

Is the current state of UK politics condemning us to in...

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As Politico reports this morning:

All anyone's been talking about is [the Sunday Times' bombshell splash](#) on plans by "senior government figures" to put Britain on course for a Swiss-style relationship with the EU over the next decade. The idea, according to the paper, is to negotiate a bespoke agreement whereby the U.K. joins the EU single market without accepting free movement. (If only someone had thought of this before.

I admit I managed to discuss other things as well yesterday, but that's just a reminder that Westminster and the real world do not always coincide. Nonetheless, this story is significant for a number of reasons.

First, there is the question as to who leaked it?

Second, there is the firmness of the denial.

Third, it shows how little the Tories have moved on, and how wrong David Cameron was to think a Brexit poll would solve the issue in the party.

Fourth, that the story has traction makes it clear how remote the Westminster parties are from the majority of people in the country on this and other issues.

There is no doubt that the majority of people in the UK now think Brexit was a mistake. There is equally no doubt that the lack of willing by either Labour or the Tories to debate this issue leaves that majority feeling almost wholly unrepresented in a two party political system.

The pretence by both leading parties that this issue has been settled once and for all is very obviously wrong. It leaves both, and Labour in particular, lacking credibility. No one expects sense from the Tories in this area.

But this issue is more significant than that. When it is obvious that part of the economic woe we are suffering is down to Brexit - and this is undeniable - then it makes anything

else said on that issue that by a politician who is in denial on Brexit lack credibility as well.

The result is severalfold. Confidence in politics falls again. Alienation from Westminster grows. The obvious failings in our democracy become clear. Belief that there are any solutions to our predicament in the face of such intransigence fades. We enter a state of resignation. And the attraction of extremes grows, which is one of the most worrying aspects of this political failure.

I feel as though I exist in the political void that Labour and the Tories have combined to create now. They combine to deny choice on Brexit, the type of economic policy we might have, almost all constitutional issues, and even civil liberties, which both seem willing to trash. There is even little between them on green issues and migration.

It's not extreme, or even particularly left wing to feel this alienation. You only have to be what was once called a social democrat - and so a relatively centre ground politician - to feel as if politics has chosen to abandon you and all you think of value.

My fear is nothing good can come of this. With the Labour leadership opposed to PR no change is in prospect. Unless, quite extraordinarily, a new party willing to fill this void emerges we are consigned to a desperate, neoliberal, right wing led decline. But I will still shout in opposition to that because I can't see another available course of action at present. Political sanity demands it.