

What would happen if Britain deported two million worke...

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What would actually happen if the UK deported two million people in three years, as Rupert Lowe's Restore Britain political party proposes?

In this video, I look at the real economics and not the slogans.

- * NHS staffing and social care would collapse
- * Construction and food supply would face massive disruption
- * We'd have falling GDP and tax revenues
- * And there would be rising inflation, and austerity

This is not immigration policy. It is economic self-harm driven by a politics of hate.

A politics of care offers a real alternative: investment in social care, strengthening social security, training workers, taxing wealth fairly, and rebuilding the capacity Britain actually needs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvcGSGdyfB4?si=onaqXRNp6tmKq-V5>

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=ekb5j-1a4d999-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

What would happen if Britain deported 2 million people? Not theoretically, not rhetorically, but actually.

That is what Rupert Lowe MP is proposing with his Restore Britain Party, which now has apparently got 10% popular support in opinion polls, despite being, and let's be clear about this, well to the right of Nigel Farage.

The proposal he is now circulating suggests removing millions of migrants from this country in just three years through either mass deportation through what we might as well call concentration camps, or by driving out many more through what he calls a hostile environment.

Now, this is not about immigration policy, of course; this is all about a politics of hate, but let's be clear about it. It is also about an economics of failure, resulting in a care crisis, NHS collapse, declining GDP, failing public services and serious economic self-harm.

We are talking about something here which is massive in scale. Let's be honest about this. He is suggesting that around 700,000 people a year might be forced to leave the UK by one of the two mechanisms that he is proposing.

He's talking about having at least 2 million people leave over a three-year period, and, of course, he's putting deterrence on new workers arriving in the UK, meaning that we will move into a situation of serious negative migration. In other words, the UK will face a massive population decline, something we've not seen in the modern era. None of us has lived through such an episode, so we have to guess what will happen.

Well, the first thing we know is that we live in a country which is already short of labour. Yes, I know we have unemployment in the UK, but also, we have many more people looking for jobs than we have jobs available. We actually have a problem with a shortage of skilled labour to fill the jobs that we've got. That's the obvious point I need to make. Therefore, if we expel people who are here precisely because they are, amongst other things, economic migrants, and many of these people will be, let's be clear; they didn't come here just because they have associations with the UK or because they are refugees from other countries; they've come here to create a new life and have done so. The vast majority of the people he's looking to expel are working in this country. So if we already have a shortage of skilled labour in the UK, that's going to get worse.

This then is not just a moral question that I'm asking here; it is a purely practical one. I've done another video on the morality and the politics of hate that is implicit in what Rupert Lowe is saying. What I'm asking is a different question on this occasion, which is: what happens to a fragile economy when you rip out a large part of its workforce?

Let's be honest about this. In the UK, we already know we have long NHS waiting lists.

We have serious problems with social care and a shortage of resources within it.

We have housing shortages and staff shortages in a whole range of economic activities from construction through to supplying, for example, teaching assistance in education.

We aren't living in an economy with spare capacity in that case. We are living in an economy running on goodwill and even exhaustion. Removing workers from this system will not create a smooth transition to something better; it will break our economy in the process.

Let's just look at some examples. Adult social care might be the first system to fail if Rupert Lowe got his way and started deporting very large numbers of people. We have a social care system in this country, which sort of works. Let's not pretend it works well because it doesn't. There are all sorts of issues within it, including a massive shortage of care facilities and people to work in them. But what we know will happen if tens of thousands of carers are removed from that system is that there will be fewer care packages.

There will also be more pressure on families who will have to look after their elderly and vulnerable relatives who do need somewhere to live where they can have 24-hour care for them, which is virtually impossible in many households now.

There will be delayed hospital discharges because one of the biggest reasons why the NHS is under such bed stress is precisely because people can't be discharged into a community where they can be cared for, and that is because of a lack of social care. As a result, NHS costs will rise as a consequence of the proposal that Rupert Lowe has.

And remember, something fundamental to the politics of care. When care fails, it is almost invariably women who pick up the resulting unpaid work. So this policy will redistribute labour from paid carers to unpaid family members, and that is regression, and not reform, and nor is it restoration. Do we really want to put ourselves back into an era where the whole of this country is dependent upon women having unpaid work that they do in the home, and do not contribute in any other way because they're prevented from doing so for institutional reasons, which is what Rupert Lowe wants to restore?

And then let's just look at the NHS itself. Social care is one problem that we face, but the NHS has all sorts of issues, in particular, because it does not work in isolation. It depends on care workers, cleaners, porters, nurses, doctors and admin staff, and many of those people are migrants. Up to a third of the people working for the NHS might be first or second-generation migrants. I know Rupert Lowe says he's only going to get rid of what he calls undocumented people in the UK, but let's be clear, they're not working for the NHS now because they can't, because there are mechanisms to make sure that this is not a possibility.

What he's actually talking about is getting rid of migrants full stop. And his hostile environment that he's talking about is designed to make sure that these people want to leave, not least by increasing the level of stress within the NHS where racist abuse of staff is already a routine matter and a cause of massive concern, not just to the people involved, but to all their colleagues, because the NHS is about care and the NHS cares for people who work for it.

Remove these people, and you get rota gaps. Waiting lists will grow. Costs will rise. Health outcomes will very obviously worsen for everyone, whoever they are. You cannot make Britain healthier by driving out its health workers.

And there are other parts of the economy which will obviously suffer as well as a result of this policy. Construction is a perfect example, but so too is food supply, where, quite literally, we are dependent upon the work of migrants to keep our food supply in this country working because nobody who appears to have ever been born here now wants to work in the fields in the way that, incidentally, I did as a teenager to make money to pay for my summer holidays.

The hospitality sector is also heavily dependent upon migrant workers, as I know from my coffee habit. Most of the baristas I meet are from countries other than the UK, at least by second-generation.

And there are other sectors as well. Transport is heavily dependent upon migrant workers, whether that be rail or road, and universities are also now heavily dependent upon migrants because, such is the level of pay in most universities in the UK, the basic level of teaching provided to most students is often provided by people who have come from overseas to work here, very often after doing a PhD at a UK university and therefore well qualified within our system, but who are nonetheless not British citizens, and who work here on a visa to supply the essential education that so many young people in this country require.

Remove all these workers and our economy will slow to a stop.

Housing construction will either slow down or virtually cease because so many skilled labourers will disappear.

Food processing bottlenecks will appear everywhere, and we will become more dependent on imports, which economically and environmentally would be disastrous.

Local economies would shrink, and here's the irony: you cannot solve housing shortages by deporting builders.

Now, in the short term, Restore Britain will get what it wants. They probably will push up wages for those who are left in employment in this country, but where supply is constrained, in particular in care, in housing and in health, higher wages will mean

higher costs, higher prices, and higher public spending. That will, in turn, lead to austerity, redundancy, and a vicious downward cycle with regard to the provision of all the services that we are utterly dependent upon from cradle to grave. We wouldn't be delivering prosperity; we would be getting inflation and rationing, but most of all, we would be getting managed decline.

That decline would be reflected in things like GDP. We would be literally destroying the wealth of our country and its income, but you would also reduce the tax stake.

Most migrant people in this country work. They want to work. They're here to work. They have the right to work, and they should be working because they've got the skills that we need. But if we take them away, they don't pay income tax. They don't pay national insurance. They don't spend, so VAT does not take place. The tax base shrinks, and with it, the government will lose confidence in its ability to spend, whichever way you understand the economy, whether you think that tax comes before spend or, correctly, spend comes before tax.

And at the same time, £57 billion is apparently going to be spent on deporting people. So not only are we going to have a labour shortage because we are literally taking people out of our economy, very large numbers of people are going to be redeployed to the job of expelling them.

We are absolutely going to destroy our productive capacity in this country if Rupert Lowe tries to do this, not just by getting rid of people, but by denying those who remain the chance to work productively. However you look at this, mass deportations are economically self-defeating and fiscally destructive.

But things might get even worse than that. People do not always leave when they're told to do so, and why should they? Because they've come to this country and they want to stay in this country, and what is more, we know that the figures that Rupert Lowe is claiming for the number of people who are here who do not have permission is grossly overstated. He claims there are 2 million such people; there might only be a hundred thousand or so. But if he makes a toxic environment, as he says, he will, people will disappear from systems. They will avoid GPs. They will avoid the police. They will work illegally. They will be exploited, and not just economically. They might be abused, and that worries me enormously. What Rupert Lowe wants is control, but what he'll get is failure.

So, what does this restoration that Rupert Lowe is talking about look like in economic terms? Let's be clear, Britain would survive. It has always survived shocks. It will survive this shock, but as a country, we will be poorer.

The world will be harsher as far as everybody in the UK is concerned, because toxicity doesn't impact just those against whom it's directed; it impacts everyone.

We would live in a country riddled with fear.

We'd be living in a more brittle country as a result, and care would be rationed.

The NHS would be jammed.

Growth would disappear.

Inflation would get higher.

Inequality would definitely get worse because that's implicit in everything that Rupert Lowe talks about.

And trust quite critically would be eroded.

This is not then about patriotism. This is a policy that can only be described as vandalism.

The real problem in this country is not migrants. The real problem in this country is, of course, a lack of care and a lack of provision for housing and public services. It's about weak social security and pay that is too low. It is about rentier economics. It is about inequality. It is about a refusal to use fiscal policy to build capacity. As a consequence, we've actually got a lot to thank migrants for, because they have filled the gaps created by neoliberal failure. We should be thanking them and not punishing them when they have actually helped us out.

If we care about Britain, we would rebuild capacity. That's what restoration should be about.

We would invest in social care.

We would train workers.

We would pay properly.

We would deliver lifelong training.

We would manage the AI transition in ways that we have not yet imagined, but we are most definitely going to have to think about.

We would support people, whoever they are, whenever they are, and however they are.

We would tax wealth to beat inequality.

We would end the hostile environment that does already exist in the UK where prejudice is real, as we all know.

And we would save the environment.

That is what a politics of care would deliver.

A country cannot depart its way to prosperity. That's my key point. Economic strength comes from investment, inclusion, and democratic accountability.

If we want a stronger Britain, we must build a fairer one.

That is the choice before us.

We can choose care, we can choose hate, but only one delivers prosperity, justice, and freedom; the other does the exact opposite. I know what I want. I want the politics of care. What do you think? There's a poll down below.

Poll

[poll id="328"]