

If growth is out of road, what are the reasons to be ch...

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Andrew Rawnsley has, like many others, looked back at the last week in the life of Rachel Reeves this morning in his [column in The Observer](#). What he does, however, do is broaden his analysis, noting that:

We know that Sir Keir can be ruthless about disposing of people, but there is no evidence of a dispute between him and his neighbour on the fundamentals. Both their names are on the big decisions that he calls “tough and right”. He owns the government’s economic strategy as much as she does. Throwing her overboard would not be strong and decisive. It would look feeble and desperate. And also pointless, because her successor would be confronted with precisely the same dilemmas, and none of the mooted candidates would pursue a substantially different approach.

So prime minister and chancellor are lashed to the same mast and bound to the same hope that the gloom will be pierced by glimmers of higher growth. Whether it turns up will decide their entwined fates.

I think he may well be right. But all we can say in that case is that without a new leader, Labour is sunk because growth is not there to be had in the world in which we are now living. I think the idea of growth is out of road, killed by its own implausibility in a finite world and the impossibility of delivering it in a world where politics has destroyed the possibility of it occurring, whether by opting for Brexit, or Trump, or other forms of extremism, all of which undermine the confidence and conditions necessary for growth to happen.

We now face a situation where we have a government that, just six months into its existence, cannot deliver because what it has offered is not plausible, whilst, in the USA, there is to be a new President who is offering what is totally destructive, not just of growth but of much else.

I was asked on LinkedIn yesterday why I so often appear to be negative. I suspect that

impression is correct from my blog posts and videos. The previous paragraph provides the answer to that at one level. On another, the accusation is totally untrue. I actually live most of my life optimistic about the well-being that people have to offer each other, even if I have moments of occasional deep disappointment. That's because I do think we have the capacity to do so much better than we are.

If I did not believe that, my commentary would not make sense. I might just as well if I did not think that change was possible, go with the flow towards the fate our politicians would appear to want for us. But I do believe we can change, and that we can have better politics, but just not in the current system and with the current thinking. The challenges are enormous, but I have to believe that we can get out of this mess. If not, there would be no point in being here.