

Shuffling deckchairs

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Do you remember the days when Keir Starmer and Rachel Reeves were inseparable? It is a little over a year ago that they claimed that the relationship between the two of them would never be like that between most prime ministers and their chancellors. A little over a year is, however, a very long time in politics. And both of these two have miserably failed in office. That said, one has the greater power to blame the other, and Keir Starmer exercised that power yesterday.

Not only did he appoint a new, [profoundly neoliberal policy adviser](#) over the weekend, but he has now done a minor cabinet reshuffle, which means that Darren Jones has been taken out of the Treasury and into Number 10. I suspect that Starmer thinks this will enhance his economic power and undermine Reeves, whilst leaving her with the ineffective James Murray as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and with another ex-Resolution Foundation policy wonk in her team, supporting the role of Torsten Bell, who is now very clearly snapping at her heels.

What does all this look like?

Firstly, the impression is very clear that Starmer is blaming Reeves for everything that has gone wrong in his first year in Downing Street. There are, admittedly, good reasons to blame Reeves: her policy choices have been dire, her communication skills invisible, and her politics appalling. But she is not responsible for Starmer's own decision to pursue ultra-neoliberalism when he could have done something very different, and once promised to do so. For that, he has to accept the blame. The fact that he is reinforcing his own team, built in that mould, shows that he has no awareness of the real crisis that he faces. What is certain is that he is not building policy alternatives in the face of it.

What is the consequence? We are watching a government fail sooner than almost any has in recent political history. Remember that the last single-term government that we had from a political party in the UK was that of Ted Heath in 1970. There has been no other government of that type since World War II. Even then, Heath only went down marginally in the first general election of 1974. Starmer would now be obliterated. What that makes clear is just how unprecedented the current political crisis in the Labour

Party really is.

In the face of fascism, Labour are sinking without a trace.

In the endgame of neoliberal capitalism, they are bereft of ideas or alternatives, and so their failure continues.

As a government, they were clueless as to what they might do before they came into office, and they have been ever since.

As the creators of a pathway to fascism, they know no equal.

As [I've already noted this morning](#), it is now up to us, in whatever capacity we have, to oppose where they will not. That is our only hope, since Labour appears to be solely dedicated to shuffling deckchairs as the country sinks.