

Politics is about ideas, not brands

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I [posted this video](#) to YouTube this morning. In it I argue that politics should be about ideas. Instead, it's become about brands.

With both the Labour and Conservative Parties - and some others, come to that - wanting to offer almost identical core policy agendas at this election, the branding is what seems to count now. But as a result, big ideas - like the difference between parties representing people and wealth - have disappeared, and that is a massive loss to us all.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uM4HFwZrCbA>

The audio version of this is available here:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?from=embed&i=jutw6-16247cc-pb&share=1&download=1&fonts=Arial&skin=1&font-color=&rtl=0∓logo_link=&btn-skin=c73a3a&size=150

The transcript is:

I recently recorded a video - the link's below - about the fact that politics is all about power. And of course, I'm not changing my opinion on that. Politics is all about power.

But it's about something more than that as well, because politics is a multifaceted subject. And politics is also about ideas.

The idea that you are serving certain interest groups in society is the most powerful idea in politics.

Let's make this simple. In the past, the Conservative Party served the interests of wealth. It served capital, as we would call it.

The Labour Party served the interests of the working person and the disadvantaged. It was all about people, in other words.

And, therefore, they both knew what they stood for, what policies they should endorse, and we understood that as well.

In between them, there were the Liberal Democrats. And they basically struck a middle ground, but emphasising personal freedoms, which is what liberal stands for in this sense. So we knew if we had a liberal view of society where personal freedoms mattered, they were the party for us.

Look at the Greens, and it's obvious what the idea that they're promoting is. They are interested in people and planet.

Now, this matters because that makes it easier for us to vote for a party. We can, at its core, identify what it's about.

Unless, and until, the moment arrives where both of our largest parties seem to have one single idea. And that has now happened. The Labour Party, once the party of the people, is now very clearly a party that is aligned with wealth.

How do I know? Look, it's obvious.

They say they will not increase taxes on wealth.

They won't increase taxes on high incomes.

They will not try to constrain the power of the City of London.

They support the Bank of England in its ludicrous policy of increasing interest rates to supposedly control inflation, but to in fact create a cost-of-living crisis for ordinary people either by putting up rents, which so many lower income people of course have to pay, or increasing mortgages.

All of this is about Labour for wealth, not Labour for people.

We now have the Conservative Party, and Labour, effectively in one space when it comes to ideas. And so instead of having a choice between ideas, when we look at our two parties, between whom government has been shared over the last century, we simply have a choice between brands.

It's as if we're choosing toothpaste. You can have Ultra Bright, or McLean's, or Colgate, or whoever, and that's the only difference. They're all mint flavoured, they've all got

stripes in them, and that's about it. They all do the same job. Well, so do the Tories and Labour now.

I don't believe in politics as brands.

I believe in politics as ideas.

I believe that now we've reached the point where politics, at least as far as our two largest parties are concerned, is all about brands.

The whole basis on which first-past-the-post elections can take place in this country has failed. We now have to have proportional representation so that ideas can take their place in democracy again.

Unless Labour moves back to the left, and unless, let's be honest, the Tories can move back towards the centre ground because they've moved so far to the right that it is ludicrous with Labour only being slightly behind them; unless those things happen, we have no choice at all but a choice between two right wing brands of politics.

That's not democracy.

We need democracy.

We need politics that's about ideas and we haven't got it with two main parties.

We therefore need a small political revolution to give us the option to have that choice again.