

Leadership is the ideology of the dead. Principles are the key.

To change course, we need to abandon notions of leadership and think instead about social progress, based on principle. Leaders belong to a past that has few connections with our modern societies and even fewer with our future, and they keep us trapped in a vicious cycle of renewal, promise and destruction. Rooted in an age of kings, dominant religion, and war, leadership was and is a way to control people, sometimes by suggestion but usually by threat. The morals of religion carry a threat of punishment and a promise of reward, both cajoling people to do the will of authority. This is not a civilised, enlightened, honourable or egalitarian model for the future. We no longer live in an age of kings, church and serfdom. The model of rule for those times is unfit for today.

Following a doctrine is not the same as understanding a principle.

When we follow the ideology of a leader, we take our first steps towards destruction and injustice. Following leadership without understanding principle, makes us tools, easily manipulated, easy to exploit and oppress. There will always be people who are motivated by fear, jealousy, profit and ambition, but when such emotions form part of a doctrine or ideology, leadership becomes tyranny. That is what makes societies based on leadership both unsustainable and dangerous. We don't need new leaders. We need education, not of what to think, but of how to think.

Early Scottish enlightenment thinkers understood the value of teaching people how to think. Originally a means to a religious end, teaching people how to read, dissect, debate and de-construct the scriptures nonetheless gave them transferable skills which allowed them to fight the imposition of tyrannical leadership from England. The ability to argue from principle is one which still defines Scots today, politically, legally and individually. It should form the basis of any modern, enlightened society.

Education can easily become a tool of control but it doesn't need to be. Instead, it can be a platform for intellectual, social and spiritual liberation, so that people need not follow the doctrine of others. Society without leadership or education based on principle, would quickly decline into chaos. Society with leadership, but without education of principle, is permanently vulnerable to oppression, corruption, injustice and exploitation. The sustainable society of the future trusts in the innate power of the people who, when given the tools of principle and logic, will conduct themselves in ways that secure the greatest benefit for the greatest number of people.

