

# Tackling the political void that Labour will create aft...

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People are beginning to realise, with a sense of dull awareness, that we are heading into the most enormous political void in this country.

There is a sense of resignation about Labour's pending victory in the general election. There is acceptance that it is going to happen, and simultaneously very little enthusiasm for this outcome.

The sense that being rid of the Tories is a necessary but nonetheless insufficient condition to guarantee our future well-being is widespread. That sense is coupled with a very limited belief that Labour will address almost any of the issues that we, as a country, face.

Pollsters suggest that the support for Labour is definitely enough for them to win but that it is very thin in the sense that it could very rapidly disappear if they then fail to deliver anything the electorate wants. Given that no one expects that Labour will deliver, most especially on the economy (on [which see my comments elsewhere this morning](#)), the likelihood that there will be a collapse in voter support for Labour is very high indeed.

So, what happens then?

It is, I think, possible that the Tory collapse will prove to be terminal at this election. Parties can recover from near-total collapse. The LibDems appear to be doing so. But that's different from doing so when you have delivered five dud prime ministers in fourteen years. In that case, the possibility that Reform might replace the Tories as the UK's party of the far-right is real, with Labour taking on that role for the centre-right.

So what will be the reaction to that? That is the real question because, as Neil Lawson of Compass [noted in the Guardian](#) yesterday:

*Data from ParlGov shows that, on a matrix of four key measures, UK voters favour the left over the right. Over 40 years and 11 elections, voters have cast on average 57% of votes for parties deemed to be on the left, making the UK the most progressive of the*

*15 nations in a sample including Sweden, Norway, Finland and Germany. And yet, because of our first-past-the-post voting system, we end up with the most rightwing governments.*

If Labour proves, as I suspect, that they are incapable of governing from the right wing and are rejected as a result, the void will not be on the right -where Labour will remain - or on the far right, where Reform will be treated with as much contempt by the majority as they are now. Instead, the void will be on the left, where most of the UK electorate are.

What will those parties to the left of Labour do in reaction, in other words? Can the Greens, LibDems and SNP - plus any newcomer party, which cannot be ruled out - cooperate in any way at that time to deliver three things?

One would be the electoral reform required to send Labour the way of the Tories just five years later.

The second would be a coalition for government, which PR is likely to require of them.

Third, the demand will be for a vision of how they can deliver what this country actually requires, which is:

- \* a sustainable future
- \* a focus on equality
- \* the end of bias towards wealth and large corporations
- \* an increased sense of well-being
- \* decent jobs, housing, education and health and social care
- \* an end to discrimination against the poorest, the most vulnerable, the sick and those with disabilities
- \* the rebuilding of community
- \* the recreation of purpose
- \* permission to be the nation(s) we want to be

I think all that is possible, together with fair incomes for all in jobs where insecurity is not the most hallmark of the job. But can those parties be persuaded of that? This is the real challenge for the next five years.