

Funding the Future

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Today is one of those days when I look at the news and wonder what there really is to write about.

Labour is in a mess. It appears that rules were bent to make Starmer the leader. Andy Burnham is sniping from the sidelines with no clear route to becoming his replacement. And the party believes that spending some money on a lick of paint on shops in the poorer parts of England will, somehow, change its fortunes when it comes to Reform, which is naïve in the extreme.

If the Tories still exist, no one has heard of them of late.

The Lib Dems and Greens are being ignored.

Reform is getting publicity for no reason whatsoever.

And no one is talking about the core fact that the problems we face are the result of the failing political ideology that dominates every one of these parties, including Reform, which is neoliberalism. Its focus is on ensuring that whatever value is created within the economy is delivered for the benefit of a few, and not the majority of the people in the country, and that is our problem, defined in one sentence.

Lifting my head above the parochialism of Westminster and London-dominated politics, no one in England appears to be paying any attention to the fact that the people of Scotland and Wales are making it very clear in recent opinion polls that they want out of the English mess.

Looking further afield still, Trump is giving us the clearest possible indication of what will happen if Farage gets into power here, but nobody seems to see the connection.

Meanwhile, the hideous genocide in Israel continues, quite unaffected by the ridiculous announcements of the recognition of the Palestinian state by the UK and other countries this week, all of which were preconditioned on their continuing colonial rights to dictate to the Palestinian people what form of government they might have.

Similarly, the superpowers continue to play games with Ukraine, and people will die

today as a result.

It is easy to see why people are completely disillusioned with politics. The incompetence of politicians, the poverty of their thinking, and their total inability to come up with answers to any known question, including how what I might describe as ordinary people can have some hope restored to their lives again, are all glaringly apparent. It's not even clear that they think this task is within their remit anymore. That is what is so depressing.

Three things follow from this.

First, this is why I am spending time on this blog thinking about broader conceptual issues and why they pose questions relevant to today. Unless we acknowledge that the paradigm we are living in is broken and that we need a new one, we will go nowhere.

Secondly, in this context, while I will never agree with those who look towards Reform for an answer, I can understand the frustrations that lead many to do so. Reform cannot, will not, and has no intention of solving any of the problems of those same ordinary people in the UK to whom I have already referred. It is, quite simply, totally uninterested in their well-being, as is apparent from everything it says and does. But it pretends otherwise by providing a means of distraction, and because people find no answers within the mainstream political parties — because there are none — they are rewarding Reform as a result. What that makes clear is that until those mainstream political parties stop thinking that a lick of paint will solve problems and begin to address the fundamental issues that they have created and must now solve, they will have no answers to any known problem within this country.

Third, I am off to London this morning to record a podcast with Zack Polanski. At the very least, this will be interesting. I have met more leaders of the Green Party than any other UK political party over the last few decades, and co-authored with one (Caroline Lucas). I have not met Zack before. I'm curious as to the questions he will ask me, and I've been given no indication in advance. The question at the back of my mind will be very clear. Throughout the interview, I will be looking for one indication, which is whether or not he is looking for a new paradigm. That's what we need. Is there a chance that he is looking to frame it? There is no perfect candidate. I just hope that somebody wants to, and he does at least have the chance to talk about it.

I don't believe that's an unreasonable desire. I think it's a reasonable hope, both for a political system and for the people whose fortunes it does shape. Time will tell whether this is now the goal that the Greens are setting for themselves. I will be watching.