

Has Labour really noticed? Acknowledging racism is one ...

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The weekend's far-right march in London appears to have been pivotal in waking opinion on the danger the far right poses in the UK, and the reality of what they are doing.

Let me offer this quotation first of all from [Stephen Bush in the FT](#):

So please, let's have none of this Temu Marxist talk about how Saturday's 110,000-strong march was "really" about economic anxiety. I know the price of a pint in the various pubs around King's Cross and Euston that were thronged with protesters on their way home, and no one necking that many of them is experiencing economic distress. Elon Musk, who urged the marchers to turn to pre-emptive ethnic violence, is certainly not suffering from economic anxiety.

Racism in the UK remains the preserve of an extreme minority — but one that is emboldened and growing louder. What we are seeing is not about having a bad economy. It is the result of a year in which neither the government nor the opposition have been willing to draw red lines, to argue against the conflation of whiteness with Britishness or to condemn people who suggest either that violence is an appropriate way to resolve political disputes or an inevitable fact of rising ethnic diversity.

And note that he, as a black journalist, concluded:

Both [Labour and Conservative] leaders need to learn from the past: racism does not diminish through rising GDP but through the willingness of politicians to argue against it.

They also need to learn to identify their own self-interest. It should be obvious that a march whose organising principle is that the mere existence of Badenoch is a crisis and that Starmer needs to be overthrown can't be beaten by either politician equivocating on whether they are wrong or not. Both need to actually make an argument, too.

I admire his courage. I agree with his analysis. I am not arguing that people aren't aggrieved, but I am saying that Farage, Reform, the Tories and Saturday were and are

all about racism, and pretty much racism alone, because they never talk about anything else.

Labour seems to have noticed. This was the Guardian's headlines last night:

Exclusive

Trump has fanned the flames of divisive politics around the world, says Sadiq Khan

Exclusive: London mayor says US president has 'perhaps done the most' to encourage far right

12m ago

Exclusive We must tackle rising tide of racism and homophobia claiming to be free speech, says Streeting

Politics UK faces 'fight of our times' against toxic division shown in far-right rally, says Starmer

Khan, Sweeting, and Starmer are all saying we are fighting racism and a far-right threat to freedom. They are right on this,

I trust Sadiq Khan on this.

I think Wes Streeting gets the threat to homosexuals and others.

But Keir Starmer, does he really get it? Who knows? However, it seems he has been shaken into a changed narrative, and changed narratives are what we need.

That fact is that unless we call out racism, we cannot beat it. I have been saying so for what seems like a long time. Of course, I have not been alone, but it has felt like a lonely place.

I am hoping Labour means it is changing its narrative. It is essential that it does so.

But let's be clear, it also has to deliver a politics of care, and that means narratives are not enough. Starmer should also be fighting for what will really change hearts and minds, and that is taking away the fear people have:

- * Of not having a job
- * Of not having security
- * Of not having a home
- * Of not having healthcare, education and a pension
- * Of not having a future.

Those are the issues that matter. Tackle them and we will have a country that will live at ease with itself, which is what everyone should want. Those are the conditions for freedom from fear, for everyone, but right now Labour's fiscal rules deny any such possibility.

Acknowledging racism is one thing. Delivering freedom from fear is necessary as well. We need a new economics and a new economic narrative to do that, [hence the quantum series](#).

Taking further action

If you want to write a letter to your MP on the issues raised in this blog post, there is a ChatGPT prompt to assist you in doing so, with full instructions, [here](#).

One word of warning, though: please ensure you have the correct MP. ChatGPT can get it wrong.

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