

Are the Tories lost in space?

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The Tories were once the party of reliable, uncontentious and boring middle England. Now Kemi Badenoch claims they are the saviours of a form of Western civilisation that is a figment of her imagination. What hope have they in that unaccustomed role, or are they lost in some unknown political space?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrkKofFg2p8?si=4jSAXp3j1Xd6sBeM>

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=ws3n2-18168bc-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

Are the Tories lost in the current UK political space that they're trying to occupy? Let me explain that.

The Tories have existed for over two centuries now in their currently recognisable form. They like to claim that they, as the Conservative Party, are the longest established and most successful political party in any democracy in the world. And there are some good reasons to think that is true. Over that period of more than two centuries, they have either formed the UK government, or been the official opposition and therefore have always been incredibly close to the seat of power within the UK. If anything represents

the UK establishment it is in a very real sense the Conservative Party. And when you look at its membership until very recently, they were also the UK establishment.

The Church of England at Prayer was one way in which they were described. Middle England - and I very much emphasise England, because the Tories are not a party of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - Middle England is represented within the Conservative Party by those people who are the - and I'm going to use this term in inverted commas - "Pillars of the community" who uphold the society in which they live by being the church warden or the local justice of the peace sitting on the magistrate's court who or who are the small business person who has been running the family business for generations and who employs a small number of people in the local shop or whatever it might be that provides them with a comfortable living.

They might also be, the local farmer, although by and large farmers don't get involved with politics. But the point is this, the Conservatives have occupied a very safe, non-dogmatic, traditional role within UK society. And they're no longer doing that.

Kemi Badenoch has now said that Western Civilisation is at threat. Apparently, the threat is from the Labour Party, who are, as far as any person other than Kemi Badenoch in the UK is concerned, so indiscernible from the last Conservative government that it is literally impossible to tell that there was actually a general election that changed the people in office last July.

They're pursuing the same policies, use the same fiscal rules, impose the same draconian laws on those who wish to protest, are saying that austerity is just as necessary as any Tory Chancellor ever has. Nothing has changed as a consequence of voting Labour into office, except that the Tories now claim that we are living on the cusp of a societal breakdown because the Tories are no longer there. Well, in fact, if we analyse it, Kemi Badenoch is actually accusing her Tory predecessors of being part of the rot that she is now seeking to address.

And this is where I come to that conundrum, where I ask that question, are the Tories lost in space? Because the space that Kemi Badenoch wants to occupy is very obviously lost on the far right of politics.

She obviously adores Trump and everything that he is doing.

She sees her natural allies as being on the far right in Europe

She is talking their talk about cutting expenditure.

She talks their talk about migration.

She promotes a politics, which is very obviously based on hate just as they do.

Her attitude towards people in this country who are on benefits is, for example, just

appalling, as if there is nobody who is in need of state support.

Her attitude towards business is that it can do no wrong, when very clearly it can.

She denies climate change, when it's very obviously real.

She hates experts, which is one of the characteristics of the far right.

She's trying to push the Tories into a space which is wholly ideologically driven, in a way that no other Tory leader, bar one, has done over the last two centuries and that one was, of course Liz Truss, who was the biggest failure as a prime minister that this country has ever seen.

Badenoch is trying to replicate Truss's outright fanaticism for hardline, pro-market, anti-people reform, and most particularly, Badenoch is trying to replicate Liz Truss's hardline ideological program which was based upon a hatred of everything to do with the state, everything to do with what it can supply, and everything and everyone who the state supports.

Whether that's by caring for the arts, or by caring for people who are in need, or by caring for people who require health care or social care which would be otherwise beyond their means, or simply by providing people with an education, the value of which she very clearly questions - and in fact, which she wants to reform so that it becomes completely uniform as a form of indoctrination - All of those things she wants to decry in the way that Liz Truss did.

She's coming straight out of Tufton Street, that road around the corner from the Houses of Parliament, where the right wing think tanks that have for the last 50 or more years promoted far right views in this country are located, and she's picking up their narrative and claiming this is what Western civilization is.

Well, it isn't. Let's be clear about it. Western civilization was civil. And they are promoting policies based upon hate and nothing else. And hate is not the basis on which the Tories have always survived.

They might well have been small minded, and in fact I think they probably have been.

They might well have been decidedly parochial, and that has been unattractive.

In the past they were decidedly imperialist, and most definitely fanatical supporters of the monarchy and the class structure.

But hate? No, that wasn't it. They could somehow reconcile their positions without hating. But, this Tory party that Badenoch is creating is absolutely full of hate. That is the narrative that she's always seeking to present.

And this is why I think the Tories are lost in space. Because most people in the UK don't live on the basis of hate. Oh, come on, I'm real. They've got their petty prejudices. They've got their dislikes. And I don't always agree with a lot of what they will be representing through those prejudices and dislikes, some of which will be a bit antisocial to say the least. But they aren't hateful in the way that Kemi Badenoch is and in the way in which the likes of Chris Philps and Robert Jenrick and other Tory leaders are. No, they're not like that. They don't want to be like that. They want people who appear to be, in their terminology, decent in charge. And Kemi Badenoch doesn't meet that criterion for love nor money.

She can't be, then, a Tory leader in the sense that any previous Tory leader, apart from Liz Truss, has ever been, and be the supporter of Trump, and the far right, and all the narratives that go with it. This is a space where there isn't common ground. She's trying to force two parts of the Venn diagram to overlap when frankly they don't.

The Conservative Party and these views which she's promoting are in different places.

So where do the Tories go now? I don't know.

I don't know whether they can survive the onslaught from Nigel Farage as a result.

But what I do know is that, again, and this is a recurring theme of this channel at present, this leaves a void inside British politics. If Badenoch is moving further to the right, and frankly leaving the centre ground single transferable party coalition to be occupied by Labour, the Liberal Democrats and SNP, then she's actually simply removing another choice. Because there is no reason to vote for her and the Tories when Farage is doing the job better than she is on the far right.

So where is this place where the Tories are? What is the space they're trying to occupy? I don't know. But what I do know is that Badenoch, if she carries on as Tory party leader, which has to be open to doubt, will be leading that party into oblivion. And that is another deeply unsettling fact within the UK political economy at present.