

Build back better

Build back better is a common phrase in modern politics, used by some on the centre right as well as by the many on the left. It is Biden's campaign phrase that binds his left wing programme. The UK Build back better campaign is anti the rich and big companies, and shares a lot in common with the Biden platform. Presumably those on the centre right who use the phrase define it differently to these mainstream versions.

There are those who think there is a global conspiracy led by a billionaire or two who they think set the agenda. I do not post such work, as it is silly. The views and actions many of you dislike are far more widespread and complex than a simple case of undue influence by one individual or think tank. It is a systematic agenda and way of thinking that infuses most global institutions and many governments or main Oppositions in leading countries. What Joe Biden says is similar to the EU programme which is reflected in the IMF's statements, the views of the World Economic Forum, the World Health Organisation, the UN, the G7 and many others. The members of a numerous well paid and much travelled global elite reinforce the same consensus everywhere they go. Some are senior elected politicians leading governments who need not accept this way of thinking if they did not agree with it.

The centre left version of the consensus sees CV 19 as a crisis full of opportunity. They usually agree that economic recovery should build back a different world. Their number one enemy is carbon dioxide, so the recovery will be led by massive public investment and subsidy for green power and green travel, partly paid for during transition by higher carbon taxes on those who do not embrace the revolution quickly enough.

It also welcomes the large expansion of state spending and intervention following WHO policies to combat the virus, and wishes to continue with policies of expanding the state workforce and spending more on state services. The IMF sees the NHS as a great model which others should adopt. Mr Biden wants to enrol a Public Health Corps and to extend Union rights to all public service employees, as well as expanding again public sector involvement in the affordable health care system pioneered by President Obama.

The politicians and political movements who disagree with some or all of this consensus are treated roughly by conventional media who by and large back the general view and protect it. So Mr Trump who went for cheap oil and gas and a big expansion of the energy sector to onshore oil and energy based industry was strongly attacked for his anti environment stance. He was then pilloried for his scepticism about long lock downs as a way of fighting the virus. Mr Bolsonaro in Brazil was slated for his casual approach to the pandemic . Even Sweden, once a poster country for the centre left, was criticised for being softer on lock down than the consensus.

In future blogs I will look at various policies that emerge from the Build Back better approach to see which ones could help and which will do harm.