

Britain's next leader probably won't be a white man

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Nadhim Zahawi (top right), Jeremy Hunt (bottom left) and Suella Braverman (bottom right) have been eliminated from the Tory leadership contest. Still in the running are (top): Penny Mordaunt, Rishi Sunak and Kemi Badenoch, and (bottom) Tom Tugendhat and Liz Truss.

by Theodore Dalrymple

In Britain, the Labour Party has always posed as the protector, even saviour, of ethnic minorities, supposedly victimised and downtrodden by the racism of British society, irremediable except by government and bureaucratic intervention.

A member of an ethnic minority was supposed, virtually *ex officio*, to be left-wing in her or his views and therefore a supporter of the Labour Party. Meanwhile, in the past half century, a quiet revolution has taken place.

The candidates in the [current contest for the Conservative Party leadership](#) are as ethnically diverse as even the most devout anti-racist could wish; though I suspect that in his heart, he would see the contest as a threat to his worldview, for it suggests that racism in an open society – albeit that it may continue to exist – has less explanatory value than he would like it to have.

Among the candidates who began the race this week were the daughter of Nigerian immigrants, the son of Indian immigrants from East Africa, the son of a Pakistani immigrant who was a bus driver, the daughter of Goan and Mauritian immigrants, and an Iraqi Kurd whose family fled Iraq when he was 11, when he spoke no English. If all members of ethnic minorities were lumped together, which they almost certainly would not wish to be, they outnumbered the white British candidates.

Nor is this all. Among the most prominent members of the Conservative Party who chose not to stand are two government ministers – one the daughter of Ugandan Indian immigrants and the other the son of Ghanaian immigrants.

Although it is possible that a degree of deliberate social engineering was involved in their selection by the Conservative Party as candidates for parliamentary seats, the fact remains that they were elected by largely white electorates because of their party affiliation and not of

their race.

Furthermore, none of them claims victimhood for their ethnic group or any special political dispensations to aid it. They have risen by merit, and even if their Conservative Party when in power has been as economically improvident and dirigiste as any in history, it remains true that they do not see a political route to salvation for disadvantaged groups.

Waiting for Godot

The most disadvantaged in Britain, if statistics are to be believed, are now the children of the white working class, with a toxic culture of family breakdown, sexual and pharmacological self-indulgence, lack of striving or belief in the value of education and personal effort, economic improvidence, resentment, and fatalism without contentment, all of which leads it to wait for Godot, the governmental solution to all its woes. This culture is not immemorial; it is, in fact, the very reverse of what the Labour Party once stood for and wished to promote in the working class.

But such a culture, which can be promoted also in ghettoised ethnic minority groups, is a political opportunity for the entrepreneurs of resentment. (It is significant that none of the prominent politicians mentioned above, although of ethnic minority, ever lived in a ghetto.) By persuading people, either working class or of ghettoised ethnic minority, [that they reside in a fundamentally unjust society](#), they arrogate to themselves and to their (now substantial) class of bureaucratic hangers-on a providential role. In essence, they offer the possibility of redemption thorough bribery at taxpayers' expense.

At least three of the [ethnic minority candidates for the leadership have made large fortunes](#), but this will count against them in the propaganda of the political entrepreneurs of resentment: for if society is fundamentally unjust, then

those who do well in it must be the beneficiaries of injustice (never mind that political entrepreneurism is also a path to considerable personal prosperity and even fortune).

This explains why the Labour Party, that once stood as the protector of Jews against antisemitism, is now itself the party of antisemitism. The Jews made the mistake, or committed the crime, of becoming successful; and this suggested that antisemitism, though it existed, was not the obstacle that political entrepreneurs thought, and hoped, that it was, and that therefore they were not needed, indeed that they were inimical to progress.

I once debated the nature of poverty in Britain with a prominent left-wing journalist. I pointed out that her own newspaper published an article in which it was stated that the richest households broken down by religious background or affiliation were Jews and Sikhs, and that they had similar histories in the country: not entirely welcome as immigrants, the object of prejudice, but without the supposedly *institutional* obstacles to advancement of that chimerical explanatory favourite of political entrepreneurs, *institutionalised racism*. They kept their families intact, they strove hard, they valued education. *Voilà tout*.

Yes, replied the journalist, but these immigrants tended to have different mentalities. Precisely my point, I said; it is the mind forg'd manacles that have to be broken.

This is one of the lessons of the Conservative Party leadership contest. The other is that Britain remains an open society, at least by comparison with most other societies that have ever existed, despite the efforts of political entrepreneurs to corral it into balkanised ghettos of resentment, the better to take control and power.

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