

Jon Moynihan 's new book "Return to Growth"

I went to Jon's launch yesterday in London. His book makes a strong case for lower taxes, fewer areas run by government and less regulation. He condemned the attacks on free speech and increasingly intrusive rules and bans on motorists.

He started his talk by pointing out there are now 8 bn people alive. Over all the years of human history there have been 109 bn in total, now dead. Multi billion populations are very recent. The average age of death was 30 for all those dead, lowered in part by a much higher level of infant and child mortality. he argued 80 bn of those died of disease. The reason life expectancy has shot up so much is the huge advances in medical science with vaccines and antibiotics given us a much longer life. More people now die in older age of inflammatory conditions. Maybe medical science will make more breakthroughs there.

It is free enterprise that has taken scientific and technical advances and applied them to products that prolong our lives. It is that same combination that has given us the car, the plane, the digital Revolution, the food conservation and supply revolution.

The book shows how high living standards and faster growth go along with lower tax rates, controlled public spending and regulation limited to the most important. It is well worth a read. I do not agree with all its challenges to the much loved principle of free healthcare at the point of need or to some of welfare measures the U.K. has developed.