

A Bad Day

By Andrea Brookes, 22/09/25

It's been a bad day (or two) for democracy and for trans rights both here and in the USA.

At home, the new exciting opportunity for a truly progressive and centre-left party appears to have imploded over internecine wrangling between its two leaders. Zarah Sultana's launch of the membership portal and promotion of the same around breakfast time was followed a few hours later by a series of emails calling on those who had signed up to cancel their subscriptions. Zarah claimed that she had been excluded by a "sexist boys' club" and Corbyn's faction reporting her to the Information Commissioner. This will, no doubt, play out over the next days, weeks or months, yet it is difficult to see how the putative party can survive this. So, what does this mean for UK politics? The biggest threat to the UK is the apparently unending rise of Reform UK which has embodied many of the principles that Trump's administration are bringing in and this is almost certain to be disastrous to the UK economy and future, let alone to any hope that we may have for the restoration of rights that have been curtailed if not yet removed from us. Your Party, the as yet unnamed new Corbyn/Sultana party, has already stated a support for trans rights and surprisingly to some perhaps this has not affected their popularity - but this self-induced implosion is tragic to see for anyone that was hoping for a challenge to the old party duopoly and to the rise of Reform UK. Hopefully the Lib Dems and the newly resurgent Green party under Zack Polanski will offer that challenge - the latter's membership is increasing with 2,000 new members over the past four days alone.

Now across the pond. We all know, unless we live under a stone, that vile, right-wing "debater" and all-round disgusting promoter of evangelical far-right ideas, Charlie Kirk, was murdered by an apparently right-wing young man. I warned at the time that he was going to become a martyr for the far right and wasn't I right. Anyone who might make any comment that can be construed as being critical of this disgusting individual are being unrelentingly attacked and some even sacked from their jobs. Latest of these has been Disney's sacking of Jimmy Kimmel for not really saying anything about Kirk at all. I don't hold a candle for Jimmy Kimmel he has not been the most supportive of commentators but he was not justifiably sacked as Disney are about to find that out to the tune of a \$1B defamation suit. However, more relevant is the fact that Kirk has made racist "if I see a black pilot I would be worried that he was not properly qualified", misogynistic "Engage in reality more... Reject feminism. Submit to your husband, Taylor. You're not in charge" to Taylor Swift on the announcement of her engagement and amongst others transphobic "just took care of 'trans people' the way we used to take care of things in the 1950s and 60s" during an interview with Riley Caines, the swimmer that was beaten into fifth place in the race against Lia Thomas. And this: "the transgender thing happening in America" is "a throbbing middle finger to God" and then proceeds to deadname Lia Thomas and tell her "You're an abomination to God". Ok, so I hope we can agree that Kirk was not a nice man and was not an advocate for women's, trans, racial or indeed any other form of rights unless you happen to be a white Christian man. So why am I mentioning this, because yesterday a new bill was put before the House calling for the life and works of Kirk to be honoured - unfortunately it passed and we must wait to see what the Senate will make of it. But it was supported by several Democrats, including almost unbelievably by Sarah McBride the only trans member of congress and a Democrat. She has been a disappointment to me and I believe to many American trans people as far from being a supporter of trans rights in the USA she has not stood with the more

progressive members such as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ilhan Omar both of whom voted against it but has actually questioned whether trans youth healthcare "has gone too far" amongst other things.