

Reeves: the slave of defunct economists

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As [the Guardian noted](#) yesterday evening:

Ministers are being asked to draw up billions of pounds in cuts to infrastructure projects over the next 18 months despite Rachel Reeves pledging to invest more to grow the economy, the Guardian has learned.

Members of the cabinet have been asked to model cuts to their investment plans of up to 10% of their annual capital spending as part of this month's spending review, government sources said.

They added:

The demands would mean big projects such as hospital improvements, road building and defence projects being slowed down or stopped altogether as the government looks for ways to repair what they say is a £22bn black hole in the public finances.

The kindest possible interpretation of this is that it is economic madness. Not only is the country more than capable of delivering the things that will be cut - meaning that there must be a reduced economic activity as a result of them not being done because the private sector is not going to pick up and use the skills of those people who would have been engaged on them - but the goal of growth that Rachel Reeves has set for itself requires that they be done. And in a great many cases, so does need.

So why is Reeves doing this? I can only offer an updated version of a quote from John Maynard Keynes:

Practical people who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence are usually the slaves of some defunct economist.

Reeves is exactly that. She very obviously believes in the defunct economics of neoliberalism. And we are all going to suffer for it.