

Am I on the far left?

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In this morning's main video, I note that far-right commentators – the sort to be found in the Tufton Street think tanks – are suggesting that I am on the far left of the political spectrum.

Really? Since when did a belief in democracy, the need for a strong government capable of delivering decent public services for a very mixed economy, plus an absolute determination that no child should live in poverty, make a person far left?

Could it be that those suggesting that I am are themselves in danger of falling off the edge of the far right?

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

The audio version of this video is here:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=jxtys-164c731-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

The transcript is:

Does wanting children to be fed make you a socialist or some far-left person, or is it just normal human compassion?

I really don't know the answer to this question, at least when viewed from the perspective of the average right-wing commentator at present, because I have been described as being far-left and Marxist and communist and all sorts of absurd names on

my blog and elsewhere now for simply talking about the fact that we should be relieving child poverty in the UK and raising taxes to do that. Only two billion or less is needed to take one million children who are in poverty as a result of the two-child benefit cap out of that poverty so that their parents could provide them with what they need.

But the Labour Party is not promising to do that. And I think that's wrong. For saying so, I've been described as far left.

Now, I'm about as far left as Harold Wilson perhaps was, or members of his cabinet were, and not all of them. I'm probably to the right of Tony Benn, and I'm not going to apologise for that.

I believe in a bigger private sector than he ever did. In fact, I'm quite a strong believer in the private sector and its role in the economy, and I don't mind people making money from it.

But what I do is combine that with a social conscience.

Are those on the right who describe me as a left-winger saying that I should not have a social conscience? I should not follow the teachings of all the major wisdom traditions on earth, which are summarised, in fact, in Christianity, which many of them will say is one of their guiding philosophies, which says, "Love your neighbour as yourself".

Nothing wrong in that statement. Let's be clear about loving yourself. It says that that's okay, so long as you love your neighbour as yourself.

I do that. I try to live my life like that.

Does that make me a socialist? Or far left?

Or are these people so far to the right that they've lost touch with the reality of basic human caring?

And are they doing something else? Are they trying to redefine politics from their perspective, to which we must all then subscribe?

I think I'm on the soft left, the moderate left. I'm not a hardcore, clause four socialist even, as once would have been described by the Labour Party. I don't believe that all the means of production should be in the ownership of workers. I'm happy to believe that we should have companies which are in private ownership.

But that, apparently, is now far left, according to people who are so far right that they hate every aspect of government, every aspect of any form of government regulation, and every aspect of our democracy that provides people other than those with the power afforded by wealth some element of choice in our society.

That worries me. Because this, frankly, is the language of those who are describing, well, what I consider to be neo-fascism. And I don't subscribe to that. And I never will. In fact, I'll spend the rest of my days opposing it.