

Why won't the left combine to give people the progressi...

Published: January 13, 2026, 6:44 am

I just posted this thread on Twitter. It is as relevant here:

know that I am not alone on the left in wondering how, if ever, we might get rid of Tory rule in England, and so the UK as it now is. I am also far from alone in wondering why so many on the left are so determined to keep them in power. A thread...

The UK faces a vast range of problems right now. That I am aware of no issue that we face has an answer that requires smaller government, more privatisation, more discrimination and less care. In other words, there is no Tory answer to any issue that we face.

Despite this there is a widespread feeling that the Tories are in power to stay. It may not be Johnson, of course. Whether it's Covid, Brexit or one corruption scandal too many that does for him I don't know. But what is sure is that those who rise through scandal fall through it.

But even when Johnson falls there will be another Tory to take his place. The Cameron, May, Johnson legacy of incompetence will continue, unchallenged by the electoral process. Until, that is, the left decide to do something about it.

I use the term 'the left' broadly. I have to. We need to. That is my argument in this thread. Those with a scintilla of comprehension that there has to be a better way for the UK, its constituent countries, all who live here and those we impact beyond, make up the left in my view.

And I know there are those 'on the left' who deeply resent this opinion. I am so bored by them. Their drive for political 'purity', whether within or beyond their parties (and all parties on the left suffer this) cripples any prospect they currently have of electoral success.

The dogmatists cripple Labour, whether from left or right. Their tribalism is fatal. The gross arrogance implicit in their belief that only their party is able to solve the problems the UK has is staggering, and utterly misplaced. Other parties can be blinkered in the same way.

In the UK we have an electoral system that right now means all those of small minded, anti-social persuasion vote the same way. And all the rest, of sounder mind, spread their votes around. It's a recipe for right wing hegemony within government. And national disaster.

It remains a fact that those on the left can, if they wish, play party politics forever. Or they can stop doing that and actually see that to serve the interests of the country they must work together.

I do not care if that means I have to vote for a LibDem where I am. Dammit, I have done that for years in local elections where it gives hope of keeping a Tory out. Does that mean I am much enamoured by the LibDems? No, it doesn't. But they can be the best available choice.

What that does mean is that I am pragmatic. A LibDem is better than a Tory. If they have a chance of winning and Labour and Greens don't, I vote for them. This is real world politics.

It is what also happens within parties. There are a lot of things Labour has proposed I do not like. Not all Green policy is to my taste. Nor come to that is all SNP and Plaid policy. But if joining a party would require massive compromise in that case so too does all politics.

I am not inclined to join any political party. That makes me one of the vast majority: that is, the sort that people in parties want to appeal to. But they don't succeed right now because they will not compromise to deliver what I, and millions, know is needed in the UK.

That requirement is for a progressive alliance. That would have to deliver cooperation on Europe, on future membership of the UK, on changing first past the post, an end to austerity, a new caring attitude in government, and a Green New Deal to take this country forward.

I promise you, little could be more attractive than that to the majority in the population of the UK. That is what people are crying out for.

Labour, in particular, denies this. It is as if they really do want Tory power forever. And yes, I know all the hackneyed and out of date stories Labour tells itself about how it can still win. But it won't. Left or right Labour makes no difference to that either. It just won't.

And no one else in isolation can. That's a fact right now.

But there is a progressive majority. Of course where we are on the progressive spectrum varies. But let's get real. People want broadly progressive policy in this country. They want government to be a force for good. They want an end to corruption. The rest is detail.

But progressives make detail, ego and power-mania based on the very base notion of tribalism that really should be alien to all the left stands for the enemy of this good.

I do, of course, know there are exceptions. Green New Deal group members Caroline Lucas MP and Clive Lewis MP regularly work together across party lines and also work with the LibDems, SNP, Plaid and Northern Ireland parties. There are those who see what is required.

But in upcoming by-elections there will be too many candidates from the left. The result could be Tory gains. And that really annoys me.

Nor is the solution adding another party. That only makes matters worse.

One day soon, I hope, there will be a moment when Labour especially, but others as well, realise that getting rid of evil - and I do think the Tory party that we now have is appropriately described as such - requires that there be cooperation to achieve that goal.

That day has not arrived yet. But I, and millions upon millions of people long to knock political heads together to achieve it, not to deliver a Labour, or Green, or SNP, or LibDem victory at Westminster but to deliver a united front for decency, change and hope.

I live in hope.