

Stability is not change. It's acceptance of a failing st...

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I have reviewed this morning's news with concern. Everything about it suggests a good reason for that, even if I ignore the international instability that is a part of that cause for anxiety and instead concentrate solely on the domestic scene. There is little to offer encouragement about what is happening in the UK today.

Let me start with what many might think is the least obvious cause for concern, which is [Manchester City winning the Premier League title](#) for the fourth year in a row. Leave aside the football for a moment and just look at the political economy of this.

City have won because of the massive backing of those who rule an oil-rich state. I am not denying that the club have what might be the best talent. But that is not why they won. They won because the exploitation of that oil-based wealth permitted the aggregation of that power to create what now looks to be akin to virtual monopoly control of what is meant to be, but is clearly not a fair competition.

If you want a metaphor for all that is wrong with the modern economy this is it. The exploitation of a natural resource, coupled with oligopolistic control of its pricing, the concentration of resulting wealth in the hands of few people and the undermining of the level playing field on which competition is meant to take place is the result.

That the three clubs relegated from the Premier League happen to be the three promoted to it last year just reinforces this point. Market entry is nigh on impossible. As an Ipswich Town supporter, I do not look at the prospect of next season without some concern. All I can see is a rigged outcome, created by the inappropriate distribution of power.

Then I look at the [reports in the Guardian](#) that at least forty per cent of UK universities will end this academic year in the red, with many of them knowing that Sunak's plan to crack down on overseas student visas will make life harder for them. This is not by chance. It is entirely deliberate. The plan is to create a destructive environment that is much beloved by far-right think tanks, where the belief that there are 'zombie' institutions and companies whose failure must happen to encourage innovation is

widespread.

When suggesting this, they totally fail to count the cost to the cities that lose their universities, the people who lose their jobs and the students, both past and present, whose lives are tainted by association. And then you wonder why a creed that puts such a value on failure is so appealing to some when it is surely only success that we should be interested in?

And what I realise is that what all this is about is, of course, the concentration of power, yet again in the hands of a few. Let Oxbridge or the Russell Group rule is the message, not that some of the universities in that wider grouping are free from the risk of failure at present.

I then noted another [Guardian article](#), this time on the work of Dr Chris van Tulleken, who is seeking to expose the control of the power hierarchy within the ultra-processed food industry over what we eat, with at least as disastrous potential consequences for health as the tobacco industry ever created. The obesity crisis did not happen by chance. It was manufactured in the labs of ultra-processed food companies seeking to persuade us to overconsume products approximating foodstuffs that are deeply destructive of our well-being but which are immensely profitable.

What do all these situations have in common? Firstly, there is deeply embedded power.

Second, there is the concentration of wealth.

Third, there is indifference to the consequences of the action.

Fourth, a totally false economic narrative exists to support the outcome, which will always claim these are free market outcomes from beneficial competition when the exact opposite is the truth.

Fifth, there is the massive cost to society resulting from these failures, whether it be the undermining of truly competitive sport, to the destruction of the physical well-being that even makes that sport possible, to the denial of hope to those not already in an elite that the apparently unstoppable destruction of universities will result in.

Sixth, there is the absence of any political will to respond as if all of this is somehow beyond the state, deliberately crippled as it is by a totally false narrative that wealth creation (or destruction, as is being witnessed here) is a matter it cannot be concerned about, as that is a matter solely to be determined by markets, however rigged they might be.

And so we get to Labour, sitting on the sidelines, claiming it can do nothing to address any issue because it must not upset the power relationships in society that are totally predicated on the inequalities in wealth that it says it will not address by taxing wealth more.

As the world collapses around Labour, as it already is, and as will become increasingly apparent when it is in office, its answer will always be to berate public sector workers, to deny the possibility of funding and to wring its hands of responsibility.

And you wonder why I am angry with them? What else should anyone be in the face of their acquiescent acceptance of the status quo that they are claiming is the virtue of what they are offering to the electorate with their crass slogan that 'stability is change'? This appears to be nothing more than the manifestation of their own desperate personal lust for power and fortune so that they might become as apart from everyone else as are those whose company they now so obviously prefer to keep. Of course, I am angry with them. Shouldn't everyone who cares about the well-being of people and the state of our world be so?