

Funding the Future

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I noted [Sue Gray's resignation yesterday](#), with good reason.

What I did not note was the fact that, as a consequence, she was appointed to a new role as the 'prime minister's envoy for nations and regions.'

I will be as restrained as I can be when asking what such a person is, what that role is, and what its creation says?

As far as I can recall, no such appointment has ever existed before. But, then, until very recently, the direction of travel when it came to devolution was that it was inevitably in the direction of greater independence. The same was true of 'the regions' (whatever that term means): powers were being devolved.

My sense is that the signalling now is that Sue Gray has been appointed to deliver bad news. Starmer is a total wimp and very obviously not inclined to stand up to anyone. So, as a sop to the sacked Gray, he has appointed her to take out his message to what I suspect he thinks to be the 'provinces' so that she might tell them two things. The first is not to argue with London. The second is to keep paying the taxes demanded. Such was the role of a Roman governor of old. The task of Sue Gray will be to say something very similar.

I presume it never occurred to Starmer to ask the 'nations and the regions' whether they wanted an envoy, or whether they had an opinion on who that envoy might be. Instead, Starmer has just foisted the failed Sue Gray on them.

If Starmer wanted to alienate Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Red Wall all at the same time, this is how to do it.

This man really is incompetent. Maybe the nations and regions should appoint envoys to send that message to him.