

Who is going to oppose Labour in parliament?

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I have another video out this morning. In it, I argue that Keir Starmer winning a massive parliamentary majority on 4 July is really dangerous in our democracy. Who is going to hold him and his party to account in parliament?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MEAnWiEwcCw>

The audio version is available at:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=rzxbe-164ad9e-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=ff6d00

The transcript is:

Who is going to oppose Keir Starmer in the next parliament?

It's a really interesting question on the basis of electoral opinion polls that are now coming out. Some of those polls suggest that the Tories may have no more than 75 seats in the next parliament. The Liberal Democrats might have 60 and the SNP might be on 35 to 40.

There will then be some other parties of course, with some the Greens, Plaid Cymru and of course the parties from Northern Ireland. But, we will be in a situation where it could be that there will be 450 Labour MPs, and the next largest party will have many fewer than 100 seats.

So, who is going to oppose Starmer?

Who is going to hold this government to account?

I think the one thing we can be sure of is that it's not going to be the Conservative Party. They are already in mayhem. We know that. That's why Starmer is going to get 450 seats. Maybe. If they aren't going to be able to do it because they will be going into all sorts of leadership rows and faction fighting and everything else, all those things that have characterised the last few years of Tory leadership of this country, then are we actually going to have an effective opposition?

Or are we going to have to look to the Liberal Democrats and the SNP to work together in some form of coalition? Well, effective coalition, whether they call it one or not, to actually deliver effective opposition in Parliament to whatever Keir Starmer might be doing.

The challenge to them is going to be really quite enormous. Remember that much of the work of Parliament is done through its committees, where legislation is scrutinised and ministerial actions are scrutinised, and there are committees of a variety of forms to do those various things. The demand on those members of the Liberal Democrats and the SNP, who will be taking their duties as parliamentarians seriously, which I am not certain the Tories will do, will be enormous because they're going to have to cover all those forms of committee and deliver the critique of the Labour Party that is going to be required to make the House of Commons function in anything like an effective way to ensure that we get the legislation that we deserve.

And don't forget that actually Parliament really does make a difference when it comes to legislation.

There are lots of matters that change as they progress through Parliament. Laws that arrive as one thing and depart from the House of Commons heading for the House of Lords and then the statute book as something else.

So, this role is vital. And I am really worried that the stress on our opposition parliamentarians in the next Parliament is going to be enormous.

We need a functioning democracy in this country. A parliamentary system that delivers Labour 450 seats is not going to deliver us a functioning democracy. It is going to be delivering us a democracy that is under enormous undue stress that should not be happening. And that's not good for the future of the well-being of everybody in this country because I believe that is dependent upon democracy working.