

Have we already lost the war?

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I am sorry to go on about defence again, but this blog is, if it is anything, a long-term train of thought, and right now, defence, the threats that are giving rise to discussion of it, and the need to fund it are issues at the forefront of my mind.

A discussion I have had in the last day brings another dimension to this. The question I am asking myself is, have we already lost this war?

That requires that I define what this war is all about, and it is my opinion that this is quite an easy question to answer. It is all about the assault on democracy that began with neoliberalism and which inevitably involved the re-emergence of fascism, all with the aim of recreating the predominant power of those with wealth inside the world economy, which predominance the rise of democracy and the power of populations as a whole had threatened.

Looked at in this way, the war being fought has never really required a declaration of hostilities. Nor has it demanded that troops be deployed. Indeed, there has rarely been a battlefield. The current belief that the war in Ukraine suggests otherwise is mistaken. This war has always been one to undermine the processes of democracy. That is it.

And that is also why it is not hard to suggest we have already lost this war. The existence of the single transferable party (comprised of Labour, the Tories, LibDems and maybe others) in the UK, whose arrival and departure from office marks no discernible difference in policy on any issue, is the clearest indication that a single political hegemony rules this country, with deviance not being allowed.

The surest indication of that is the failure of labour to address the abuses of the last Tory government. All its draconian Henry VIII powers, permitting ministers to rule by decree if they so wish, remain in place.

The powers the Tories created to eliminate dissent are all still on the statute book, and Labour gives every indication that it agrees with them all. Worse, it is overseeing their enforcement against the left whilst failing to enforce them when it comes to rallies of

tractors deliberately designed to cause maximum havoc in a fashion now clearly illegal, but to which this government turns a blind eye even when it is the target of the protests, so willing is it to assist the wealthy make their demands at cost to everyone else.

The supposed right to free speech really does not exist in the UK any more, and it is not the left that has eliminated it as J D Vance would like to claim: it is the work of the far-right and their friends in Labour that has done that.

Labour's very obvious refusal to reform the electoral system is a further indication of the refusal to accept that politics should be accountable to people. Given the right-wing and genuinely unpopular nature of many of its policies now that it is in office, that lack of willingness to be held accountable may be understandable, but these actions are also entirely consistent with my thesis that the people of this country have already lost this war.

And, when talking of countries, Labour's contempt for the right to independence in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland reveals that Labour is as committed to the old ideas of empire and the oppression that goes with it as ever the Tories were.

Is it, then, the case that this war has already been lost to a far-right about which we talked but which was so insidious that it won its war through propaganda and stealth before almost anyone was ever really aware, and now all that is required is for the far right to claim outright victory - which it could do in the form of any of the Tories, Labour or Reform right now, so indistinct are the differences between them?

I leave the question open deliberately. Some might disagree with me. But I think this battle might already have been lost, with Starmer, Reeves and Streeting, backed by Blair, having sealed the victory. Now, we need to talk about how the counter-attack begins.