

We can do better than have a majority Labour government

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Clare Short was MP for Birmingham Ladywood from 1983 to 2010, and Labour's secretary of state for the Department for International Development from 1997 to 2003. That, of course, was in Blair governments. She quit over Iraq. She served her last four years in parliament as an independent, no longer able to serve Blair's Labour Party.

She has [an article in the Guardian](#) this morning. I highlight two of her arguments. The first is this:

[B]oth main political parties relentlessly target the swing voter, which makes it impossible to really face up to the enormous crisis the world is facing, and be honest about the contribution that Britain might make to create a more sustainable and just future. Life for many in Britain is very hard and unlikely to get better soon. But due to our voting system, to win parties have to compete on the centre ground for the votes of a really small proportion of people. This is unhealthy and leads to growing frustration that may well break out again, as with the Brexit referendum. My greatest fear is that if people who are struggling are offered little hope, the appeal of racist populists will grow.

She is right, of course. We need proportional representation to address this fundamental problem.

She then added:

All that said, I think it is almost inevitable that the Tories will lose the election. The worst result for Labour would be a hung parliament, where it would need support for its programme from the Lib Dems and the SNP. But would this be such a bad thing? The outcome could be a more pluralist and less authoritarian government, and stronger commitments on inequality and the environment.

Again, Clare Short is right. We can do better than have a majority Labour government. And, as yet, I am still not convinced that we will have one.