

Starmer should not be copying Southgate

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:52 am

I have published this video this morning. In it, I argue that England's football team might get by on last-minute equalisers after 90 clueless minutes, but that's not the way to run a country, and yet Starmer seems to be going into government with that game plan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7p5VMKOkYXw>

The audio version of this video is here:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=qvikd-165814f-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=c73a3a&font-color=&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=666666

The transcript is:

Extra time equalisers work for no one.

I am not, I am quite sure, the only person with at least a passing interest in football who went through the agonies of Sunday evening and watched England playing Slovakia.

Okay, Jude Bellingham did save the day in the fourth minute of extra time.

And Harry Kane then delivered the goal that won the match a couple of minutes, effectively, later.

But is that the way to really run a football game? No.

Is that what a manager would want to do? No.

Is that the way that fans want to watch their football? I don't think so, because 90 minutes were not highly entertaining.

But is that the way that Keir Starmer's going to run a government? I fear it is.

I draw the analogy deliberately because I don't know what Keir Starmer's going to do. It appears he's clueless, and if you listen to the football commentators, and they know more about football than I do, and you use your own experience of watching football over many years, and I've been watching for 50 years or more, you realise that this was a very strange game plan by Gareth Southgate.

And if you've been watching for politics as long, and I have been, you realise that Keir Starmer's game plan for running a government is, well, at least as weird, if not worse.

Gareth Southgate clearly had an objective - winning.

It's not even clear what Keir Starmer's objective is. Why does he want power? I don't know, nor does anybody else it would seem.

But is he going to leave it until a last-minute equaliser to try to win the election in 2029 and hold the far right at bay in the UK? I fear he will.

I know that he has said that he will hold the far right at bay by his deeds and not his words.

Well, his words certainly aren't working so we have to hope for his deeds. But, as yet ,none of us know what those deeds will be either.

He cannot, must not, wait until the last minute to try to hold back what is happening with the right wing in the UK.

We've seen what has now happened in France.

We've seen what happens when centre-right parties facilitate fascism by simply not taking the actions necessary to protect the interests of ordinary people in the country that they are meant to serve.

We know the consequence because Marie Le Pen and her party are riding high, even if they don't form a government after the completion of the French general election.

That is the risk that Keir Starmer faces here. We cannot afford it.

He cannot manage the next government the way in which Gareth Southgate managed the English football team to secure an equaliser and then a win in extra time. That option is not available to Keir Starmer. He has to hit the ground running to beat the right in 2029. There's no other option available, but right now it doesn't appear that he

understands that this has to be his game plan.