

Truss does not care

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I have [just posted this thread](#) on Twitter:

I took the weekend off writing. I deliberately wanted a break from commenting on the crisis that I think is coming. Having done so, and having done some other things as well as watching a little politics, I come back even more worried. A thread....

Like everyone else I could be wrong in assuming Liz Truss will be prime minister (PM), but I will take that risk. So what are the risks in that forthcoming premiership? They are numerous. They're all deeply troubling.

At its core the most troubling issue that we face is that Liz Truss is simply not a credible politician. She says nothing, commits to nothing, has never delivered an identifiable policy of consequence, and is clearly driven by dogma. Her indifference to redistribution proves that.

It would be easy to say that we have already got used to this. Johnson was an obvious disaster, after all. But this is not the same. Truss is as vacuous, although more dogmatic. But she also lacks two things Johnson had.

The first of these is charisma. Johnson had this in my opinion and that of most people. I think, as many will agree, that Truss lacks charisma. Second, unlike Johnson she becomes PM without the obvious support of most of her MPs.

We know that Sunak won the MP vote to be party leader. We know Truss has not won over many MPs who supported him. And worse, we know many MPs and most Tories would still prefer Johnson as PM, corrupt as he was.

In that case let us remember the basis on which an MP is invited to form a government. The assumption is that they can command a majority in the House of Commons. It is not clear that Truss will be in this position. At best she will be hostage to many factions

in parliament.

I doubt any PM will come into office in such a weak position as Truss. There is already talk of MPs sending letters of no confidence in Truss to the 1922 Committee. I suspect that is true. And Sunak, Johnson and Gove will all be working to fuel that concern about Truss.

But let me add that the concern I have is not just about the micro-politics of the House of Commons and even the Tory party. There is the credibility of the whole of British and even the British government at stake here.

A country that can, in the absurd manner in which it has happened, end up with Truss as PM without her having the backing of her MPs and without her having won a general election, is not in possession of a credible constitution.

Nor can that country be considered credible when the PM selected in this extraordinary fashion has shown during her election campaign contempt for not just her own potential electorate but those also considered key political allies from France and the USA to the EU.

If there is going to be a sterling crisis (and because the dollar is overvalued due to the Fed's reckless interest rate policy this is likely) it's not down to economics: it will be because the chance that anyone outside the UK will believe in Truss is very low indeed.

In a country where Johnson did his best to bankrupt politics, Truss has the aim of finishing the job. A look at her supposed ideas for her time in office makes clear how bad things will be.

She plans tax cuts for the rich. They will save the net benefits and not spend them. There will then be no stimulus for growth. There will be no trickle-down, as there never is. There will just be a shortage of government revenue as an excuse for more austerity.

When people already have nothing to lose as they cannot pay their bills Truss will take on the unions, thinking herself like Thatcher for doing so. She cannot win but she can wreck services by trying, and likely will.

Unless there is the most massive U turn millions of households will not get the help that they need this winter. I suspect those on lowest incomes will, just about.

But middle earners will not, and as I have argued before now, they have no margins left for the decent lifestyles they thought within their grasp. In that case she will alienate the group she has to keep on side at the next election, which is staggering.

And so far we have heard nothing from her about support for business. Cuts in corporation tax make no difference when you are making a loss and facing liquidation. Truss clearly does not get that. Expect hundreds of thousands of businesses to fail and

millions of jobs to be lost.

Do not expect Truss to care: Thatcher created 3 million unemployed and was hailed as a hero: Truss expects the same.

Thatcher was saved by a war, of course. Expect Truss to look for one. The difference is that we do not have the forces, or allies, to fight one.

But political turmoil will be created, in Northern Ireland in particular, where the abandonment of the Protocol is going to cause immense problems.

And Scotland will be rightly enraged by the demand that 50% of the electorate must vote for independence if it is to happen when no such demand was made for Brexit.

Talking of Brexit, Truss says she is going for growth. Outside Brexit she has not a hope, even if this is the right goal in a world heading for net-zero, but the born-again are always the worst, and Truss is a born-again Brexiteer.

The fact that Labour will not talk Brexit either is a massive issue here. Certainly, the fact that the two UK major political parties will not talk about what is so very obviously the cause of much of the malaise in the UK is enough to deter any investor from coming here.

Worse, companies and individuals are going for that reason: nothing will be solved in the UK until the disaster that is Brexit is faced.

Nor will anything be solved until we have government that believes in government again. Truss does not. She believes in shrinking the state when the state is needed more than ever.

But Labour also refuses to talk about nationalisation. It's as if there is a collective desire to destroy the credibility of the body politic by mutual denial that there are solutions to the problems that we face. Labour enables Truss as a result.

As bad, Labour is also fixated on solutions that are designed to bail out energy companies and not people, and which hopelessly inappropriately target help for those who need it and give much to those who don't.

What did we do to deserve this? We believed that the individual was more important than society. And we believed greed was good. And that there was a trickle down to the poorest. We were wrong to believe any of this. We need each other and to care.

Truss doesn't care. Labour doesn't care enough to talk about what matters. And this is happening when politics is likely to melt down as Truss fails to address the issues that we face in this country.

The outcome? Either a move to the very far right, or a resurgence of real democracy. The former is more likely. The latter is what we have to work for.

Truss has to be the last PM of her type: out of touch with a country that never chose her and with a mandate from almost no one. We have to hope for better. Will we get it? I do not know.