Twitter Thread by Will Tanner



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Since the reshuffle in No.10, there has been a lot of talk about whether the PM should choose between his new Northern spoils or his Southern heartlands.

Today, @ukonward publishes "No Turning Back", a detailed look at the parties' new voting coalitions. A few highlights:

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1. There has been a lot of sorting in the electorate over the last few elections, driven by Brexit and the realignment of British politics away from old divisions of class towards a values divide on culture and age.

This is from the 2015 result to the start of the 2019 campaign

2. There was further sorting during the 2019 campaign itself.

This is from the start to the end of the campaign. The Tories converted 71% of Brexit Party supporters during the campaign and 35% of DKs and WNVs. 6% of Lib Dem voters switched to Labour.

3. As a result, the two main parties have fundamentally different coalitions to five or ten years ago.

The Tories are more provincial, working class, regionally distributed. Labour are more metropolitan, middle class and urban.

4. It is also hard to overstate how different geography of the Conservative Party is to recent decades.

This is the 2019 party against the party after its 1997 defeat. The Conservatives now represent 57% of seats in the North and Midlands, their highest share since 1935.

5. As the PM made clear, many voters "lent" their votes.

1 in 5 Tory voters - 3.2 million people - were "contract voters", where they backed a party other than their ideal party to deliver an outcome (mostly Brexit). Without these voters, the majority would have been 42, not 80

6. The majority is thus more vulnerable than it first appears. But it can be strengthened - because Red Wall voters share many of the same values as loyal Tories.

The Tories are no longer the party of Notting Hill. But they can unite North West Durham with North Swindon.

7. Labour is much less homogenous. 27% of the party's 2019 voters are strongly the left of centre on both economic and social issues.

The current values coalition could only ever delivers 37% of the electorate. Keir Starmer will need to move right on economics and culture.

8. All of this means that there can be "No Turning Back" for the Conservatives if they want to retain a majority. They must deliver on Brexit and levelling up.

And there must be a significant rightward pivot from Labour if they want to get back into contention in 2024.

9. In the longer term, however, the Conservatives faces a growing challenge among the young.

In 2019, the gap between the oldest and youngest voters widened to more than 80 percentage points. Only 1 in 3 voters aged 18-24 years old would consider voting Conservative.

10. You can read the full report here: https://t.co/QDPFly5JEP

Please share, comment, challenge. The next election is few years away, but there's a lot of work to do for both main parties.

Thanks to @HanburyStrategy, @guymiscampbell and @jim_blagden for all their hard work.

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