Twitter Thread by Shaun Lawson



Shaun Lawson
@shaunjlawson

This is why I just don't buy that 'Corbyn changed politics'. He did his best, sure - but the movement didn't move anywhere, even under his watch.

It's strange, looking back, how much potential was wasted. And not just because of PLP sabotage either. All very sad.

> On the plus side, the Corbyn years did feel like being part of a movement, a determined and united collective - I hadn't felt like that before as a party member! It's just that the movement didn't actually move anywhere.
>
> — Rhian E. Jones (@RhianEJones) January 17, 2021

On a related note: I've seen many tweets insisting that Corbyn *proved* Labour don't need donors' money.

Sorry, no he didn't. Because we lost: in general elections, European elections and local elections again and again and again. Despite the massive membership.

He certainly enthused and inspired many... but ultimately, not enough. And he was like Marmite to the wider electorate for all sorts of reasons: some legitimate, others a lot less so.

See also: Sanders. Enthused and inspired many, dragged the platform leftwards, not corporate funded in any way... and never close to winning.

How big is the Tory membership? It's a heck of a lot smaller than Labour's even now... yet look at their majority. Money still matters.

To be frank, Labour will always be the underdogs. Our entire history - which is embarrassingly bad electorally - demonstrates that.

So we have to think differently, act differently (Starmer falls down on both at present) and combine activism and Parliamentary politics together.

Unhappily, the reality of the latter is boring, staid, dull. But it won't be if we do what is blindingly obvious, and embrace a progressive anti-Tory alliance.

You want a way to inspire activists and force meaningful change? That's how you do it.

It remains astonishing to me that Corbyn never even considered electoral reform. In that sense, he was as trapped in the old, tribal, closed ways of thinking as anyone else.

It is equally astonishing that Starmer hasn't considered it either. Both represent betrayals of democracy

Time, then, to re-up two articles. One from 2015 - it's been blindingly obvious since then - and one from 2019. All progressives must unite... and this is the only way not just of doing it, but doing it excitingly and showing REAL vision and hope.

(1)

https://t.co/AtutUBLeXY

(2)

https://t.co/bOPEisdcr0

And just in case you missed it:

https://t.co/ovWsvdY5Ut

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris united:

- The young
- The old
- The left
- Ethnic minorities
- Suburban voters (especially women)
- Independents
- Professionals
- Centrists
- Conservatives
- White working class men
- 2016 third party voters
- 2016 non-voters

And look at the result.

The conclusion from how they won isn't - memo to Starmer - milquetoast centrism.

It's building a massively broad voting coalition spanning all the way from left to centre-right, encompassing unions, small businesses, workers and yes, bosses.

It's entirely possible to be bold but also realistic; to change the economic argument but do so in a credible, trustworthy way.

We'll see the economic and social impact of the 'centrist' Biden and Democratic Congress. I think it'll be significant. They have much to teach us.