

The cracks are developing

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It is always unwise to read too much into a particular event, especially when the event involves someone as unwise as Iain Duncan Smith, but his resignation does seem to indicate deep rifts in the Conservative Party.

It can, of course, be argued that such rifts have been apparent ever since the rise of Thatcher. After all, technically even John Major had to resign as party leader once to try to reclaim some authority over his own rebels. So what's the deal now? The EU referendum, of course.

For forty years the Conservatives have sought to avoid the moment when they could tear at each other. And wisely they succeeded until David Cameron, in all his weakness, could do so no longer and relented to demands from those seeking to end his reign to grant a referendum if they would offer him in turn support for a second term in office in the meantime.

He got the support. Whether he gets a second term is a harder question to answer. It is impossible to think that IDS's resignation solely relates to disability payments. I simply do not think him that principled, and if he was the point he sought to make had very obviously already been conceded by the time he quit. In that case his resignation was personal, political and based on what seems like little better than loathing for another part of his own Party.

I confess that as a student I saw how when engaged in politics those you could trust the least were always on your own side. That heavily informed my decision to observe but stay out of party politics. I suspect the rise of single issues campaigning has been the consequence of many others making the same observation. But some chose the political path knowing that risk, and today they govern this country. Except one has to wonder for how much longer that might be the case.

It is apparent that Labour is not a happy place.

Now it is more than apparent that the same is true in the Conservatives.

The LibDems look life expired and the time will come when the SNP will fight internally: it is inevitable.

But that means we need a political system that reflects the reality of division within the country. The politics we have can longer support the uniformity of opinion that first part the post demands.

Why, oh why, can't we now liberate debate with a proportional representation system? Its time has come.