

It's time for the left to stop being squeamish: the cou...

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If another person on the left tells me that they can't work with the Lib Dems because they sold out to the Tories and "anyway, what about tuition fees?" I think I will scream, very noisily. I'll do the same with those who can't work with nationalists because it's essential we keep the union alive. And to those who can't work with Labour MPs who they claim took part in a coup. Or those who say they can never work with a Tory even when the Tory talks common sense, as some do. In fact I'd say the same to all those who raise myriad other reasons why they can't work with others with whom they broadly share some political sympathy because of some other perceived slight or past wrong doing. My comment to all who are now of that opinion is simple. It's that it's time to stop such petty self-indulgent nonsense and realise that there are bigger issues to deal with in life, like the existential crisis facing this country.

Let's not beat about the bush. This week the government will start the process of getting parliamentary authority for a course of action they quite specifically said in their manifesto that they would not pursue and for which they will only publish a whiter paper when the Act is passed. What's worse, the Bill in question permits the collective leave taking of sanity. I have still not heard the government suggest a single law they want to repeal that the EU required us to enact. Nor have I so far heard of a single group of migrants they want to stop coming to the country. Neither have I heard how they might achieve that goal given that they have collectively completely failed to control non-EU migration since being in office. And there is no one who has yet presented a cogent argument for why our democracy will be improved by leaving the EU: indeed, the process of leaving provides the clearest evidence that it will not, whilst the decision of the Supreme Court makes clear we do already have control of our own law making in this country, even if the government does not like the fact.

And let's face the reality that Brexit will tear the UK apart.

Brexit will also harm us economically: it is simply not possible for it to do otherwise.

And Brexit will leave us isolated and diminished internationally, dependent on tyrants and bigots for political alliances.

Brexit will also devastate the whole of Ireland.

And Brexit leads us down the path Trump is already taking towards a politics of intolerance, greater inequality and fear.

And if you really think a past mistake on tuition fees, a desire for federalism or even mutual nation status, or any other issue are as important as those then I despair. As I also despair of those party tribalists who insist they must give electors the sole choice of being represented by a far-right wing MP.

We are as a country in existential crisis. The first wall we're going to hit is close. The cliff we'll fall off is just beyond the point where we smash through it. And still small-mindedness and narrow party divisions seem to be more important than any aspect of working together amongst those of sense shared in common in UK politics.

Is it too late to beg all those of all parties who want to prevent this nightmare, and who want to explore the possibilities of leaving the EU whilst at least staying in the single market to work together, and to do so despite their existing party ties in order to do so?

Tory, Lib Dem, Labour, SNP, Plaid, Green, SDLP and more: surely now is the time to say that in the face of this crisis there is common ground and to reject the pettiness of party allegiance until this crisis has passed?

Is that too much to ask?