

Funding the Future

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A weekend spent trying to avoid some of the discussion going on around the election was worthwhile. At the end of it I had done some serious thinking about new ideas to write about over the summer, albeit summarised in little more than a series of mathematically logical statements at present.

The process involved, of sitting back, reflecting, and trying to search for some truth in the midst of the plethora of noise to which we are subjected both now, and on a regular basis, was useful.

In part, that was simply because trying to avoid that noise made so much sense. It is easy to understand why those who are unexcited by politics are so turned off so much that is said by our politicians when so much of it is, to be candid, worse than total nonsense.

I am bored politicians who will not tell the truth. Tory politicians are paying the price for this at present but there can be no doubt that one of the reasons for the decline in their party's popularity has been its total inability to communicate anything that makes coherent sense to anyone for sometime. Boris Johnson might have tried to turn lying into an artform, but the curious side effect has been that vast numbers of people have rumbled that his colleagues have followed his example, and they will all be paying the price for that.

Labour are, however, no better. Whilst they may not be outright lying during the course of their election campaign, a refusal to tell the truth about anything that they plan to do hardly provides a convincing alternative to the Conservative's failings. Both parties are providing a choice of a leap in the dark. That is hardly a ringing endorsement of democracy. They can be little wonder that, as a consequence, it is expected that the combined number of votes to be cast for both of these parties will be lower in this election than in any in recent recorded history.

Some claim that this is the consequence of an increase in alternative political thinking amongst the electorate. To some extent, I accept that claim. But, at least as likely is the explanation that people have had enough of the entire system as it currently stands, not least because it is designed to ensure that they can never get what they want or

need. The real question is for how long people can be persuaded to believe in what they are told is democracy when our two leading parties deliberately rig that system to make sure that people cannot be represented by those who they would really choose if only the system allowed them to?

There is another dimension to this though. Whilst most people do not spend an enormous amount of time thinking about politics, the majority of us have an inability to appraise what might best be called bullshit, since this also exists way beyond the obvious political sphere. It is this ability that lets people all too readily understand how thin are the political promises being made by all the major political parties in this election, in which category I would also include both the SNP and the Liberal Democrat's.

It is very obvious that none of these parties have any clear understanding of what they are about now. They obsess about detail, but people want to hear the big stuff. People know that neoliberalism has failed and that it deeply patronises them, even if that is not the way in which most people would express their understanding. What people want to know is what the alternative might be.

The obvious failure of these parties to have any such alternative is precisely why they are permitting Farage, Reform and the far right of the Tories to have a platform in this election. If the mainstream have nothing of consequence to say, as seems to be the case, it creates a vacuum that can only provide the far-right with a continuing opportunity.

So, is it that the absolute absence of ideas, and even the refusal of the mainstream body politic to think at all, that creates the political problem that we have, which is all about a lot of noise and absolutely nothing of substance being said?

And is that because those seeking political office really do think that there is no need at all for any new political thinking now, since they presume that intellectually neoliberalism is now the philosophy we must maintain in perpetuity, and that the idea of the person as a consumer is now so dominant a narrative that no further explanation of society is required?

And could it, in fact, be that the politician as consumer of neoliberal thinking believes that thought is, in any case, beyond them because in their role as a consumer of ideas they have accepted that their own role is entirely passive, which is what, intellectually, they now appear to be? Could this explain the origin of the politics of blandness, from which we are suffering?

I do not know the answers to these questions. But there is one thing of which I am certain, and that is that I will be thinking about them, whilst the likes of Streeting, Starmer and Reeves will not be. As purveyors of the politics of blandness thinking is the last thing that they want to do, or might be capable of.