



David Howell, Lord Howell of Guildford, was first elected as an MP in 1966. He was Margaret Thatcher's first Secretary of State for Energy and later became Secretary of State for Transport.

He was chair of the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee from 1987 to 1997 and later first chair of the new International Affairs and Defence Committee in the Lords. From 2010 to 2012 he was Minister for the Commonwealth and is a former President of the Royal Commonwealth Society.

He is the only Minister to have served in the Heath, Thatcher and Cameron Administrations. He is the author of six books and a Privy Counsellor since 1979. He holds the Japanese Grand Cordon of the Order of the Sacred Treasure from the Emperor of Japan.

He is the host of the podcast *Powerful Undercurrents*.

“David Howell lives and thinks on that special terrain where the past, the present and what is to come jostle and baffle for our attention.. I've never worked with anyone who does this better. There is stimulation in his every paragraph. How we need his wisdom today as we seek to protect and preserve our precious liberal democracy against its enemies and detractors. His words within these pages really matter.”

Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield

“...a much-needed breath of fresh air blowing through our stagnant political landscape. I am proud to have first published his ideas in TheArticle and delighted to see them now appear in book form.”

Daniel Johnson, Publisher of *TheArticle*

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AVOIDING THE COMING ANARCHY

David Howell

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A short book for optimists in dangerous times



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Daniel Johnson

There is little agreement just now about the state of the world – except that it is in an extremely dangerous phase. From political leaders to thinktanks, from best-selling authors and media commentators to philosophers, the message is one of gloom, doom and apprehension at the prospect of social and political upheaval to come.

In this series of essays and commentaries, mostly published over the last five stormy years, David Howell picks out the areas where a more realistic but less negative picture can be discerned. The anarchy so often predicted, both international and within societies, and linked with the widespread loss of trust and respect, the shrivelling of deliberative discussion and compromise on which the democratic ‘bargain’ depends, and the loss of faith in liberal capitalism itself, may nonetheless have a positive side. When it comes to facing the feared chaos ahead, the forces holding our societies together may be stronger, if properly harnessed, than the forces tearing our societies, and our world apart.

But for things to go this way, he explains, we have to first recognize that we are not just in troubled times but, thanks to the tiny silicon microchip, at a key point in human history affecting the very the pattern of human relationships and the evolution of human institutions.

The reality, which too many people of influence, especially those involved in governance, have yet to understand fully, is that the microchip has reshaped the world in all aspects. We are at a moment of history comparable to the invention of the printing press, equal to the Enlightenment and even greater (and swifter) in impact than the steam age and the industrial revolution.

Rising anarchy is not inevitable.