

Living in interesting political times

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:12 am

As [The Guardian](#) has reported this morning:

Keir Starmer has sought to tighten his grip on his government with a wave of junior ministerial changes that has sidelined allies of the unions, raising questions over the future of Labour's workers' rights package.

There is nothing surprising about this. As they also note:

The reshuffle has been used by Downing Street to signal a tougher stance on immigration in an apparent bid to take on Reform UK, with Shabana Mahmood – a self-described social conservative rising star – now in charge of the Home Office, supported by Sarah Jones who returns to her former policing brief.

That said, the move does three things.

First, it consolidates Starmer's power. Given that he very obviously has no idea what to use that power to achieve, this is, in itself, worrying.

Secondly, Stamer's direction of travel is very obviously towards the right, and away from every single thing that Labour once stood for. Why the trade union movement wants to have anything more to do with Starmer's Labour Party baffles me. Surely the time has come when they should be looking to lend their support elsewhere.

Thirdly, and predictably, Starmer very obviously intends to increase the uncertainty, risk, and precariousness within the lives of working people. Is it surprising that they are looking elsewhere instead?

We are living in the most extraordinary political times. It already looks as if the Conservative Party is being consigned to history, forever. In the next parliament, it is likely that we will see Labour go the same way. For a century, we were able to take the domination of politics by these two parties as a fact; something is close to a certainty as we would ever get. That is no longer the case.

Their demise has been of their own creation, and in both cases, there is a similar reason. Their dedication to the folly of neoliberal economics is the common cause of their irrelevance to the people of this country. Even in a democracy as weak as ours, you cannot, eventually, ignore the will of the people forever. They have tried to do so.

The question now is, what is next? Many will, of course, think that Farage is the answer to that. I, of course, would hope otherwise. The fact is, we do not know. What that means is that, for all the stress and uncertainty, we are living in interesting political times. There is much to be achieved as a consequence, but none of that will be the result of the actions of Labour as it passes through its death throes, which we are, unfortunately, going to have to observe.