

# Whatever Brexit is it is not socialist and it's time La...

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This [morning I tweeted](#) this:

*I find it very boring to be told socialism requires Brexit.*

*Socialism is internationalist. Brexit is not.*

*Socialism is about protecting people. Brexit is the exact opposite.*

*Socialism is cooperative. Brexit is not.*

*Whatever Brexit is, it is not socialist.*

#Stayandreform

Why did I do that? Because I am, as I said, so bored of the mindless claims that to be in favour of staying in the EU is to be a Tory; that wanting to Remain is to be opposed to any form of radical policy and that leaving the EU is necessary for modern monetary theory to work, which in my case also gets thrown in.

The tweet, when I last looked, had been shared 181 times and liked more than 450 times. It's clear I am not alone in this thinking.

That was confirmed when I read Paul Mason's [article for the Guardian](#) this morning. Let me be clear; Paul is to the left of me: he is a Marxist and I am not, although I understand why people are and have no problem with it. He would unambiguously identify as socialist when I have problems with the materialism I think implicit in that term. Both of us would, however, be offended to be called social democrat when I suspect Chukka Umunna probably still claims to be that. So there are differences, but let's not overblow them. And we've both been associated with the Corbyn project. So I welcome this headline:

*Corbynism is now in crisis: the only way forward is to oppose Brexit*

And this sub-title:

*The officials around Jeremy Corbyn who designed this electoral fiasco need to go. Labour must unite around the remain and reform strategy*

As I do this comment in the main body of the text:

*[T]he leadership's Brexit position and the woeful performance of senior officials have now become an impediment to defending the left project. I will enthusiastically circle the wagons around Corbyn. He has grown since 2015 into a politician who thrives on adversity and class struggle and will do so now. But the officials who designed this fiasco, and ignored all evidence that it would lead to disaster, must be removed from positions of influence.*

*They include Seumas Milne, director of strategy, and Karie Murphy, Corbyn's chief of staff. With an electoral fiasco like this, the buck has to stop somewhere, and it must stop with them — together with Ian Lavery MP, the party chair, who twice broke the whip to oppose the second referendum.*

I would most especially agree on Milne. He is the impediment to progress in my view. He thrives on dispute. He loathes those who do not toe his line. His political position is way beyond any I - and most Labour supporters - could ever reasonably embrace. It is also from an era long-gone. And I know he likes me as much as I do him. The divisions he sows need to end.

But not, as Mason says, for their own sake - although that would help. The left does, instead, need to have a plan to go forward. I have a chapter on how it might do so with regard to tax in a book out on Labour policy next month. But, as Paul Mason says, the issue is bigger than policy at that level now. What Labour needs is to, as Mason says:

*[B]egin from the facts: the struggle against rightwing authoritarianism and fascism is now the main priority. No amount of pledges to nationalise stuff, or appeals to class solidarity, wins that war. We are engaged in a culture war over values and narratives. Labour's narrative has to be built around resistance to Brexit as a project of the racist and xenophobic right, and a story of communities revived by hope and solidarity.*

Quite so. But for too many in the hardcore of Labour this is now sacrilege. And that's why it failed last night.

I'm not a member of Labour. I have voted Labour in an election this month. I have voted Green too. Locally, I voted for a LibDem as well when that was the only available choice to try to unseat a Tory left. I'm not tribalist. I was invited to work with Corbyn: as I always say, he chose me and not vice versa. But I see the value in having a functioning

left of centre party in England. In Scotland and Wales I suspect that mantle has moved on. It may too in England, to the Greens. But for now the option has to be left open. And I support what Paul Mason is saying.

Labour has to get its act together. But it can only do that by shredding the old school, 1970s and before era, model of socialism that Corbyn has chosen to surround himself with. It's either it does that or, as Paul Mason very clearly knows, it's day is over

Could I sacrifice Milne, McCluskey and Murphy for a better Labour Party? Of course I could. I just hope Corbyn will have the sense to see that nothing less is necessary.

But he chose them. And they're not alone: there are ample others around them of not very dissimilar view. So this may not happen. But it is Labour's last chance, in all likelihood.