

Funding the Future

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It's impossible not to think that 2020 is about perfect vision. It's what the number means. Except that's not how 2020 is going to be. Even if we Brexit in 2019 the 2020 election (if that is when it will be, and it's not a foregone conclusion as yet) will be messy, very angry and, as yet, deeply unpredictable.

Presuming even more serious events do not overtake Brexit (and they might) then it looks as if it will dominate UK politics at that time. And we do, at last, have wise heads pointing out that even if the legal process is complete by 2019 the practical arrangements will hardly have begun. [Philip Hammond said so yesterday](#), making clear that long term transitional arrangements will be required to get us out of the EU. And the [Lords have also said much the same thing](#).

Partly that's inevitable: if we can't start negotiating new trade deals until we leave there won't be any in 2020.

Partly it's down to capacity: there will be just too much to do here in the UK before 2019 to think leaving is possible.

Partly it's because I think politicians will have realised how toxic Brexit is by then because many in the public [will have realised just how much it will cost them](#) and fear will be pervading wiser heads in Westminster.

Partly it will be because Europe too will be unable to conclude a great deal by then: even if the heads of agreement on leaving is signed in 2020 actually working out the detail, the costs, and the ongoing payments will involve many years of wholly wasted human effort on all sides that will be solely dedicated to reducing the net sum of human well-being.

Those are sufficient reasons in themselves to be sure that the 2020 election will, assuming Trump has not plunged us into some other crisis, be dominated by Brexit. And assuming that is the case what will happen?

There will be massive anger with the Tories: Brexit means Brexit will prove to be a deadweight around their political fortunes, it's simplistic charm having long proved to

be the evidence of gross naivety that will result in a massive wave of anger and mistrust: the veneer of competence will disappear long before 2020 arrives.

UKIP will remain in a mess with its inability to form any sort of coherent policy appealing to most people becoming ever more apparent, although that will not stop it gathering a hard core of support from those for whom migration is the sole issue of concern.

The Lib Dem policy of staying in the EU will need some refinement: going back will not be an option by then, although reapplication might be, but the terms would be horrible.

Nationalists will be stronger than ever: Brexit will be seen as a crisis imposed by the English, rightly or wrongly.

And as for Labour? If a Trotskyite Momentum has not torn it asunder by then it will still have problems in appearing credible. Corbyn is not. The old guard who served until 2010 are not. And so far it's not obvious the few others are really capable of unifying it, let alone taking ideas to the country.

So we face a political void in England and nationalism that seeks a European identity holding sway beyond that country's borders.

Is there room for another party now? Could the Greens surge? I doubt it, to be honest. And if not them, what would it be? And would that just add to the confusion if it happened?

The prospect is of an election where anger, fear and disillusionment will be dominant popular sentiment, with all being appropriately based because politics will have failed people right across the board. It's a horrible, and realistic prospect.

And I have no answers as yet. I'll just throw that into the melting pot to add to the sense of despair. Which also makes me wonder whether 2020 might be our last election. I think it worth noting the concern.