

English politics may wait a long time for something lik...

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I am not the greatest fan of The Observer's Andrew Rawnsley. He is a man who can instinctively find the middle: the line of least defence most likely to not alienate too many of his sources whilst appeasing as many of his readers as possible. This is triangulation at its most obvious. [This, though](#), seems true to me, in the sense that he thinks it:

When we get to the very edge of the abyss — and that moment is alarmingly close — my hunch is that parliament will act. I suspect that enough Tories share Sir Oliver's dread of no deal and what the consequences would do to their party. It's only a hunch, mind, and one based on the fragile assumption that the Conservative party still has some instinct for self-preservation and a residual capacity to think rationally.

I think it's true because it's the hunch that, I think, underpins the Tory lead in the opinion poll the Observer also publish this morning. Both are based on the misguided belief that somehow the Tories always sort the mess out.

The reality is that they don't. They did not in 1992 and by 1997 they had blown it, badly. From 2010 inwards it's hard to find a shred of evidence to support the idea. But the belief remains. Even without evidential support.

What's scary about it is that this suggests that no deal is Labour's best hope. And I regret to say it, but in party political terms it probably is. As I was told by an influential member of Corbyn's team in March 2016, Brexit was a Tory fight and Labour just needed to watch it out to win from it.

That was a position grossly negligent in political terms. But nothing has changed as far as I can see. That's what Labour are doing. It's a plan predicated on a no deal. And it's predicated on chaos. And that Labour can win from this. Which is thought to be a price worth paying.

That is a form of politics in which I wanted to play no part. I still think it wrong. I am, and have only ever been, solution focussed in my interests. In other words, the aim has

always been to say simultaneously there are problems and there are solutions available. That's the antithesis of Labour's Brexit strategy.

Right now Labour's strategy is playing very badly for the party.

That may change.

But the price will be unacceptable.

The Tories have been appalling on Brexit. Unforgivable, for many. But they were probably that for most of those people, anyway.

Labour's plan has lacked principle, leadership and, if one might be blunt, any plan barring beating the Tories if and only if they really do fail in the worst possible way. That's it.

I fear there will be a significant price for that too.

A person in Cambridge told me they wished they could vote SNP yesterday. I can understand why. The desire for a party with cohesion and a unifying idea is high.

English politics might wait a long time for something like the SNP to come along. Until long after they have gone, maybe.