

I want to win the war against neoliberalism

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Yesterday and [earlier today](#) I wrote on what I thought the election result meant, and what I thought should happen now.

I suggested it would be best if the Tories were allowed by the Lib Dems to form a minority government. My logic is in the original post.

One reader, Stuart Bruce [did not agree](#):

I'm glad you can live with the neo-liberal alliance for the next three years. Some of us, many of us, working in the public sector can't.

Those who rely on the public sector for essential services might not be too keen to spend the next three years watching those services disintegrate.

Standing by and waiting on the inevitable collapse might be a good argument, I'm not so sure its a good tactic.

If I've failed to explain let me do so in more depth.

I agree with Stuart. I don't, I admit, work in the public sector. My wife does. And as a family we rely heavily on it. My son has been in an NHS hospital twice in the last tree weeks. And that's just the tip of the iceberg of how and where the state supports the whole fabric of life all around us.

I believe, passionately, in public services.

I believe there is no alternative to public services in the vast majority of cases.

I profoundly regret that many sectors have been inappropriately privatised at cost to us all.

I regret as much the outsourcing of far too many public sector jobs at cost to us all.

I loathe PFI.

I am proud to work for the TUC.

I'm proud to work for PCS.

I'm proud [to support](#) PCS's campaign against HMRC office closures and job cuts which I think profoundly misguided.

I have argued consistently that there is [no reason for cuts](#).

More than that — I argue we should be spending more now to [get us out of recession](#). I've done so whenever and wherever I can. It's not been a popular line.

So I'm really not saying I can live with a neo-liberal alliance. I will hate every minute of it.

But this is a battle in a long war. And as someone who has chosen not to stand for political office (and some have encouraged me to do so) I stand on the sidelines. From that perspective I am convinced this campaign is only just beginning. The fight to not just hold neoliberalism at bay will be a long one. It is one we must win. I do not exaggerate when I say neoliberalism has the capacity to destroy society as we know it. Look at the callous indifference of the European central bank to the people of Greece and working people throughout Europe, for whom they will grant not a Euro of monetary concession, in contrast to the unlimited funds for bankers, and you'll see just what I mean. This is a struggle for the future of ordinary people, society, democracy and the well being of ordinary people everywhere. The Tories are a part of the anti-democratic process that seeks to take power away from the vast majority in the interests of the minority for good. Their record on the unions was just the start. Their proposals on electoral reform are, in effect, to permanently dismantle democracy in the UK for good and grant perpetual power to the faction whose interests they serve.

I make the point to make clear I suffer no illusions as to the importance of the issues.

But I also make the point that this is a battle — not the war itself. This battle has for now been lost. Not nearly as badly as many feared. But damage has been inflicted, some of which was avoidable.

What should have been avoided was the absurdity of Labour and Lib Dems seeking to out do the Tories in committing to the cuts Stuart and I both oppose. There was no reason to do that. These cuts are the economics of the madhouse. The private sector is not creating jobs. None at all. Banks aren't lending to allow the private sector to do so. Therefore every job axed by government is a job lost — and due to the multiplier effect at least half a job or more lost in the private sector too — a spiral of loss which will rapidly head us towards recession unless arrested soon after it has begun. The insanity is obvious. Just when we have increased national debt to pay the

prescription is that we cut our national income. It is as blunt as that. And only a fool cannot spot the obvious problem: that if you reduce income and increase the debt obligation the result is exponentially reducing real after debt repayment income. That's why spending to stimulate growth — growth that will pay for itself and so eliminate debt — is the only answer. That's the Green New Deal.

The problem is though Labour and the Lib Dems are committed to those cuts: cuts which will not deliver and which will bring massive retribution to bear on whoever tries to impose them.

I face the reality that Lib Dems and Labour would if in office try to do that now. Within two years that project would fail but the result then would be a Tory victory — a massive one.

We'd then face national annihilation. We'd see an end to real democracy. After that the Tories would slash the state, reduce benefits, charge for services now free, and enjoy the fear and panic this would induce, knowing they'd ensured there was no prospect of electoral backlash.

I can't face that.

So I don't want Labour to seek to impose cuts — wholly unnecessary cuts — now or soon. But Gordon Brown would try to impose those cuts.

So Labour has to fall back and regroup.

Brown has to go.

New alliances have to be built — including solid agreement on STY PR.

New policy has to be built around the essential nature of public services — and honouring the commitment to maintain and grow them in the interests of the people of this country. Yes, I mean that: we need to grow them. How else will we deal with an aging population? Or the boom in the demand for education and eventually jobs that there will be as the current baby bulge (yes, we have one just starting school)?

But that means we must have the chance to vote the Tories out when it has been proven that cuts don't work — because they'll have tried them, the reality of them will have become clear, and people will be enthused to resoundingly reject them and the party that tried to impose them.

It's essential that the party rejected in that way is not Labour.

It's essential that Labour is prepared to fight when that election comes. On a radical, new, confident platform that says no to cuts.

Only Labour will eventually do that (plus the SNP, Plaid and the Greens).

But that means the Tories have to take the blame for the failure of trying to implement policy adopted by all parties right now — a policy that is bound to be a disaster.

Unions will have to be prepared to fight those cuts. I hope they will.

People will have to be angry and campaign against those cuts.

Labour must be confident in its re-grouping, and do it fast.

But holding office right now — as Mervyn King (of all people) predicted — is not something to be aspired to.

So, I agree with you Stuart, entirely, that our public services must be defended. But I think we have to see the big picture when seeking to do so. There is no point winning this battle to lose the war. I want to win the war.