd fluctuation in this date.

Amongst those that do care I was pleased to see an approximate three to one majority in favour of fixing the date, with relatively few vehemently opposed.

So, why did I ask this? There were two reasons. One, is that the person who likes order within me (the J in Myers-Briggs terms) would like there to be a fixed date to assist orderly planning. I do happen to think that would be of considerable benefit to education, tourism and maybe other sectors.

Second, though, there was the desire to simply do this to symbolise the power that the state has to decide on such issues, and not leave them to a mystical tradition that now has little influence in the lives of most people in the country.

I know that Easter is not just a Christian festival; it is also Passover.

And I know that my argument could be suggested to show a lack of respect for those

wishing to celebrate those religious festivals.

But, in a multi-cultural country - and we most definitely are that, whatever the likes of Liz Truss and her cohort of followers think - then to pick out the festivals of some faiths rather than others does itself feel discriminatory. It also ignores the non-committed reality of the lives of most people.

So, I feel that this is a case where the state should say that some order for the sake of assisting planning would be of benefit. But I also happen to think that statement of who has to the power to decide would, in itself, be symbolically important.

And it is not as if it would even require legislation. All that it would require would be that the Easter Act of 1928 be brought into use. That set the date of Easter as the first Sunday after the second Saturday in April, meaning it would always fall between April 9 and 15. I am not even being radical when all that I am doing is asking for a 96 year old piece of legislation be brought into use, at last.

It may not seem like a big deal, but power relationships matter, and this one is about the power of the established church, and all the nonsense (as, for example, was seen in the coronation last year) that goes with it. In that case breaking that power of the broader establishment that the established church symbolises does matter. That is why I think the date of Easter - or the spring festival of hope - should be fixed.