

# Is Farage still in the bin?

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Nigel Farage won Clacton. But did his unnecessary by-election actually make his political problems worse?

Farage beat Count Binface after calling an election that cost the public more than £200,000. The mainstream parties stayed away, Farage did not attend the count, and the parliamentary scrutiny of his finances that he hoped the election would negate has not disappeared.

But the bigger story is what happens next.

In this video, I ask whether Reform UK has already passed its peak. Farage has moved from insurgent outsider to parliamentary politician, bringing much greater scrutiny and demands for accountability.

At the same time, Rupert Lowe's Restore movement is challenging Reform from further to the right. If Reform begins losing voters in that direction, does Farage moderate his politics, or does he follow them?

That question matters far beyond Reform.

Labour and the Conservatives have repeatedly responded to Farage by shifting their own positions rightwards. If the right fragments further, will they continue doing so? And could the Greens, Liberal Democrats, SNP and Plaid Cymru benefit from a political realignment?

Farage won Clacton. That much is certain. What his victory means for the future of British politics is anything but clear.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOQWip901uA?si=Q3I1hr7krlimMZPc>

This is the audio version:

[https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=8btac-1b359ec-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo\\_link=episode\\_page&btn-skin=c73a3a](https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=8btac-1b359ec-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a)

There is no Debate Ammunition for this video.

This is the transcript:

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So Nigel Farage has won the unnecessary Clacton by-election that he called and created. He beat Count Binface. But my question is: does he and UK politics remain in the bin?

The mainstream parties refuse to participate in this political stunt that he created, and even he did so in the end by refusing to attend the count for fear of being jeered, which was the only threat he faced.

And he has not avoided the parliamentary investigation into his finances that he claimed this election would negate. In fact, he has reopened it by his own choice. In the meantime, he's wasted more than £200,000 of public money. But the reality is that there are even bigger questions to ask now about the future of UK politics.

There are three of those questions that I want to address.

The first is, has Reform already passed its political peak?

The second is, is the political right fragmenting and becoming more extreme?

And the third is, how will the rest of British politics respond?

The fact is, those questions matter far more than this by-election result, which has been, and remains, nothing much more than a stunt.

So has Reform passed its political peak? Is the party now subject to ridicule? Is Farage looking stupid when he has, in effect, been humiliated by having to call Count Binface the figure of the British establishment whom he has beaten in a by-election?

Parliamentary success has brought scrutiny of Reform and demands for accountability. That means Farage can no longer easily claim to stand outside conventional politics, and that's especially true when so many questions have arisen about its funding. Have

Reform and Farage's political brands been damaged irreparably by those questions, and now, by this fiasco in Clacton? Is Farage in the bin, as Count Binface would rightly suggest he is? And did this tantrum by-election just make things worse for him in that case? Could the trajectory from here be downwards?

And is that why the political right is now fragmenting so very clearly and in front of our eyes?

Rupert Lowe's Restore movement is challenging Reform from the further right. More like a social media campaign than a political party, Restore has nonetheless got an MP attached to it in the form of Rupert Lowe, and it did win 9% of the Manchester mayoral by-election first-preference votes. But its white, Christian ethnic nationalism comes dangerously close to fascism by any definition that you can think of in any form of academic literature. And despite that, some former Reform voters appear attracted to this more extreme form of right-wing politics.

So is this a fragmentation that is going to break the far-right apart, and how will Farage respond to Restore? Will Farage respond to Restore by moving further to the right? Is that a possibility at this moment? We clearly don't know. But it is certainly possible that Reform will move further into this ethnic nationalist politics arena, and the contempt that Farage has shown with his comments after the Clacton election, describing all the other candidates as people who are beneath his contempt, and in the process, also dismissing the electorate of Clacton, suggests that this is a possibility. And will Farage's unpredictability, especially as his own behaviour proves that this by-election fiasco has backfired badly, make this danger particularly serious? His weakness could make British politics more dangerous. That is my point.

And that poses big questions for Labour and the Conservatives. They now face a critical choice. Anybody who has watched politics seriously has realised that these two parties have followed behind Farage to the right.

Kemi Badenoch has become more robust on migration as the challenge from Farage has increased.

Labour has Shabana Mahmood as home secretary, and some of her policies are quite frankly, openly racist, in my opinion. So, will they now refuse to follow Farage, or will they also move further to the right if he does, in response to what Rupert Lowe is saying?

Following Farage would shift the whole political debate rightwards. Drawing a clear line in the sand now could instead move politics back towards the centre, but will they do that, and how will they react elsewhere?

Will they fight a second Clacton by-election, which looks to be almost inevitable? How will they handle Farage then, and how would they handle Binface? People who have

voted for him once might do so again.

But let's look wider. Wales already has a two-party system: Labour and the Tories have disappeared from the frontline there, and the fight is only between Reform and Plaid Cymru in that country.

Elsewhere, the Greens and the Liberal Democrats could gain from voters rejecting right-wing politics, but how are they going to position themselves to do that?

Meanwhile, the SNP could benefit from the same process in Scotland, but again it has to work out what it is going to do to achieve that objective.

What we're seeing is a total restructuring of politics. Clacton might have been a fiasco; it might have been ridiculous, but it says something more important. It says that everything we thought we knew is falling apart.

Restore exists. Let's face it. That is, at the moment, a reality.

Labour and the Conservatives are all adrift. They might have walked away from this election in a way that is almost unprecedented, but the reality is they didn't know how to handle it, and they don't know how to handle Farage now.

Farage appears to be ludicrous, and yet he won 63% of the vote in Clacton, so people there will still support him.

What does that mean? Does it mean that British politics is undergoing a significant realignment which is going to last?

And is it, despite the fact that Farage is clearly on a downward turn, the case that he's still going to disrupt British politics for some time to come? Is that the legacy that he's going to create?

Let's be clear. We cannot know what will happen as yet. I cannot say that Clacton resolved any of these issues. I do not know the answers to the questions I'm posing. But what we can say is that Farage is under scrutiny over Reform's funding. And it is facing growing competition from its right-wing, and Farage's position looks increasingly precarious. But that weakness creates risks rather than reassurance, and that's the issue here.

Count Binface exposed something. He exposed this risk. We know that the danger in British politics has not gone away, and the reality is that Reform weakening does not necessarily mean that the far-right of politics is weakening. In fact, the far-right of politics might be becoming more extreme, and that is dangerous in itself because our mainstream parties have refused to resist the allure of following politics into that arena, and that means one thing now.

Mainstream parties have to decide where they stand. They have to decide where they will draw the line, and my suggestion is they've got to do that by the time of their party conferences this September and October. But will they? We don't know. There is very little about what follows from Clacton that might be worth celebrating until we know what these mainstream parties will do. That's the problem we face. Their dithering is our issue, and our future and our crisis to handle.

That's what I think. What do you think? There is a poll down below. Please let us have your comments. Please do like and share this video. Please do subscribe to the channel, and hit that bell button, and say you want to be notified when we issue a new video. And if you'd like to buy us a coffee, because this one's being recorded quite early in the morning, and we are most definitely in need of some more, that would be great.

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Poll

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