

The end of Tory rule is possible

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The Conservative Party exists for a reason. The most successful political party in the history of democracy has, for centuries, served the sole purpose of preserving the interests of wealth. I stress that when saying so I am not suggesting that it exists to serve the interests of business, as it would like many to believe, but wealth. This is the party of the rentier, not the business person.

What has to be acknowledged is that it has been remarkably successful at doing so. It has [been in office](#) for 44 of the 72 years since 1945. [It's borrowed far more than Labour in the process](#). And I am quite sure it does not give a damn: the Conservative Party does not exist to deliver policy or purity: its goal is pragmatic power.

Only once in my lifetime has it forgotten this. That was the 1990s. Then, in a moment of madness (by its standards) it fell into partisan bickering when those who forgot the goals of the party did instead seek to pursue a dogmatic, nationalist, anti-EU agenda that drove it from the corridors of power for more than a decade. The natural order was disrupted.

It has never returned with its old confidence. If Cameron was a weak prime minister, holding office by the thinnest of margins, May is very much worse, despite still running a Tory administration. And that could still work if the Tories remembered what they were all about, which is compromise in the pursuit of power itself.

What Brexit negotiations convincingly reveal is that this is precisely what they have forgotten. They appear to have lost their negotiating ability whilst compromise appears beyond them. And all that remains on view is desperation and dogma. To put it another way, the Tories appear to have regressed to their 1990 state.

We can but hope that there is opportunity in this. What we know is that the interest of the rentier does not align with that of most people in a country: by definition those who live off the back of the wealth created by others must be in a minority and have to oppress the majority. This is the malignant reality at the core of Tory politics.

What we also know is that this does not deny the minority power: money ensures they

have influence beyond numbers.

But, that is only true when the oppressor is single minded and the oppressed can be fractured in their opposition.

Or to put it another way, when there is a divided Tory party united opponents can overturn the hegemony of Tory power. This is the opportunity that exists now. This week showed it: the united opposition (because this was a multi-party showing) defeated the government on a motion on universal credit, from the vote on which all but one Tory abstained. They simply ran from the field.

If only this could be built upon the end of Tory rule is possible for a long time to come. I am not optimistic it can be done by one party alone. I know it is possible by an opposition willing to work for a greater good, which is to achieve freedom from the oppression of the rentier.

Is that enough to unite political opinion on the left? I wish I knew.

I live in hope.