

A bad day for Britain

My take on the 2015 General Election. Originally posted to my Blog in May 2015. I like to think I had a pretty good feel for the vibe after that awful election.

The last time the Tories had a small majority it was in the days of John Major. David Cameron will have to appease his own back benchers and look after the unionists in Northern Ireland. In the 90s that led to many decisions by John Major that most definitely weren't in the national interest.

Once again we'll see a weak prime minister, needing to do deals and form odd collaborations to get his legislation through the house. Add his long list of pre-election promises and Dave isn't in for an easy five years. If his government lasts that long! We have the potential bombshell of an in/out referendum on Europe coming up. Don't forget, Dave has promised a law that stops him from increasing taxes. A complete nonsense of course. There are ways around it, but his stropky back benchers will give him a hard time over every perceived increase. Then if he survives all this.... The SNP will be trying to give him hell from day one of the new parliament.

Oh, and then there's the whole devolution issue and the potential nightmare of English votes for English laws. The sad thing is that while Dave tries to tip toe through all these minefields, the country will be going to the dogs. Let's look at the election results;

The Tories

They've gained 23 seats and most of those are from the LibDems. In fact Labour had a net gain from the Tories of one seat and Dave is in Downing Street purely by taking all the LibDem seats. I did predict that people would think, "Why vote LibDem in a coalition when I can vote for a genuine Tory?" I seem to have been proven right. I've already mentioned the problems Dave will have surviving until 2020 on such a tiny majority. Their main problem is a lack of likely allies. Who will want to help the Tories out in a tight vote, after seeing the fate of Nick Clegg and his LibDems.

Labour

Wiped out by the SNP not the Tories. Sad to see such a disaster and as we now know, Ed Miliband has resigned as leader. I'm not going to use this opportunity to have a go at Ed Miliband, but I'd be a hypocrite if I didn't say that his exit will be good for the party. Ed Balls has gone too and this is an excellent opportunity to reshuffle the leadership deck. The defeat wasn't because of left wing policies, the SNP are even further to the left. But I have a real fear that we'll see another Blair style shift to the right and another period of 'Tory Lite' policies from Labour. I hope I'm wrong, but Labour always seems to jump to the right after an election defeat. It is understandable, grabbing at the clothing of the party that defeated you. But a leap to the right will condemn Labour to another long spell in the wilderness.

UKIP

Gone and good riddance. One MP, who'll no doubt get bored and join in with his old Tory buddies again. Nigel Farage has resigned and he was UKIP! Not just a single issue party, more a single charismatic nutter party. I can see them making a lot of noise in the Euro referendum, but in reality they no longer have political relevance.

LibDems

Talking of political relevance, they now have just 8 MPs. Nick Clegg has resigned and they really will be able to have next years party conference in a hotel room somewhere. If nothing else they'll have killed off the idea of 'coalitions' in UK politics. What other party will ever risk suffering the same vengeance from the electorate? Dave may need to throw them the odd bone if his back benchers play up, but it will be a very small bone. No more ministerial cars and another hundred years of irrelevance for the LibDems.

I'm not completely depressed by the results. Labour has a problem getting the vote out, which needs addressing very quickly. People say they will vote Labour, they even put a poster in the window. Then their kids get home, there's something on the TV and they don't get to the polling station. That turns a slight lead for Labour in the polls into a win for the Tories! Labour need to invest in IT systems to keep a better track of promises and get them out on the night. The Tories are famously good at this and Labour need to be good at it too. I'm not going to go on about the SNP, the media are already trying to get Ms Sturgeon made into a saint.

The next big battle is the Euro referendum.....

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