

The Political Situation.

The Major Political Problem.

The great problem with our politics is that:- The major concern of politicians is to maintain support for themselves and for their party. Politicians spend most of their time worrying about electoral popularity. Representing the needs of their constituents - as good constituency MPs. Putting forward views that they know the majority of their electorate will be comfortable with. They spend little time worrying about the needs of our society as a whole. How often do you find MPs opposing the NIMBYisms of their local communities?

Westminster is a hothouse of instant issues, which are both promoted and farmed by a voracious media, which latches on to every story and spreads it over the front pages and the airwaves. Many of these stories are about the personal mistakes and errors of politicians. Long term issues and under-lying policies get little look in. Even when a serious debate is mounted on a long-term issue, it is spun into a one-day wonder full of party point scoring and invective. Our parliamentary system is adversarial, what one side proposes the others feel bound to oppose. Where mistakes have been made they are endlessly defended by the perpetrators on one side and attacked by the other.

Westminster and Global Warming.

Global warming is a highly technical subject depending on a proper understanding of probability. It does not fit easily into the black and white world of Westminster. There is a powerful vocal internet- based opposition to recognition of global warming. Much of this comes from America, and much of it is launched, maintained, and financed by companies with a vested interest in making money out of fossil fuels and products depending on them. This has left the British public confused, so that many of them are suspicious of the statements of the scientists. Support for the scientific view in general does not go down well with the floating electorate. This puts pressure on MPs to adopt a similar suspicious attitude.

Is it any wonder then that the true seriousness of the situation is rarely acknowledged at Westminster and this in turn boosts the general uncertainty of MPs. Further in their uncertainty, they do not wish to be the bearers of bad news. (It would make them unpopular with the public). Much better to give a re-assuring message that the problem is not very serious and that in any case their party will sort things out and make it possible for us to become more prosperous and that will become better for everyone.

General Westminster Attitude.

Most MPs express the view that Global Warming may be a bit of a problem, but not one of great urgency. In general they think that it can be left for the time being - until "we" are more certain about it and, if necessary, it can be dealt with in the future. Further that if there is a problem technology will sort it out. But not until we have sorted out the credit crunch and got the consumer economy running furiously again. In a few years energy will be produced from renewables, we will all be driving electric cars, industry will have become greener and that everything will be much as at present. Indeed that we will all be more prosperous.

So in general they quite simply do not understand the scale of the crisis we are facing - that the world environmental systems are in dire trouble - that there are too many human beings on the planet - and that there are simply not enough resources to support the existing population with anything like its present (mixed level of) lifestyles - that increasingly shortages of resources are likely to lead to international tension, and worse.

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