

We thought it would be useful to explain a little about who we are, why we set up The Decision Problem and what we hope to achieve.

For those maths and programming lovers out there, the name The Decision Problem will hold all sorts of interesting connotations. For the rest of us, it is a name that offers up some significant questions. 2020 was an interesting year but we are, as an organisation, hopeful, optimistic and excited about the future. If you take anything away from this short piece it is that we are championing the politics of hope. That may, at the moment, seem unlikely but it is our conjecture, and history suggests we are right, that often after seismic events an opportunity, a moment for reformation can exist. Our goal is make sure the people and ideas are in place to make the most of this window.

The change that is happening in Britain today is unmatched in speed and scale, probably since the height of the industrial revolution. There is a social, cultural, technological and generational revolution underway. Well underway in fact. We all know it, we can all see it and feel it happening around us. One can almost see a federalism unfolding. Yes, a federalism along geographical lines, but also along generational and social divisions. Successive governments are slow to recognise and not equipped to deal with it.

Globally and specifically in Great Britain, the twin defining events of leaving the European Union and the pandemic, will accelerate rapid changes yet further. We know though, that we enter this new age saddled with a debt the likes we haven't seen since the end of the second world war and with unemployment levels probably greater than those of the dark days in the 1970s. In order to tackle this and for government to keep pace the usual tinkering with small levers is, quite frankly, not going to cut the mustard. We need big ideas, big thoughts that can go on to become transformative policies.

At the heart of it all lies a paradox. A push pull paradox. As mentioned above every bit of society is pushing for more self-determination, greater control over their destiny, their affairs and their finances and yet the response of government is to pull them closer in, increase the size and presence of the state at every opportunity. This happens for several reasons which we will no doubt discuss in later papers but one reason is that the left is comprehensively winning the argument that the state is best, knows best and usually the only solution to making lives better. Laws and regulation are forever increasing, tax is on an upward spiral that our friends at the IEA understand and explain with crystal clarity. Sadly there is very little ideological distinction anymore between the labour party or conservative government. The individual counts for very little, equality of opportunity is nowhere to be seen, and the state seeks to control every aspect of life.

Unlike a lot of think tanks, we will directly support conservative members of parliament with campaign and research resource, with polling and with ideas. We will run a significant outreach campaign, designed to promote liberal conservative ideas amongst the next generation of conservative parliamentarians and we will support projects to increase representation of women and others.

Despite the challenges ahead we feel a thrill of invoking a new liberal conservatism. We feel a thrill that comes with creating an equality of opportunity and we feel the thrill of the renewed rise of the individual.

WE ARE THE DECISION PROBLEM.