

The demise of politics as we have known it has been for...

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Thursday was another almost relentlessly depressing day in this dreadful election campaign.

Labour presented

an election manifesto that delighted in saying nothing new whilst confirming that its goal is to maintain the failed status quo established by the Tories over the last 14 years.

Worse than that, every recognisable trait that once identified the Labour Party has been eliminated from it. It seeks to promote wealth, and has nothing to say on the distribution of that wealth. Any claim that it might have once made to represent working people has been abandoned in Starmer's relentless drive towards the right wing of politics.

Meanwhile, YouGov suggests that support for Reform is now stronger than that for the Tories, albeit by an insignificant one per cent.

That support for Reform does, however, lend credibility to the Tory claim that a vote for Reform is a vote for Labour. The combined Conservative and Reform vote in that poll is 37 per cent. Labour is on 38 per cent. if Labour does get a significant majority, it will have much to think Nigel Farage for.

Meanwhile, in last night's election debate, which was ITV's rerun of the BBC event broadcast last Friday in which few leaders took part, Angela Rayner and Penny Mordaunt once more proved themselves to be dull, petty, boring, rude and outright deniers of the truth.

Farage was mocked by the audience, again.

And the smaller parties proved themselves far more competent, clear, nimble and in touch, again.

Stephen Flynn for the SNP was the winner, once more, simply by proving that he could, better than anyone else, call out both Labour and the Tories for their obvious shared failings when it comes to economic policy. He was also well in the lead when it came to migration and was unambiguous on Brexit, and opposing it.

That said, Carla Denyer has another good night for the Greens, and is obviously growing in confidence.

Rhun ap Iorwerth was also good for Plaid Cymru, turning his fire more effectively on Labour, and Daisy Cooper had a better night for the LibDems.

When the leading parties are so obviously dismal in almost every imaginable way the only thing that keeps me hopeful with regard to politics is the fact that these parties do, so obviously, include some people with the ability to make their case for something better.

The worst moment of the evening did, undoubtedly, arise when a very straightforward question was put to each of the seven people present. They were asked whether their parties would ever consider returning to the European Union, overturning the

outcome of the 2016 referendum on this issue, which was almost certainly dubiously won by the leave campaign.

We knew that the Tories would say they would not.

It was inevitable that Farage would say that Brexit had not been done properly.

But Angela Rayner took Labour to a new low when she said that there would never be an occasion when Labour would ever consider this. The decision had been made, she said. It is as if she is unaware of the fact that democracy is always about permitting people to change their minds. But then, that is not the case in Labour, anymore.

Thankfully, the other four parties did, again, show much greater wisdom on the issue, from the LibDems 'one day' to the SNP's unambiguous 'yes, they would'.

I will not say that yesterday was the occasion when the death of political ambition was announced. It is clear that this is not true in the case of the smaller parties in this election, in which the LibDems do now stand a serious chance of becoming the official opposition. But, it could have been the day when the leading parties in this countries announced their own demise due to their own lack of interest in governing the country. We will be well rid of them, so rotten to the core are they.