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British elections

Analysing a disastrous result

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This analysis of the British general election result of 12 December 2019 was published by the editorial board of *Socialist Resistance* on 12 February. A last section dealing in detail with the elections for Leader and Deputy Leader has been omitted. The full version can be found on *Socialist Resistance*.

What happened?

Like many others on the left, we got the election result seriously wrong. Most thought a hung Parliament or even a Labour minority government was a real possibility. It was not.

Brexit shattered voting loyalties established over lifetimes and, along with Britain's notorious first-past-the-post electoral system, gave the Tories an 80 seat majority in Parliament. The Tories won 43.6% of the vote, gaining 66 seats and Labour's vote share fell by 7.8% to 32%, resulting in a loss of 42 seats.

Labour Brexiteers voted Tory or Brexit party in large numbers. John Curtis puts it this way: 'The Conservatives' share of the vote rose on average by six points in those seats where more than 60 per cent voted Leave in 2017, whereas it fell by three points where more than 55 per cent voted Remain. In contrast, Labour's vote fell by 11 points in the most pro-Leave seats and dropped by a more modest 6 points in the most pro-Remain constituencies.' These mostly went to the Tories in England and to the SNP in Scotland. Even in many of the seats that Labour held the party's vote share went down, often by about 10%. The Tories are now celebrating a victory they only half believed was possible.

As Andy Stowe points out on the SR website [1], in an initial assessment of the election, this was not only a devastating defeat for the left and progressive forces, but a huge victory for English nationalism and the xenophobic hard right who had been fighting for exactly this for many years. It was a defeat as heavy as at the 1983 general election when Thatcher won a big majority for a second term. With the climate crisis looming, however, and Trump in the White House, it was under far more dangerous circumstances.

Brexit will now be completed, and in the most hard-line and reactionary form available to the Johnson government. Free movement has ended. New racist immigration laws will be introduced. A no-deal crash-out of the EU at the end of the implementation period is also highly probable because it is the model that key figures in the ERG always wanted.

The Tory Party, in the course of all this, has been transformed, into Brexit Party mark II. [2] It is now an English nationalist/populist party with a racist as its leader and Tommy Robinson as a new recruit - with many more of his ilk to come. Maybe Farage as well? One-nation Toryism, to the extent that it still existed, has been roundly defeated.

Such a party - through the toxic alchemy of Brexit - has managed to persuade large numbers of Labour voters that an assertion of English nationalism was more important than getting rid of food banks and homelessness or making sure that people don't die waiting to be admitted to hospital. In the end, the ruling class acted in their own class interest, despite their dislike of Brexit in many cases, whilst big sectors of the working class in the deindustrialised north, in particular, ignored their class interest and bought into Brexit and the 'taking control of our borders' rhetoric.

It is a disaster. Johnson will take British capitalism from EU membership to a dangerous and reactionary relationship with Donald Trump, whose central slogan is 'make America great again,' and who's stock in trade is privatisation, deregulation, climate denial, and short term military adventures. He will move to further restrict trade union rights that are already massively curtailed - particularly in sectors like rail and on the post where there has been some limited history of resistance including unofficial action - along with any other rights or benefits that get in the way of free-market trade deals. The hated Universal Credit will remain unchanged and benefits will continue to be under attack. The racist nature of the Tory project will leave millions of EU citizens in this country worried about their future here.

Most frightening of all is the ecological/climate dimension. Just as science is giving us ten years to save the planet from uncontrollable climate disaster we have a climate denier and prime minister, probably for 5 years, possibly more.

What really happened

We should not, however, confuse the loss of seats with the loss of votes - particularly given Britain's first-past-the-post voting system - which in this election gave the Tories an 80 seat landslide for a 1.3 per cent increase in their share of the vote over 2017.

In fact in terms of total votes cast for or against Brexit, according to the Yorkshire Post of December 14, Remain parties won the majority, polling 53 per cent of the total vote whilst Leave parties received just 47 per cent. These figures, they say, are remarkably in line with the last 75 opinion polls on Brexit - all have shown a similar lead for Remain.

In other words Brexit, a hugely strategic and controversial decision, with multiple impacts on the future of the country and the quality of people's lives, has been taken against the popular will of the people, which had changed since the 2016 referendum.

The fact that the Tory victory doesn't reflect popular opinion is explained by the 'first past the post' electoral system that awarded the Tories 56 per cent of the Commons seats on 44 per cent of the vote. If a second referendum had been held first we would have had a different result.

Although the Labour vote went down by 3 million against the 2017 election, the various claims from the right wing that this was a defeat of historic proportions - the latest being by Roy Hattersley 'the worst for 100 years' - is false. [3]

In fact, Labour's share of the vote in this election was better than that achieved by either Gordon Brown in 2010 or Ed Miliband in 2015. Labour received just over 10m votes, which is roughly what Blair got in 2001, and more than he achieved in 2005. Brexit, however, and the distorting effects of 'first past the post' concentrated the Labour losses in key Labour Northern (so-called 'red wall' seats) - which resulted in Labour under Corbyn getting fewer MPs than under Michael Foot. It is still a massive defeat, of course, but let's discuss it on the basis of the facts. In votes, this result was second only to the Corbyn-led Labour Party's score of 12.9 million in 2017.

The ludicrous line of the Brexiteers that a second referendum would have been grossly undemocratic was widely accepted by voters when it could hardly have been clearer that a second referendum, or confirmatory vote, would have been an extension of democracy not a restriction of it. Democracy cannot be reduced to a single binary vote on a single day - whatever subsequent consequences emerge.

The working class vote

The claim by the right wing that this result represents a fundamental shift of the working class away from Labour is false and simplistic. What it does demonstrate is that Labour's electoral base (or core Labour vote) has moved away from the old industrial towns where racist and xenophobic ideas are often strongest amongst manual and ex-manual workers (in
 many cases part of the labour aristocracy), and shaped by the failed economic and industrial policies of successive governments, including New Labour, to do anything about it.

As Paul Mason argues in his pamphlet *After Corbynism*, the strongest agent of change today is now the working class in the big cities.

'In their struggles over wages, rent, zero hours, women's rights, migration rights, LGBTQ+ issues and above all the climate, this new, diverse and networked workforce is the strongest agent of change we have. They have achieved exactly what, in the old theory, the pure economic struggle wassupposed to achieve: a common progressive consciousness. And they don't just exist in cities. All over the north of England, even in small towns like Leigh, Shipley and Bury, this new working class formed the backbone of our electoral support.'

As Phil Hearse points out on the SR website on January 12:

'Simplistic arguments that 'the working class abandoned Labour' necessarily involve archaic definitions of the working class - stereotypes which envision a class mainly involved in manual labour, mainly white, and mainly permanently employed. But the working class has not been like this for 40 years. The reality, as Claire Ainsley explains (Labour List, 20 February 2019) is very different:

"The occupations of heavy industry, which formed the bedrock of the British working class for a century, have given way to a multitude of jobs in today's economy. Four in five jobs are now in the service sector. Many of those jobs do not pay enough for people to make a decent standard of living and meet their rising costs. And the people being employed to do them are different, too.

"This new working class is made up of people living on low to middle incomes, employed as cleaners, shop workers, bar tenders, teaching assistants, cooks, carers, and so on. It is multi-ethnic and much more diverse than the traditional working class..."' [4]

Young people

There was a remarkable generational factor in this election as well. Young people were attracted to Labour's radical anti-austerity agenda with its opposition to Brexit and its green new deal in large numbers. Labour was the overwhelming winner among voters under 40. YouGov reckoned that 56% of voters aged 18 to 24 voted Labour. [5] The following YouGov figures show the scale of it:

https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/votingage-page0001.jpg

This reflects one of the biggest achievements of Corbynism, which was to bring a new generation of young people, who had been used and abused by the Tories, for many years into politics. Many young people have joined the Labour Party and huge numbers formed the backbone of mass canvasses in Labour's target constituencies. And the majority show no sign of going away even after the election defeat.

Scotland

The outcome in Scotland is more complicated and more promising - although it reflects the continued collapse of the Labour vote. Labour's cause in Scotland was lost long before this election was called. It is rooted in its failure to break from Unionism, including on the part of the Labour left. Labour's introduction of devolution in Scotland was posed as an attempt to head off a call for Scottish independence - while of course it predictably has had exactly the opposite effect. And while it is perfectly possible to make legitimate criticisms of the SNP from the left, this cannot be done on the basis of failing to deal with the national question and continued support for Unionism as Labour has done (both Scottish Labour and UK Labour).

Mark Steele, in an excellent article in the *Independent* on Jan 2 puts it like this (speaking first about candidates for the Labour leadership):

None of them have proposed how to redress Labour's collapse in Scotland, and whether the party has to change its attitude towards the SNP or independence. Until now, their approach seems to have been to call the SNP a bunch of arseholes, and maybe they hope this will work if they keep at it.

For example, shortly after the 2015 election, when Labour managed to drop from 50 MPs in Scotland to one, I saw a Labour member of the Scottish parliament give a speech at a public event. She began: 'My message to the SNP is they are a DISGRACE, DESTROYING this country.' It is a puzzle how this doesn't seem to have won back their lost voters.

The irony is that the Scottish method of alienating voters seems to be learned from the English method of explaining matters to foreigners: say the same thing, but louder. Labour's manifesto for the next Scottish election will be: "LABOUR. I said LABOUR, no, not SNP, L-A-B-O-U-R. Why can't you understand, you idiot? [6]

It will become an increasingly important task for the Labour left in England and Wales to take up these arguments head on over the next period as the different political situation north of the border becomes more apparent. The left of centre SNP now holds 48 seats out of 59 and is
 stepping up its campaign for a second referendum on independence in an explicit rejection of the wave of English nationalism we are now experiencing.

In the North of Ireland, the DUP lost ground (and its Westminster leader Nigel Dodds) and is now outnumbered by pro-Remain MPs which opens to the door to a border poll. This has prompted the leader of the Alliance party Naomi Long to say: 'it is almost inevitable that there will be a push for an Irish Unity referendum'. [7]

What went wrong?

Firstly, as we in SR argued vigorously at the time, to have a general election in advance of a second referendum was always hugely problematic - coming as it did before the Parliamentary struggle for a second referendum had been concluded. After weeks during which Johnson's call for a general election had been blocked by the opposition parties, the Lib Dems broke ranks and were supported by the SNP. In the end Labour had little choice, but there is little evidence that the dangers were fully appreciated.

The election was, unsurprisingly, dominated by Brexit. It was treated as a second referendum from the outset but it lacked the ability of a referendum to provide the accurate result in terms of support for or against Brexit that only a

referendum could have provided. This was excluded by both the election format and the 'first past the post' voting system.

Another major factor was the durability of the Brexit vote - particularly in Labour's Northern 'red wall' seats. Far from weakening, the Brexit vote had hardened and shifted to the right - enthusiastically aided by a media hostile to Labour, particularly the tabloids. This neutralised the ability of Labour's radical manifesto to counteract Brexit as it had in 2017. This time it failed to resonate from the outset. Minds were made up and they were not going to change.

Even Labour's impressive Green New Deal, which formed the first major section of the manifesto, failed to cut through Brexit fervour - despite the high profile of the issue.

Many Labour Leave voters had seen Labour's protracted (and correct) struggle in Parliament against a no-deal Brexit not as protecting their interests (which it absolutely was) but as blocking their preferred option - a no-deal Brexit'. They saw Labour's evolution towards a clearer Remain position and a second referendum, in a similar way - as a betrayal of Brexit by Labour. Mounting evidence of the disastrous economic consequences of the kind of Brexit being proposed cut no ice. To the extent that there had ever been any centre ground in this debate, it was now long gone.

There had been warnings signs of this. For example, workers at factories threatened with closure by Brexit had continued to support it despite the threat it represented to their jobs. This was the case at Honda in Swindon and British Steel in Scunthorpe, for example. It was also reflected in the way that most Brexiteers dismissed negative economic predictions arising from Brexit and were prepared to see an economic impact if it meant exit from the EU.

There was also, it has to be said, a presentational problem with both the Labour campaign and the manifesto itself - as argued by James Meadway on Novara Media. [8] There was a lack of focus and a failure to properly present and defend addition commitments added to the manifest after publication, that were exploited by the media and the Tories. The real problem, however, was that the manifesto did not resonate because it was overwhelmed by Brexit. Under different circumstances the presentational problems would not have had the same impact.

Racism

The most powerful force behind Brexit - as in the 2016 referendum - despite the effort of the Labour right (and most of the radical left) to deny it - was racism and xenophobia taking the form of a visceral hatred of the most progressive aspect of the EU structures the free movement of people. Labour, unfortunately was unable to counter it with, for example, a strident defence of free movement. Racism was packaged as populism, of which Johnson, Trump, Bolsonaro, Orban and Salvini are prime examples. Simple slogans in complex situations presented as anti-politics, anti-political correctness, anti-regulation, with dog-whistle appeals to racism and bigotry.

The social impact of all this has been increased racism on the streets, in the playgrounds and on the football terraces, which will only get worse following the Tory victory. Richard Seymour makes this point very well in his general election assessment:

The body count from austerity and the hostile environment will multiply. An already fairly awful society is going to get brutally worse. And it is difficult to see how this won't feed into yet more violent racism and hatred of foreigners predicated on zero-sum ethnic competition. [9]

Novara Media has done a stunning series of video interviews entitled *The Unbearable Whiteness of Brexit - Race*

[Class and the EU Referendum on the streets of Barking](#), brilliantly conducted by Ash Sarkar, that could hardly be more convincing in making this point, Such racism is not new in the blue-collar working class in post imperial Britain, but it is a big problem that it still exists in the 21st century. Brexit voters in Don Valley interviewed on the Today programme the morning after the vote told the reporter that they voted Brexit to stop immigration and that Brexit was more important to them than the NHS.

Those of us in SR, however, should not have been surprised at the durability of the Brexit vote since we had long identified it as a vote driven by racism, xenophobia, and English nationalism - which is why we advocated a critical Remain vote the 2016 referendum.

The role of the Lexiteers also needs comment. Brexit has not only brought down Jeremy Corbyn, and transformed the Tory party into a hard-right populist cult, it also split the radical left - with the bulk of far-left organisations, including the CPB, the Socialist party, the SWP, and Counterfire on the wrong side. Those supporting a Remain position were the smaller groups including ourselves as SR (critically), the AWL, and those involved in the campaign for a second referendum and the AEIP campaign. RS 21 were split on it.

The position taken by the Lexiteers represents a major, indeed historic, mistake with political consequences both immediate and long-term. It led them to be in denial of the fundamental politics and class nature of the Brexit project from the outset. The general election itself represented a conundrum for the Lexiteers. They could not vote for Johnson, for reputational reasons, though some individually did, because that meant explicitly supporting the most right-wing government Britain has ever seen. But they supported exit from the EU at every stage - in full knowledge that it was Johnson's central project. During the Parliamentary battle against a no-deal Brexit they implicitly supported this reactionary option throughout.

They refused throughout to accept that Brexit was a right-wing project driven primarily by racism, even when rising levels of racist violence was plain to see at every level of society. This included the SWP, the organisation that built the Anti-Nazi League in the 1970s and early 1980s, that now finds itself unable to identify blatant racism in the Brexit project from Boris Johnson himself to large numbers of Brexit voters, and have ended up tail-ending the CPB. They also refused to accept that racism is most strongly located in the traditional sections of the white industrial (or de-industrialised) sections of the white blue-collar working class.

During the battles over Brexit they avoided addressing either the class content or the implications of the 2016 referendum or the of the Johnson's election victory. Nor does John Rees's assessment of the Tory victory on the Counterfire site address Brexit as such, which he supported, and what its impact might be in terms of the future direction of the country and of the workers' movement but focuses on the election and why Labour lost - which was a result, he argues, because of disloyalty from McDonnell and others by expressing differences with Jeremy Corbyn over Remain and a second referendum - and who are paving the way for the Blairites.

Vilification

Another major factor that we might have underestimated in the election result was the impact of what was an unprecedented campaign of vilification against Jeremy Corbyn - antisemitism in particular, but also red-baiting. Thatcher's attacks on Scargill as the 'enemy within' were nothing comparted this.

The idea that Corbyn is or has ever been an antisemite is, and was, preposterous. He has been an opponent of all forms of racism for the whole of his active life. The establishment, however, could not tolerate the possibility of a pro-Palestinian Prime Minister. As a result of this he was constantly pilloried from the time he was elected Labour

leader with the enthusiastic support of the whole of the media and with the support of the Labour right as well as a number of pro-Zionist organisations per se. This message was not primarily aimed at the relatively small and diverse Jewish electorate but way beyond it at those who might already be worried that Corbyn was a little too 'extreme' on a range of questions. And after four years of consistent attack by the time of this election it had seriously more cut through than in 2017.

This problem was compounded by Corbyn's failure to deal decisively with antisemitism at a political level from the outset by insisting that opposition to the Israeli state is not antisemitic but the legitimate defence of an oppressed people. The apologies demand was a trap. Once Corbyn had apologised without defining what he was apologising for, the witch hunters could present it as admission that there was a serious problem as charged and fill in the blanks.

It's also worth pointing out that the behaviour of most of the mainstream media was very different in the 2017 election campaign and this one. Once the election was declared in 2017, much of the media, most notably the BBC, generally followed the purdah rules of fair play to all political parties. But the 2017 results gave the establishment a shock when Corbyn was much more successful than they predicted. So in 2019 the attacks on Labour and its leader absolutely did not slow down once the formal campaign started, as Roger Benjamin chronicles in his article on the SR website. [10]

Vacillation

Alongside the failure of the Corbyn team to deal decisively with antisemitism, was its failure to adopt a clear Remain position soon enough. This was already a problem in the European Parliament elections in May 2019 where Labour campaigned on the issue of uniting a divided country - which had no resonance what-so-ever but simply gave ground heavily to the LibDems. This was no doubt compounded by the influence of his personal advisers, Andrew Murray, Karrie Murphy, and Seumas Milne.

This situation was changed for the better at the Labour Party conference in September last year when Corbyn eventually accepted the overwhelming opinion of party members and endorsed a position of a second referendum. The conference also decided that a second referendum would be in the Labour manifesto and that a Labour Government would negotiate the best (or the least worst) Brexit deal possible with the EU and then put it to a second referendum against a Remain option. This was a laudable attempt to reach across the divide in the Labour Party, and indeed the country, but by that time (it is now clear) that no one was listening. The reputational damage of vacillation, however, was already complete

Over the summer, the Labour leadership had stood aside whilst huge demonstrations had taken place demanding a second referendum. It had also entered into completely futile negotiations which were used by Theresa May to her own advantage.

Richard Seymour argues that it was wrong for Labour to ever have adopted a pro-second referendum position because it gave the right ammunition against him. This is wrong. There was a very strong case to be argued in favour of second referendum but it was never properly deployed by the Labour leadership. In fact things had changed so much that a second referendum had itself become a democratic demand. And since the only democratic way to change the 2016 referendum vote was a second referendum, nothing else could do it, so to rule it out was to accept the inevitability of Brexit.

Cameron's arrogance had taken him into a referendum based on a binary choice without a word to say as to where to what Brexit meant or where Britain would locate itself in the world if the vote went for Leave.

Was a Tory majority inevitable?

In hindsight, a Tory majority was probably inevitable, and the reason, as John McDonnell has insisted was Brexit. The centre-ground was already gone and no-one was listening - if they ever had been.

In in such a polarised situation, Jeremy Corbyn's stance of uniting the party (and/or the country) across the Brexit divide was doomed. If Labour had taken a firm Remain position much earlier, which it should have done because it was right, it would haemorrhage votes to the Tories and to the Brexit party. If it had taken a Brexit position - which would have been politically disastrous since it would have meant supporting a reactionary Tory project - it would have haemorrhaged support to the LibDems and the Greens which it did anyway. As Richard Seymour puts it: 'There seems to be no obvious solution on Brexit, nothing that would not be taken as 'treason' by someone.'

From the outset, Labour's divisions over Brexit were more damaging and intractable than for any other party. While 60 per cent of its supporters (and 90 of its members) supported Remain, 70 per cent of Labour's constituencies supported Brexit and many of these were prepared to desert Labour for the Tories or the Brexit Party to achieve that aim. This mean that unless something shifted, Labour could not stop a Tory majority - and when the results came in it became clear that nothing had shifted.

The Lib Dems and the Greens, in contrast, have always been heavily Remain, as has Plaid and the SNP. This is why Labour did not want this to be a Brexit election, the problem is that once it was called it was never going to be anything else. The Tory party has been famously split over the EU for 30 years, with its differences descending into open warfare after the 2016 referendum result.

These divisions, however, were brutally resolved by Johnson and Cummings in advance of the election, as mentioned above, by expelling all of those who opposed them in Parliament and then barring them from standing as Tory candidates. This was a remarkable achievement. The Tory Party was effectively transformed into the Brexit Party overnight with the added advantage (for the Tories) of sending Farage into the wilderness. (It is too soon to say whether Farage can resurrect his base again at the end of 2020 if Johnson concedes an extension or backs down on a hard Brexit.) In any case, Tories are more likely to vote in line with their class interests, i.e., stopping Labour, when it comes to the crunch.

In any event, Labour haemorrhaged votes in both directions, with most going to the pro-Remain parties. The polling analyst firm Datapraxis, Paul Mason points out, calculated that a maximum of 800,000 Labour voters switched to the Tories, while the Lib Dems gained at least 1.1 million votes from Labour, the Greens 339,000 and the SNP a quarter of a million. 'Labour, in short, lost nearly twice as many votes to progressive pro-Remain parties as it did to the parties of Brexit and racism.' [11]

The right on the rampage

Since the election the Labour right have (unsurprisingly) been queuing up to denounce Corbynism as responsible for the defeat. According to them the election was lost because Corbyn was too far to the left, and the manifesto far too radical. The Corbyn leadership, they claim, had paid 'insufficient attention' to the issue of immigration and to English nationalism: i.e., they had continued to oppose both.

Former Blair consigliere Andrew Adonis goes further and says "Corbyn and Corbynism have to be completely eradicated if Labour is to become an electable democratic socialist party". [12] Alan Johnson has said the same

thing, as did, unsurprisingly, Tony Blair. We have to fully engage with this struggle which is now opening up.

The right-wing Labour MP for Wolverhampton South East, Pat McFadden, as Andy Stowe points out in his recent article on the SR site, argues that 'Labour needs to rediscover its patriotic instincts'. [13] He argues that the internationalism that defines Corbyn makes him insufficiently patriotic. Even Rebecca Long-Bailey, the most left of the leadership candidates, is falling into the trap by talking about "progressive patriotism".

As Stowe also points out 'the *Morning Star*, paper of the CPB is pushing a similar view: 'From Brexit, at the most important level, to backing England in the World Cup, at the most trivial, large sections of the left are abandoning their posts at the first sign of trouble [...]'. This is an echo of the demand made on immigrants to support the English cricket team by the Tory cabinet minister Norman Tebbit.' [14]

This is a huge concession to racism. It goes alongside the argument, increasingly advanced by the right, and by sections of the left, that opposition by British workers to migration and the free movement of people is not racist but the legitimate defence of jobs against foreign workers.
 The fightback

Labour Party members should stay in the party, join the fight, and recruit more members. First indications are that this is indeed what is happening. People are staying in the party. gearing up for the fightback, and getting mobilised.

The first (and crucial) stage of this fightback is the election for Leader and Deputy Leader that is now under way.

The Labour right is as dedicated as ever to smashing Corbynism and all it stands for. They are convinced that this leadership election gives them the best opportunity they have had to shift political discourse and practice to the right and to accommodating to the system. They are not necessarily wrong - which means that defeating them and electing those that best represent the gains of Corbynism is an absolutely essential task.

The problem we have is that Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell are politically irreplaceable as central leaders of the party. They represent more than anyone else the possibilities of going beyond left social democracy on an anti-capitalist trajectory - which is why such levels of vitriol have been poured on their heads. They have been by far the most steadfast when it comes to promoting an anti-austerity, anti-war and largely anti-imperialist agenda. The most promising of the new MPs last time, Laura Pidcock, who might have been persuaded to stand, lost her seat, putting paid to that idea. We are therefore talking about candidates that fall short of the standards set by the outgoing leadership but who best represent their overall direction and are best equipped to defend the Corbyn project against the assaults it will now face.

SR has been upfront in criticising Corbyn or the Labour leadership team more generally when we have thought it necessary. On Brexit and on antisemitism in particular we have published many articles doing just that. But at the same time, we have emphasised what Corbyn and Corbynism represent, and now is not the time to change that approach when there is a real possibility that the result of this leadership election could result in a major setback.

PS:

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[1] 13 December 2019
"A disastrous election result: defend the gains of Corbynism".

[2] Ian Parker, 7 January 2020 "British Conservative Party tacks right".

[3] PolitcsHome blog, 22 December 2019 "Labour grandee urges MPs to 'refuse to accept' Rebecca Long-Bailey if she wins leadership".

[4] Phil Hearse, 10 January 2020 "Must Labour move right to secure its working-class base?".

[5] YouGov, 17 December 2019 "How Britain voted in the 2019 general election".

[6] The Independent 2 January 2020 "Labour doesn't need a 'likeable' leader - it needs a competent one".

[7] The Irish News, 13 December 2019 "Push for Irish Unity referendum 'almost inevitable' following hard Brexit".

[8] 17 December 2019 "Labour's Economic Plans: What Went Wrong?".

[9] Novara Media, 13 December 2019 "No False Consolations".

[10] 6 December 2019 "Post-Truth election?".

[11] Blog, 15 December 2019 "After Corbynism: Where next for Labour".

[12] 29 December 2019 Twitter.

[13] The Guardian, 29 December 2019 "Labour must believe in our country to stop it being torn apart ".

[14] Morning Star, 29 September 2018 "The working class has no use for liberal hand-wringing".