

Jonathon Porritt talks on 'Hope in Hell', his latest book, out in paperback in August 20th July 2021 to Green Party members.

We had the great pleasure of a 30 minute talk by the inimitable JP on matters green, the future and hopes of avoiding climate catastrophe.

Jonathon started by talking about realism in green aspirations and how 'Inevitable Policy Response' has been the hope in green circles whereby when enough people feel enough pain brought about by climate change, that political action will follow. There are now doubts this is true. The recent German floods may supply at least part of the answer..

The balance felt by greens between hope and despair, and the need to be honest about the crisis remains a crucial test of green action and campaigning.

The issues need an holistic approach including the essentials of social justice to underpin the ethics of our arguments.

Progress is being made though. The change to renewable power is being driven by commercial incentives and the 'experts' in costs have been proved almost wholly wrong. If the money spent on Covid could be redirected as an emergency fund, we could be green powered by 2030! The downside being the extractive industries in developing countries needed for the rare earth metals required to feed these new technologies. Again, honesty is required.

The technology is ALL THERE. We can have green towns by electrification and moves away from individual car ownership (used 5% of the time) to car share, public transport and pedestrian and cycle use, if the political will is there.

JP talked about the risks to democracy, especially apathy amongst young voters, who, paradoxically, with XR, have led the way with civil disobedience and maturing policies which may be our best hope of radical change. Greta Thunberg (GT) being the icon of such drive and commitment.

Q&A

3 things to improve our democracy: Votes at 16, Electoral reform and devolved constitutional powers.

Labour championing PR, on its way?

Democracy may be corrupted in this country but Brexit proved it still works!

Citizen assemblies are desperately needed to advance democratic participation.

Autocracy may superficially appeal to stimulate change, but it is and always has proved a Faustian pact.

Technology and industry are needed to drive energy efficiency and take advantage of entrepreneurial drive BUT it needs to have a regulated market provided by Government policy to push through the changes so desperately needed.

Rural community needs must be met by an agricultural green revolution in food production and land usage (and ownership)

3 personal actions YOU can do

- Eat less meat.
- Greta Thunberg avoids being didactic and advises gaining knowledge and acting politically.
- Finally, you vote by your wallet every day. Bank, invest and spend ethically. <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/>

Stuart Galey 21.07.2021