

Tory Turmoil

Written by Ian Grozdanovic-Whittle
Thursday, 23 May 2013 18:03



One of the things we can be sure of when there is a Tory government (this is no real equal coalition) sat cosily in 10 Downing Street is that they will make a real Eton Mess of the whole thing. Their infighting is open, hostile, and ultimately counterproductive for the country.

Coming to power promising recovery, failure is written all over George Osborne's face. Britain has a downgraded AAA-debt status and a discredited Chancellor with the IMF breathing down his neck.

The NHS is in turmoil with its 111 call centre number and A&E Depts coming under increasing pressure.

Michael Gove, the Education Secretary, was recently being booed by the very professionals he should be supporting.

And now, Tory MP's in open revolt over plans to offer equal marital status to same sex couples.

The list of this government's problems goes on unabated no matter how much they blame the

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previous administration; and they do at every opportunity, regardless of the fact they're more than halfway through their planned government.

Europe has been a problem for the Tory party forever. The late Baroness Thatcher was partly brought down by Europe. Far from being against Europe, Thatcher campaigned to retain European status in 1975. She wanted a common European approach to defence in 1978. In power, she signed the Single European Act which created the European Market. She believed that the advantages of this act would be seen well into the future.

John Major had his "bastards" in the party who laid siege to his premiership. The turmoil of the Major government became a national comedy, helped, of course, by Spitting Image; "Black Wednesday" being a very low point for his government and the country. Some of the characters from the Major years are still around. John Redwood even suggested he'd advised David Cameron recently on his Bloomberg speech. Ken Clarke must have nearly choked on his Sunday brunch!

Cameron has, in Geoffrey Howe's recently published piece headed "...a new, farcical low..." opened up a "Pandora's box" and is losing control of the Tory party.

The promise of a referendum in 2017, if the Tory's win the next General Election, has not mollified the Tory Europhobes. They were then upset that the Queen's Speech didn't lock-in a commitment to a referendum, more, of which, later.

And so another round of public arguments ensued. Unsavory is not the word. Both Barack Obama and Angela Merkel have recently felt the need to support our membership of the EU.

One of the things that confuses me when listening to people about Europe is how it costs us money and we can't control our borders. "Business for Europe" supports our continued inclusion in Europe. Europe is Britain's main trading partner worth £400bn or 52% of our total trade.

The CBI are divided on Europe but its chairman, John Cridland, said recently - "There are some who say that we could retain access to the single market without being a member of the EU;

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that the UK could withdraw and have a relationship with the EU more akin to Norway's or Switzerland's. I'd urge them to really look at the detail." So much for business being against our membership, then.

Not only that, but is it possible that all the businesses that settle here – like Nissan – from outside the European Union would do so if they didn't get access to the vast market we're part of?

The cost of doing individual deals with individual countries could be catastrophic for British business and jobs.

Immigration is an unusual one. In your standard tabloid headline immigration is a big problem. I know people who will argue till they're blue in the face that immigration is this country's worst problem and they blame the EU for it. The overuse of the NHS by foreigners is often cited as an abuse of our services. If it wasn't for foreigners coming in our NHS would be funded adequately. Interesting? In a recent piece in the Guardian newspaper, it was revealed that many Poles use private practices because they trust them more. Their experience of the NHS is poor compared to their experiences in Poland.

It seems our welfare state might not be as attractive as we would like to think.

It's my view that on immigration, the government of the day should get a realistic grip on it. People come in and people leave. We can control our borders, we're an island for heavens sake. We make the rules, not Europe.

And so we have the tail wagging the dog over Europe once again. They demand the referendum that will once and for all decide whether we stay in or leave the European Union. As the *raison d'être* of this coalition was to get the deficit down, which they are patently not doing as they are borrowing ever more money, a referendum could cost in the region of £80m, as did the failed PR referendum the coalition lost last time around. That would be more money down the drain. It's hardly a method of sound government.

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Referenda are for countries that can't make their mind up at the ballot box; failed democracies. We have political party's in Parliament who produce manifesto's that we vote on. None of the main party's said they would table a referendum in this parliament. UKIP, Cameron's worst nightmare, have been allowed by his lack of strength, to dictate and alter the timetable. The Tory Europhobes have been given their heads and they are revelling in the party. Never has their influence been greater. Cameron is now playing with fire over Britain's future, not only in Europe, but also the world. We will not be the economic powerhouse some still think we are once we have left the EU.

I've always believed that the Tory's use immigration and Europe as diversionary tactic. It moves the voters attention from the lack of affordable housing, the withdrawal of much needed benefits, the massive outsourcing of NHS activities, the decimation of local services, the closure of libraries and of course, the massive tax cuts for the rich.

But there's something else to. Their inability to stick to party lines and back their leaders shows the ugly side to their version of democracy and capitalism; one where complete self importance is paramount over the group. They don't care about the affects of their actions; the effects on the very people they're elected to represent. They want power, but they can't exercise it with responsibility. If they don't get their own way they will cause as much trouble as they can, even to their own detriment; and sadly, to the countries.