

A Questionable Victory

Kaamil Ahmed, 18, explores the positive and negative consequences of BNP leader Nick Griffin's poor performance on Question Time.

He squirmed and laughed his way through most of Question Time on Thursday and on Friday his face was all over the news. Nick Griffin must be quite pleased.

His performance on the show itself was dreadful; he was interrogated about holocaust denial, accused of hi-jacking Winston Churchill's image and jeered by the audience.

The BNP leader came across as weak and was unable to respond with any strength to any of the accusations levelled at him by the rest of the panel and his struggle to articulate responses stood in stark contrast to the calm and thoughtful Bonnie Greer, making him seem ever weaker.

However, in the aftermath, I can see that it wasn't exactly a disaster for him. The London audience wasn't convinced, and neither, I imagine, were most Londoners. But the show drew in far more viewers than it usually does, and not all of them would have been watching to see Nick Griffin's ideals destroyed. A lot of people probably watched because they might be attracted to his policies.

And it is their opinions that could have changed. To the eyes of many, Nick Griffin looked like he was bullied, everyone in the building was against him and the show seemed focused on his appearance rather than on general current affairs, allowing for a bombardment of his views.

Anyone, who in any way identifies with the BNP's ideals, would have been offended by what happened last night and may have strengthened in their resolve.

And that's a problem. The BNP probably won't be winning many more votes because of Question Time, but their members and voters will probably be even more determined to defend their beliefs and feel even more alienated. That's dangerous.

The recent rise of the English Defence League could be even more worrying. Those who saw Nick Griffin's weakness and inability to stand firm on previous comments may look for more extreme measures. With one reaping chaos throughout England, that measure certainly isn't a distant option.

It was nice to see Nick Griffin's ideals exposed but the truth is, many share those ideals, and they won't be happy about what happened last night.

About this story

This article was written by Kaamil Ahmed, 18.

1 comment

BNP Question Time

A well-reflected piece which I do, on the whole, agree with. I must add that, like a lot of Londoners, there were also many viewers in the Northern regions who, similarly, were not convinced by Griffins' performance.

Ami from Liverpool, 02 December 2009 22:35

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