

Funding the Future

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I think we have a government in place this morning. By which I mean the last time I checked, that seemed to be the case. I cannot be sure that will be true before I get to post this in a few minutes time, so I might check again before doing so, just in case. And that is not a joke: that is simply a reflection on the state of chaos into which the Tory government has descended.

I am making no predictions this morning. Any attempt to do so would seek to apply rationality to a situation where reasoning has departed the scene. So let me offer a reflection instead.

As is well known, the major political parties in the UK's ludicrous first past the post electoral system have always been very broad coalitions. They have, usually uncomfortably, embraced very wide ranges of opinion out of the simple necessity that any prospect of power demands that they do. And sometimes those coalitions fail.

Labour has been failing to reconcile its warring factions for some time, to its detriment.

However, their fights are mild when compared to the breakdown in relationships in the Tories.

The now, very largely departed, left of the Tory party might say that they warned of this with good reason.

The factions remaining in that party, from the far-right, through the Brexiteers, via Tufton Street, to those who retain some vestige of Tory political pragmatism, have very obviously now ceased to cooperate in a way that makes any chance of the survival of a continuing Tory government impossible. When MPs from the party resort to violence to push MPs through voting lobbies that is obvious.

Whether there is even a rump of the Tory party of any valet left for the factions to fight over in the strange belief that the brand might have a remaining value must be open to doubt.

But in that case a dangerous vacuum is opening on the right-wing of UK politics at a time when fascism is rife. How to fill that vacuum and keep the fascists out is my

concern now there is not even a hint of Tory moderation on view.

This government will, of course, fail. That is inevitable, sometime soon. There will be a Labour government. It will appear to have a big majority and so it might be expected that it should deliver stability. But the circumstances of the moment, by which I mean the economic crisis to come as a result of mounting household inability to manage debt, plus a void on the political right, suggests that stability is the last thing we might get.

The Tories have failed, at just about every level, and might even cease to exist for all practical purposes. But right now a policy-timid, technocratic and austerity-inclined Labour government may not have the solutions the country requires, however big a majority it might command. We are living in dangerous times. Chaos might continue. And that is rarely helpful.