

We need deep thinking on delivery, and only get slogans

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Wes Streeting told Sophy Ridge this morning that he had "Had it with the BMA" (British Medical Association) and that "An outbreak of juvenile delinquency" is taking place, when referring to their strike.

Sophy Ridge then referred to how bad things were in the NHS, and suggested that people might die as a result of the chaos that was occurring, which is precisely why resident doctors are striking, because right now they know many of them are being made redundant precisely because the NHS will not give them jobs so that safe care might be provided, let alone at fair pay.

Streeting was given little option but to agree on the issue of likely deaths: a report on corridor care had already made the point.

So, what is happening here? The BMA is making these points:

- * The government is neglecting the NHS, and people are dying as a result.
- * There are doctors available to work in the NHS to alleviate this issue right now, but the government will not provide the funding to employ them. In fact, some are being made redundant at this moment when patients are desperate for the services they could supply.
- * As a matter of fact, doctors can get better terms of employment outside England and are doing so because they can no longer afford to live here or endure the impossible conditions of employment being offered to them. We face a permanent loss of skills unless this issue is resolved soon.

I could add:

- * This week, the government has agreed to pay big pharma several billion pounds more a year for drugs, all to fuel the profits of big drug companies. There was no indication of where the funds would come from in budgeting terms. We can assume it will come from reduced care. NHS carers are paying for these drugs, as are we when we need care.

- * The government is doing precisely nothing of consequence to curb the abuse of the big food industry that is creating the crisis of ill health that is overwhelming the NHS.
- * The money to fund the NHS could be available. It just has to be spent into existence. And if there is an inflation risk as a result, I have shown how to address that, too. I set it out in my [alternative budget](#). I keep showing how. The government is simply too frightened to act.

And the last point is key.

Streetering is like a rabbit in the headlights.

So is the whole of the government, not one of whom prepared themselves in any way for the likelihood of office or the decisions that might be asked of them, even though they had 14 years to do so in Opposition.

Like most on the so-called Left, whether from Labour (which, in reality, cannot recall what being left is) to the far left (and there is, regrettably little in between right now - which may be the precise problem) they know what they want, but they are not willing to do the work to find out how to deliver it. They are, instead, delivering three things:

- * Empty rhetoric
- * Mindless tropes
- * Contentless proposals which glaringly obviously make no sense, as the details of delivery have never been worked out.

This is what the government has been reduced to as a result of supposed left-of-centre politics being reduced to either neoliberal mimicry (in the case of Labour, but without those undertaking the mimicry learning how even that system is meant to work) or sloganised politics where actually working out the nitty-gritty of how delivery might occur is considered so frightening, because it might then need to be justified, that the process has been deliberately ignored.

This is what failure looks like.

This is why I raise this issue when discussing the so-called left.

It might make me unpopular, but let me use a perfect example. Gary Stevenson provides it. He is a man remarkably like Wes Streetering. He can deliver lines. He has his slogans - "tax wealth, not work" - but when it comes down to it, he has admitted he had no idea how taxes on wealth would really work. At least he had the sense to appeal for help. I offered it. I have done the hard work. It's called the [Taxing Wealth Report](#). I heard nothing. Why? Because the detail does not fit the slogans, and those slogans matter more. So, how delivery might happen is ignored. And as a consequence, his campaign will likely fail, which I deeply regret, because we do need to tax wealth more.

I say all this for good reason. Precisely because details are ignored, we get to Wes Streeting, managing chaos, doctor redundancy and failed delivery in the hospital because he never worked out what was required, how to deliver it, and to have the detailed economic understanding to know that it could be supplied. As a result, people will die in this case. It is as blunt as that. So, please don't tell me this does not matter.

Politics is not just about winning power.

Nor is it about getting the red box.

And it is most certainly not about winning the petty infighting that bedevils it.

It is only about delivery for people. All the rest is irrelevant compared to that.

This is the only thing that matters.

And when the left ignores this, as most do, they fail people, and people do not forget, and right now that is the biggest problem the left has. Because almost no one on the left wants to talk about coherent policy on economics, money, tax and relationships with the City and business and their reform, because so few have bothered to work out what any resulting policies might be, then, firstly, the right walks all over it, secondly we get what looks like Tory government, because it is, because in the absence of their own thinking Labour delivers what the Tories might have done, and, third, it's so ill-equipped for office that it is profoundly embarrassing.

The malaise is profound, and real, and not limited to Labour, as I well know from what I see and hear.

So, I raise the point because the crisis is for the people of this country. They need people who care, for sure. They hate being treated with indifference, as is the case right now. But they also want competence, and until the left gets to grips not with political theory but with pragmatically possible real-world delivery, it will fail people. And that matters. And I do not care if I upset people by saying so. Someone has to. This has to be addressed. And it won't be until someone points out the problem.