

Burnham needs to learn How to Govern

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I watched Laura Kuenssberg's interview with Andy Burnham before the Labour Party conference started yesterday.

It was a dispiriting event that did neither of them any credit.

Kuenssberg asked all the usual questions.

She fretted about funding as if it was the only issue of consequence in this country.

Burnham emoted.

He said he would do politics differently. And then he did it exactly as everyone who has come before him has done of late.

He failed to answer the questions posed.

What he would not say is that to fund the services this country needs, he will run a deficit, and that it will increase.

That this is essential in the time of crisis in which we are living, as Keynes pointed out, is something he does not appear to know.

As a consequence, he inevitably ruled in austerity.

Blair was ring-fencing the NHS.

Burnham is claiming he will ring-fence social care.

He did so entirely inside an analysis that focused upon the household analogy.

The only discussion was of money.

No one discussed whether we had the people, the skills, the facilities or the training to support the need that he rightly says exists. Apparently, it is money alone that is the

issue of consequence, so unrooted from reality is our politics.

And so, another Prime Minister sets out on his path to failure.

That outcome is inevitable.

He does not know what he is doing.

He does not know what the job he has demands of him.

He does not understand what the country expects.

He cannot, therefore, deliver it.

He does not know how to govern. That is why I am now more than halfway through writing the first draft of this book. He needs it, very badly.

