

A Farrago of Political Parties All Leading the British People to the Same Dustbin

News:

Facing a UK Metropolitan Police investigation into £500,000 in donations and a parliamentary standards probe over a £5 million gift, Nigel Farage has resigned as 'Reform UK' MP for Clacton to trigger a by-election he insists will be a "people versus the establishment" contest. Yet with Labour, the Conservatives and other major parties boycotting the race, the Reform UK leader's most prominent challenger is Count Binface – a comedian in a silver dustbin costume who claims to hail from planet Sigma IX and promises to "nationalise Adele".

Comment:

Nigel Farage has built a career on snarling at the "establishment", painting himself as the lone tribune of the forgotten people, besieged by a corrupt Westminster cartel. In 2018, he co-founded a far-right populist political party, originally called Brexit Party, which he runs. Farage's populist narrative has proven seductive, but the reality of Reform UK's finances reveals it to be a cynical mirage. Far from being an outsider's insurgency, the party is a vehicle for offshore wealth, bankrolled by the very billionaire class that has spent decades gutting public services and hoarding tax revenues. The mask slips not just on Reform, but on the entire political charade of the UK's party political system: the same ultra-rich donors who prop up Farage are also the patrons of the Conservative Party, while Labour for decades has been embracing the same billionaire elites, watering down promises to the 'working classes' in exchange for their cheques. Britain's democracy is just a bidding war among plutocrats making Britain a plutocracy rather than a democracy, and this is the inevitable reality of capitalism wherever it emerges.

The machinery behind Farage's rebellion is now facing unprecedented scrutiny. Nick Candy, billionaire honorary treasurer of Reform UK, plans to raise a record £100 million war chest, already outpacing Labour and the Tories in fundraising. Reform UK's biggest backer, Christopher Harborne, a British-Thai billionaire with a 12% stake in Tether and offshore holdings in the British Virgin Islands, has donated £15 million over the past year, including the largest single donation ever made to a UK political party. Another crypto billionaire, Ben Delo, has added £4 million. Together they account for 71% of Reform's registered income. Harborne's military contracting firms and Candy's offshore donor events, alongside the Cottrell family, whose son George has a US wire fraud conviction and operates from Montenegro, paint a picture of secrecy and potential illegality. The UK's Metropolitan Police are investigating £500,000 in donations from Fiona Cottrell, while Farage himself faces a UK parliamentary standards probe over a £5 million gift from Harborne, suspended only after he resigned his seat.

This web extends to the Conservatives. Donors like Harborne and Candy have long flitted between both parties, treating them as interchangeable investments. One in three British billionaires have bankrolled the Tories, with 48 donating over £50 million since 2005. The party's recent £1 million from David Pears and £112,500 from jailed David Sullivan illustrate its moral flexibility. When Tory figures defect to Reform, they follow the money, not ideology.

As for the Labour Party, it was founded by rich and privileged elites, not by the poor; although ostensibly for the poor, whose influence has been subdued long ago. Labour's capture seems now complete. In opposition, Labour leader Keir Starmer pledged to abolish the "non-dom" tax status, a centuries-old rule that allows UK residents with permanent homes abroad to avoid paying British tax on their overseas income and gains. This status has long been exploited by hedge fund managers and private equity tycoons to shield billions. Labour also promised to close the "carried interest" loophole, which lets private equity partners treat their performance fees as capital gains rather than income, slashing their tax rate from 45% to as low as 28%. Yet in government, the resolve crumbled. The non-dom regime was replaced with a system that still grants generous breaks to new arrivals, while 'carried interest' was brought within income tax, but only nudged up to an effective rate of around 34% for what is termed 'qualified carried interest'. Meanwhile, non-UK residents can still avoid UK tax on their carried interest entirely. The fingerprints of Labour's donors are everywhere: Lord Sainsbury, Gary Lubner, and Quadrature Capital, a Cayman-registered hedge fund that is Labour's largest-ever donor, have all ensured radical redistribution never reaches the statute book. The result is a closed political loop. Murdoch's papers and GB News, which pays Farage handsomely, amplify the donor-friendly agenda. Former Labour leader Tony Blair actually flew to Australia to convince Rupert Murdoch to switch the allegiance of his media empire to support Labour, which Murdoch agreed to resulting in Labour winning the election in 1997 after 18 years of Conservative Party rule. Labour, once critical, now accepts a House of Lords stuffed with cronies. What unites all three parties is the subordination of ordinary people's interests. The tax system, housing, and energy policy all reflect donor returns on investment. Every fundraiser serves to translate wealth into power. This is plutocracy. This is Britain. And this is oppression.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Abdul Hamid Martin**