

*In this issue: thoughts on a volcano, UK electoral politics and values*

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**Volcanic Developments**

Having cut back on flying from at least one flight a month to less than one a year, I could be sitting at home feeling smug about all those frequent fliers stranded by ash from the the Icelandic volcano. So irony of ironies, a week or so ago I reluctantly broke my self-imposed no-fly rule and succumbed to the entreaties of a NGO who really, really wanted me at a face to face meeting in New York, and as a result I am writing this Newsletter while stranded in the Big Apple. Make of that what you will.

However this turns out – whether it's 'all over' in days or whether it creates a Northern Hemisphere dust cloud that upsets the climate and disrupts air travel for a year or more – a few things seem certain about the Icelandic ash saga.

Obviously it is going to get a lot of businesses thinking harder about replacing air travel with 'telepresence' or equivalent systems. The organization I have been visiting is a very large very ethical NGO but which has so far done very little to cut its carbon footprint. Like others it is too busy pursuing good works to have quickly taken on another agenda cast in ethical terms. Now people here are starting to think differently – at least for a few days.

Perhaps sadly, the pain and fear are likely to have longer lasting impacts than the upsides: the ability to hear birdsong again near Heathrow and the beauty of a sky unscarred by contrails of pollution, are ephemera which will probably be quickly squished from the cultural memory by a return to business as usual. After all, to achieve those benefits we needed to ground all aircraft, something well beyond the reach of any one of us or any conceivable group.

Similarly, although the immediate cries of anguish from just in time suppliers such as air cargo flower importers show the lack of resilience in the UK and European food systems, unless this ends in prolonged food shortages it's unlikely to register as a lasting lesson. Yes it's relevant but no, 'sustainable development' advocates are unlikely to get much of a 'bounce' from the volcano's activities.

On the other hand, the capacity of businesses in particular to cut back on travel, save money, reduce risk and save time by opting out of so much air travel, is well within the 'agency envelope', and the impact on many businesses will be significant.

So my guess is that one outcome of the Icelandic volcanic eruption will certainly be a permanent shift towards replacing business flying with virtual meetings and similar communication. Organisations like 1010 ([www.1010uk.org](http://www.1010uk.org)) can safely put their shoulder to that wheel.

To repeat a suggestion made in previous newsletters, the community of climate advocates and savers now focused on the forthcoming Mexico 'climate talks' slated for November or December 2010, should seize the moment and call on governments to virtualise the meeting. NGOs should give a lead – cut back their physical presence there by say 90% and

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demand that governments do the same. They face the risk that they cannot make what needs to happen, happen at that event. They can at least show what needs to happen.

Climate campaign time would at any event be better spent on activities such as promoting first-action by individuals, groups, businesses and communities who have yet to start cutting carbon (eg via 1010), and finding ways to show that the energy and technology transition to a renewably powered future is not an 'if' issue to be debated but a reality. NGOs should encourage businesses and governments to manifest the scale and pace of change – this is how to reframe the debate away from the 'uncertainties' playground in which skeptics ensnare naïve climate scientists.

As with Hurricane Katrina which had the unanticipated effect of catapulting Walmart into a climate leadership position, the real significance of this event is almost certainly going to be something we've not – and certainly that I've not - thought of yet.

### **Postscript to volcano:**

New Scientist reports 20 April 'Engine strip-downs establish safe volcanic ash levels'. This is a great example of power of context and acuteness/ immediacy. The new 'safe' ash level (there is no international standard) fixed at 0.002g/ash/sec is based on data from stripping down engines from just one BA 747 test flight, plus UK Met office measurements (not of engine impacts) by a prop research plane. On this basis flight restrictions were lifted in UK airspace. Contrast with the millions of data points on climate change which all add up to overwhelming evidence pointing one way - and yet many are content to ignore.

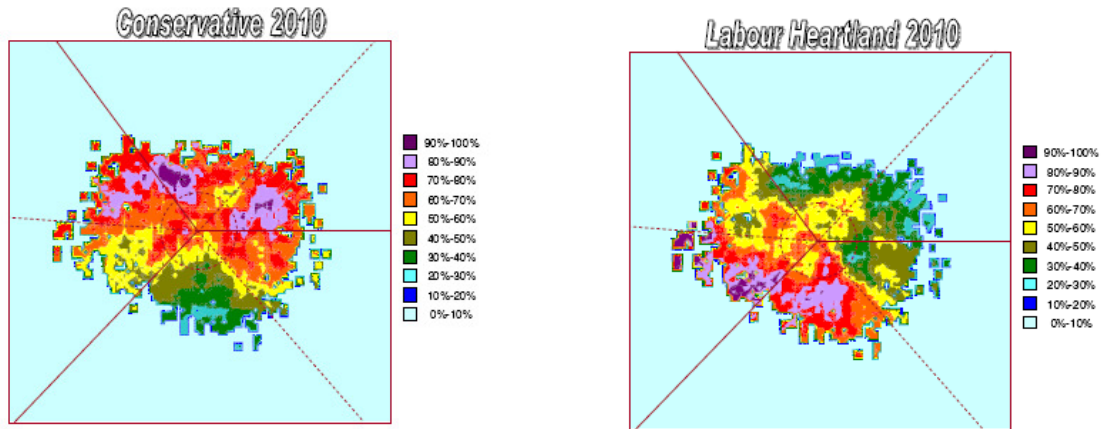
### **Values, Horse Races and UK Politics**

Readers interested in motivational values should take a look at a new series of little articles at CDSM's website, where Pat Dade walks us through the profile of the three main political parties not by socio economic group or class, age or sex but by identity – which party do potential voters most feel an affinity for.

This shows the progressive shrinkage of Labour Party support from the Blair years from a spread across SD (Settler – Security Driven) + OD (Prospector - Outer Directed) and ID (Pioneer – Inner Directed) to a 'heartland' centred on the adjacent OD Now People and the ID Transcenders. Moreover, according to Dade's 2010 survey 67% of those who 'at heart' most identify with Labour said they'd vote for it if an election was 'held tomorrow'. [Survey conducted in February 2010]

See the results at: <http://www.cultdyn.co.uk/ART067736u/democracy2010.html>

The CDSM survey also reveals the present gulf between the UK's 'main' opposition party the Conservatives and ruling Labour to now be a massive values crevasse. This gives the lie to the often repeated media mantra that there's little to chose between them, and the assumption that voters therefore see little difference. This perception is mainly based on comparing policies but in terms of feeling and affinity translated into values distribution, some huge differences emerge. Indeed if you compare the Labour 2010 Heartland (page 3 of the Labour report at CDSM's website) with the Conservative 2010 Heartland (page 3 of the Conservative report) you will see that they are almost non-overlapping.



Conservative support is (or was in February 2010) strongly concentrated in the SD values groups, along with the more authoritarian power-oriented esteem driven OD Vlaues Mode, the Golden Dreamers. If two things unite these Modes when it comes to politics it's insecurity and (especially the Golden Dreamers and Brave New Worlds, top left) anger. This almost certainly exactly overlaps with the psychological profile of the US 'Tea Party' – puzzled over n the US press because they are 'angry' but in jobs and above average income. What unites the Tea Party folk is anger at the country being run by people who are definitely not like them –and they are right that this is not just about race – it's about values. Going back to UK shorthand, this is the profile which, when it played strongly to these values, gave the Tories the self-imposed nickname, 'The Nasty Party'.

The dilemma for the Tories is presumably how to mobilize this base without so playing to the aspects of their values (power of others, rejection of 'other') that they alienate the rest of the electorate. At the same time, as Dade observes, the battleground between Labour and Conservative is really the more optimistic, open-minded ODs, such as the now People Prospectors (and the IDs if the Conservatives could convince more of them).

Dade identifies a risk and dilemma for Labour – fail to tell the unvarnished truth about the deficit and hard times and you don't convince the ethically minded ID Pioneers you're open and honest. But paint too dark a picture and you puncture the bubble of optimism essential for attracting the lower segment of the outer Directeds, those who have achieved the esteem of others and who are looking for self-esteem. Maybe Labour should stress positive future investments in things like green technologies ?

Since that survey was taken the UK has seen its first 'US Presidential style' tv debate, between Labour's Gordon Brown, Conservative's David Cameron, and Liberal Democrats' Nick Clegg. This created a storm of media comment because Clegg was generally agreed to be 'the winner' in public perception, as reflected in a swathe of subsequent polls which put the LibDems way above their previous 'might vote for' scores.

As has long been speculated, the most likely cause for this is simply that the LibDems have been granted far less attention than the other two parties in the media, and the long-standing strategy of Labour and Conservative has been to try and pose the choice as between themselves, so marginalizing the LibDems and creating the widespread

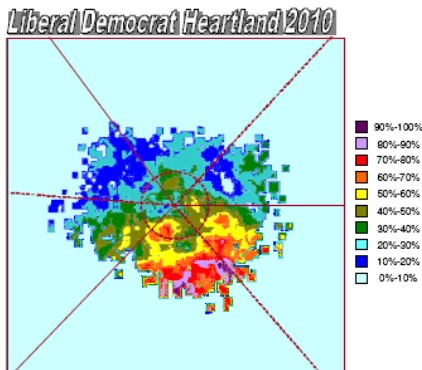
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assumption that they are a 'wasted vote'. Just by being given equal billing in a three way framing rather than a two-way, the LibDems stood to gain increased awareness and credibility, and Clegg looked more like a tv presenter, more comfortable and happier to see the audience than the other two.

As Aditya Chakraborty pointed out in *The Guardian* (20 April) faced with uncertainties about two choices seen as 'extremes' (rightly in values terms as it turns out in this case) choosers may also opt for a 'middle' option – in which case the LibDems would be well to keep playing up Clegg as a likeable personality, and not to worry too much about getting across their (much beloved) 'policies'. He already is seen as different: the LibDems need to understand that his achievement is just in being seen.

Personality-wise, Brown began the tv debate with the demeanour of a man facing his execution, and Cameron is, to many Brits, a 'toff' who has an inescapably patronizing air, so Clegg also probably benefitted from not having an established profile of emotional negatives. Sad though it may be, we know all these factors affect perceptions. Political and media geeks can view the programme along with all three main UK political broadcasts at <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/293006-4> and <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/293014-1> For evidence on the 'horse race' polling effect see Justin Lewis at <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/jomec/en/pubs/201/171.html> and *Constructing Public Opinion* Justin Lewis, Columbia University Press, 2001). All three political broadcasts are pretty awful in different ways – Clegg's is probably best in using visual language to send a message consistent with his words but with one huge hole: it used a torrent of litter to illustrate a history of 'broken promises' – my guess is that this visual metaphor left many (especially SD Settlers) thinking "isn't that awful – why didn't they pick the litter up at the end?" A framing error Mr Clegg, or Mr Clegg's Director.

Anyway back to the CDSM survey. For the LibDems this shows their usual values base heavily concentrated in just the ID Pioneer values area. Although it has waxed and waned since 2005, unlike the Conservative and Labour bases, this one has not shifted. As Pat and I pointed out back in 2005 (see <http://www.campaignstrategy.org/valuesvoters/index.html>) this is why the UK LibDems cannot win a General election, as although there are 41% ID Pioneers in the country, they are too thinly spread geographically to achieve the sort of results that Conservative and Labour can with their geographically more clustered support, in the UK 'first past the post system'.



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The heavily ID values base also shows why the LibDems are the 'natural' party of ethical causes in so far as those are framed or messaged by ethically motivated activists. So what happened after the tv debate ? My guess is that the prominence given to Clegg helped attract some ODs simply because he was prominent (and a slightly better 'performer' – visible ability), as well as some reluctant Labour supporters, and, as Pat Dade suggested to me afterwards, some Libertarian Tories (who in the UK tend to be ID – in the US 'Libertarian' can mean something rather different: asserting the freedom to suppress others eg with arms).

We don't have a values survey post-tv-debate and at any event there are two more to come – and Clegg may bomb, so losing this 'best performer' bounce – but politicians should watch this space.

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