

The Final Days



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PARLIAMENT STREET

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A

Briefing Note

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partnership in policy

Executive Summary

In this paper I argue that whilst running on a message of “Get Brexit Done” is in tune with the vast majority of the British public in relation to Brexit, it is still not enough to get the Conservative Party “home and dry” in this election.

I suggest that the overarching message for the final days of the campaign must be one which factors in that elections are essentially comparative exercises; where you have to explain why it is good to vote for your candidate and why it would be bad to vote for your opponent.

It works if your candidate’s strength and your opponent’s weakness mirror each other. It enables you to encapsulate the campaign narrative into a single easy to remember phrase.

I suggest, for the final days, the overarching theme of the campaign be: “**A Uniter, Not A Divider.**” The message of unity is pitch perfect for this electorate.

I outline why **Coherence Trumps Consistency** in the 21st century in contrast to the politics of the 1990s.

In the late 1990s, when most of the modern Conservative Parliamentary Party earned their spurs message consistency was all the rage. The discipline of New Labour as personified by Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell was legendary.

It would be hard to argue the President Trump has any message consistency, yet his supporters view him as the only honest man in Washington. The reason is because whilst his message might not have consistency, it does have coherence. Therefore, Boris Johnson does not have to worry about traditional media gotcha question and tie himself in knots trying to reconcile all the things he has ever said with each other. It

would be difficult for any of us to say they have been consistent in everything throughout our lives. Voters don't expect politicians to be different to them.

I state that Corbyn managed a **hostile takeover of the Labour Party** with the help of those who opposed us going after Osama bin Laden, and the Taliban thugs giving him safe harbor, in the immediate aftermath of the September 11th 2001 attacks.

I recommend that the Conservative Party reach out to traditional Labour voters who feel that **they didn't leave the Labour Party, the Labour Party left them**. I also recommend that they inform the electorate that Corbyn's inner circle resemble a bunch of Mafia hoods, meaning putting Corbyn into power would be little different than **moving the Sopranos into Downing Street**.

I look back at the last time the Conservatives won elections in a time of peace and prosperity – Boris Johnson's own successful run for London Mayor in 2008 and the Crewe and Nantwich by-election that followed shortly thereafter.

I state that David Cameron was right in addressing concerns relating to **General Wellbeing** at a time of peace and prosperity. Given that the "*Age of Austerity*" is over, Boris Johnson ought to borrow a chapter from **David Cameron's pre-Financial Crisis Playbook** and speak to issues associated with *General Wellbeing* in the final days of this General Election campaign.

Boris Johnson should be talking about the issues of **Mental Health, Loneliness, Special Needs and Community**. He should also be speaking to the promise and problems caused by the rapid rate of technological change.

I also postulate that the public does not want radical promises of fundamental change or grandiose mission statements from the Conservative Party, and they wouldn't believe them from any political party.

What would be more effective both in the General Election campaign, and when returned to government, is to offer **a series of byte-sized policies** that the public will see as both cost effective and achievable. These should where appropriate use the rapid rate of technological change to have new technologies work for the public good.

The public want politicians to be on the level with them; **promising no more than they can deliver and delivering all that they promise.**

When put together, just like Lego, byte-sized policies can help us build a country as big as our imaginations. They can also make lives happier and easier. Boris Johnson can use these policies to **paint a picture of a Britain at peace with itself**, which in this time of political polarization is the country the people are looking for.

I will argue that the campaign has been extremely effective in its messaging of *Get Brexit Done* that it does not need much reinforcement in the final days.

Instead, the final days should be used to focus on non-Brexit policies designed to remind wavering Conservatives, who voted Remain in the referendum, that whilst they might disagree with the party on Brexit: The Conservative Party remains the one most in line with their values.

Introduction

In the aftermath of the Great War, Republican Senator from Ohio, Warren G. Harding successfully ran for the U.S. Presidency promising a *“return to normalcy.”*

Boris Johnson is essentially promising the British electorate the same thing with his pledge to *“Get Brexit Done.”*

The logic here is sound.

The electorate have had to weather a General Election in 2015, an EU referendum in 2016, another General Election in 2017, followed by two years of Parliamentary gridlock and now yet another General Election in 2019.

Everything that has happened over the preceding 4 years has conspired to tire the electorate out. Voters are looking for a “*time out*”, so they can catch their breathes after the recent political rollercoaster they have been on.

The logic behind “*Get Brexit Done*” is sound.

I think Boris Johnson has said “*Get Brexit Done*” even more than President Trump has said “*Make America Great Again*”.

The campaign has been so effective in getting this message out and neutralising the threat of the Brexit Party that further repetition of the message in the final days falls foul of the law of diminishing returns.

Lessons certainly can and should be drawn from previous election campaigns but no one campaign is identical to another. The Conservative campaign in this election has been the best in living memory.

There was a real danger that the Conservative campaign team would be fighting the General Election of 2017, instead of just drawing lessons from it.

This was my fear when the campaign started as too often in politics, we fight the last war or the last campaign. This campaign although there have been occasional stumbles and missteps, as with any political campaign, has had remarkably few.

It has also shown the dexterity to, when necessary, course correct which is essential in politics.

I am wary of that great quote from Theodore Roosevelt:

*“It is not the critic who counts;
not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles,
or where the doer of deeds could have done them better.
The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena,
whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood;
who strives valiantly; who errs,
who comes short again and again,
because there is no effort without error and shortcoming;
but who does actually strive to do the deeds;
who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions;
who spends himself in a worthy cause;
who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement,
and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly,
so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls
who neither know victory nor defeat.”*

In my role as Political Editor of *The Commentator* and occasional TV pundit, I have to be a critic at times but am always well aware that it is all too easy to criticize when you are not in *the thick of it*; especially because I have been in *the thick of it* in campaigns myself.

The problem with always being in *the thick of it* is that you are so often dealing with things incoming that you do not have the time to pause and take stock of your successes and reassess the situation on the ground.

What I seek to do in this paper is to offer my analysis of how I think the Conservative Party should campaign in the final days of this General Election campaign; drawing from experience leading Conservative under-30s campaigns (2008-11), as Research Director for a Republican Congressional campaign (2012) and as the founder and Chief Executive of *Parliament Street* (2012 – present).

This is not however meant to be an academic paper like those *Parliament Street* typically publishes. The tone is deliberately meant to be more conversational and this paper is full of anecdotes from previous campaigns in history and personal asides. There are more than a few pop culture references. Some of what I say is tongue-in-cheek.

Another academic paper wouldn't quite frankly be read at this point in a General Election campaign anyway. This paper even if it fails to move the campaign in any meaningful way is also meant to be entertaining although I do hope it provides some food for thought.

It is at time of writing Tuesday 10th December and we are in the final days of the 2019 General Election.

Many think that when it comes to this election the Conservatives "got this." I would caution against that attitude citing the lessons of the Labour Party in 1992.

So confident of victory was Labour in the 1992 General Election that their then Party leader, Neil Kinnock virtually declared victory days before the actual vote at the infamous Sheffield rally.

It wasn't "*all right*" for Labour then and it certainly isn't "*all right*" for the Conservatives now.

A victory for the Conservative Party on Thursday looks likely but in the reporting of that lies the seeds of potential ruin. Campaigns can and have in the past been the victims of their own success.

If traditional Conservative voters do not see a Jeremy Corbyn premiership as a very real possibility, they might not turn out in sufficient numbers or even worse, if they voted Remain in the referendum, register a protest vote on the issue of Brexit in an attempt to get have a hung Parliament force Boris Johnson into a second referendum.

It has to be reiterated that the sort of tactical voting, as being promoted by John Major and Tony Blair, is being pushed by politicians who are trying to be too clever by half and is likely to fall foul of the law of unintended consequences. Such tactical voting would only serve to hand Jeremy Corbyn the keys to Number 10.

Instead, I believe in the final days of this campaign there be a pivot to reassure those wavering Conservative voters, who supported Remain, that the Conservative Party is the one most in line with their values.

When you normally get these sorts of briefing papers, they are written by those who are seeking to push an agenda in line with their own personal political prejudices.

This certainly isn't the case with this paper; although it does contain a few self-congratulatory notes designed to wind-up certain critics.

I supported Donald Trump even before went down that fabled golden escalator to announce his candidacy for President and I was arguing that we should leave the European Union as far back as 2002. I am certainly not trying to push some liberal agenda.

I consider Boris Johnson to be very much a liberal Conservative; more in the mold of Arnold Schwarzenegger than President Trump.

I was even more than a little concerned about this when Boris Johnson ran for the leadership but all the right people seem to hate him so I cannot help but like him.

I have spent a large portion of my life either involved in or studying political campaigns and have developed a certain hard-headedness about them. I also know that although I draw many lessons from American politics in this paper that Britain is not America.

I believe, despite my own personal politics, that Boris Johnson should, in these final days, remind the British electorate that in the words of Ed Vaizey he is *“continuity Cameron.”*

Before we get to all that, in the immortal words of Talking Heads:

*“And you may ask yourself, well
How did I get here?”*

How did we get here?

The Brexit “Pop-Up” Party

Nigel Farage was on the ball when he realized that the behavior of our elected politicians had led the British public to finally lose faith with the political class. He saw parallels between this and what happened in the United States following the failure of their own political class, in the wake of the Watergate scandal, which led to the resignation of President Richard Nixon.

He knew that from then onwards, successful political candidates in America had won by campaigning against Washington.

He ran his successful Brexit Party effort during this year’s European Parliamentary elections, as a campaign led not by Westminster insiders, but genuine political outsiders. He realized that no one involved in Westminster politics could escape responsibility for the legislative mess in which we found ourselves.

He ran his campaign as one not just to reaffirm the result of the 2016 referendum but also to give a bloody nose to business-as-usual politics in Westminster.

The collapse of UKIP had allowed Nigel Farage to transcend Westminster party politics at the perfect time. He no longer had a dog in the Westminster party politics fight.

For many voters, the Brexit Party was viewed as a “pop-up” political party for the purpose of the European Parliamentary elections and to send a message to Westminster.

His perceptiveness regarding the change within the British electorate gave way to falling back into habit.

Instead of declaring victory he sought to turn the Brexit Party into a UKIP 2.0 without the baggage. What he failed to recognize was that, that was not what his voters wanted. Neither Boris Johnson nor Nigel Farage have truly appreciated the extent of overlap between their supporters.

Nigel Farage's triumph in the European Parliamentary elections made Boris Johnson's premiership inevitable.

The Regeneration Game

The key to the Conservative Party's traditional success can be found in [a 2007 Dead Ringers sketch](#), in which Tony Blair, as played by the excellent Rory Bremner, states that New Labour is, if it is anything, about renewal before collapsing onto the floor and, in true Doctor Who style, regenerating into the figure of David Tennant, who most famously played the 11th Doctor.

When the first Doctor Who, William Hartnell, started to fall ill and have trouble remembering his lines, his wife went to the show's producers, to say that Bill could not fairly be asked to do the program for much longer. It was at this point that the show runners created a brilliant concept, which would allow the program to refresh itself and consistently adapt to the times, keeping it relevant. The Doctor, it was decided, due to after all being an alien, had the fantastical ability to regenerate into a new form, as the previous one grew old and tired.

Hartnell being unaware of his wife's intervention, did not want to go, but told producers that there was only one man in the country who could replace him and that was Patrick Troughton. Physically, Troughton could not have looked more different to Hartnell. He was considerably shorter, but Hartnell realized Troughton could play this to the show's advantage.

The first episode of Doctor Who famously aired on the day of the Kennedy assassination, meaning the show had to, unusually for the time, be re-aired some days later. The Prime Minister at that time was Sir. Alec Douglas-Home, who had ascended to the top job while being a member of the House of Lords and only became an MP after renouncing his peerage in [the tradition of Tony Benn](#), the erstwhile Viscount Stansgate, and fighting a by-election for the Commons seat of Kinross and Western Perthshire. This little aside illustrates the law of unintended consequences, as it was through socialist Tony Benn renouncing his peerage that a sitting member of the House of Lords was able to have a mechanism with which he could ascend to the premiership in the second half of the 20th century. Douglas-Home, like his predecessor Harold

MacMillan, came in a long line of Tory paternalists, portraying themselves often as the nation's wise and kindly grandfather. It was in this mold that the 1st Doctor Who was fashioned. Indeed, he was introduced as the grandfather of the 1st companion, Susan Foreman.

By 1967, Britain was deep in the midst of the “white heat of the technological revolution.” The country had its own pop-culture savvy premier in the guise of pipe smoking, celebrity hand shaking Harold Wilson. Although still with its fair share of old Etonians, the Tory Party was now led by grammar school educated Ted Heath.

In terms of pop-culture, London was truly swinging, with the King's Road in Chelsea acting as Cultural HQ, where it would not be uncommon to walk past a Rolling Stone or two, or Bob Dylan. This was the era, so different from our own, that was comically brought to life by Mike Myers in his Austin Powers series of films. It was in this cultural and political environment that Troughton was asked to take on the mantle of the Doctor.

Instead of playing the role as Hartnell had, a kindly grandfather, Troughton reinvented the Doctor as what he described as a “cosmic hobo”, stumbling from adventure to adventure, whilst playing a flute or some such instrument. This put the show once more at the centre of the cultural zeitgeist and made it relevant to a new generation of young people.

The principle tenants of the show remained the same; Troughton still had a Police Box, which was bigger on the inside than on the out, and still had adventures in time and space. The key concept remained the same, but it was renewed to become relevant for the next generation. When times moved on, so did the show. Troughton himself was replaced by Jon Pertwee, who was then replaced by Tom Baker and so on....

It is the ability to adapt to the world around it that has enabled Doctor Who to become the longest running science fiction program in television. Another great British franchise, that of James Bond, has been known to pull a similar trick.

Of course, the founders of the great British tradition of regeneration are the Conservative Party, which is the longest running political party in the world. The Conservative Party, as brilliantly illustrated by Quintin Hogg in his 1947 book, *The Case for Conservatism*, has traditionally found its role as one of providing a moderating influence on the dominant ideology of the day. In the 19th century this was classical liberalism and in the mid-20th century was socialism.

In modern times, the Conservative Party showed its ability to regenerate with the succession of John Major to Margaret Thatcher; the Tory Party, not wanting to reward dagger-wielding Michael Heseltine for his betrayal of Thatcher, put their faith in the relatively unknown figure of John Major.

Major pieced the public consciousness in mid-1989, when Thatcher promoted him to Foreign Secretary and four months later, Chancellor of the Exchequer. He only first entered the Cabinet as Chief Secretary to the Treasury in 1987 but most people, myself included, would struggle to name who holds that office at the best of times. This meant that upon the resignation of Mrs. Thatcher, Mr. Major had only spent little over a year in the public eye and as a fixture in the public's living rooms through news broadcasts and front-page headlines.

Major was therefore not saddled with the baggage of the preceding decade of Tory rule, in which many difficult, but necessary decisions were taken. Major then had a year to establish himself in the eyes of the public, before running what must have been the most successful election campaign in Conservative Party history.

Major's come from behind campaign, which secured the Conservative Party a record 4th term, was in large part due to Major selling himself as a different kind of Conservative Prime Minister, representing a new, classless Conservative Party. In the extremely effective *John Major: The Movie* Party Political Broadcast, he was able to amalgamate his own unique life story with the Conservative message of aspiration. Major had grown up as a working-class lad from Brixton, who despite having only 6 O-

levels was able to make it to a senior position in the banking sector before reaching the highest office in the land.

Major also “kept it real” by campaigning on soapboxes, up and down the country. Major would receive the most votes of any Prime Minister in British political history. Although, he is probably best remembered for the 1997 Conservative General Election defeat, it can be argued that this occurred due to a failure of the Conservative Party to renew itself and John Major, a man who once wanted to run away and join the circus forgetting the old maxim of the great ringleaders “to exit the stage, with the audience begging for more.”

Major had the year preceding Thatcher’s downfall to establish himself with the British people, while still being a fresh face with the electorate, and still be relatively fresh when running against Kinnock, who by that point had been Leader of the Opposition for over half a decade himself.

The success of Nigel Farage and his Brexit Party precipitated a new Tory regeneration cycle, with the resignation of Theresa May and the inevitable Conservative Party leadership race that followed, which would ultimately be won by Boris Johnson.

As a pronounced supporter of President Trump, I was slightly irritated by the comparisons made, during the leadership race, between the man who is President and the man who would become Prime Minister. However, it was obvious from the scenes at August’s G7 summit and by the President’s full-throated support of Mr. Johnson on his must-read Twitter feed that the two have developed something of a rapport and seem to get along famously. That having been said, during the G7, Boris Johnson did extremely politely tell President Trump about his differing attitude on the matter of free trade, saying that Britain had benefitted for over 200 years as a result of it, and regarding the US-China trade war, he was in favour of trade peace. The polite and respectful way his difference was expressed meant that it was taken by the President as a slight, honest disagreement between good friends.

Because of Mr. Johnson's role in the Brexit campaign, which was widely seen as a populist revolt against the establishment, many have mistakenly taken Mr. Johnson for a populist. It must be remembered that before he spearheaded the Vote Leave campaign, he was the successful Mayor of liberal London.

As Margaret Thatcher's favourite newspaper columnist in the later days of her premiership, it is unsurprising that Mr. Johnson should hold views that are in simpatico with those that were held by the Iron Lady. Boris is a firm believer in free trade, as is evident by the appointment of free market think tank darling, Lis Truss as Secretary of State for International Trade.

You might even say that Boris Johnson is not a conservative, if such a thing truly exists these days. One of Baroness Thatcher's favourite tomes was *The Constitution of Liberty (1960)* by F.A.Hayek. The final chapter of the book is entitled *Why I Am Not a Conservative*, in which Hayek places himself in the tradition of the Whigs of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Due to the rise of socialism, the Conservative Party became a big tent for those who in another century would have been considered more classically liberal than traditionally tory. Thatcherism was a strangely revolutionary doctrine for the Conservative Party, at the time. Mr. Johnson through the bold leadership he has offered so far is proving himself to be every bit as revolutionary as Mrs. Thatcher was.

Donald Trump comes from a different tradition within the centre-right coalition. His views on trade and on speaking softly(-ish) and carrying a big stick, as well as the mastery of the media of his time have more in common with the Republicanism of Theodore Roosevelt, the original Republican populist, than it does the more recent liberal Republicanism of Ronald Reagan.

The Conservative Party of Boris Johnson bears an uncanny resemblance to the Republican Party of compassionate conservatism and George W. Bush, before his Presidency came to be dominated by *The War on Terror*. The American leader Boris

most resembles, in style and in policy, is the only recent, successful major Republican in California State-wide politics, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Schwarzenegger, who is a friend of Mr. Johnson, was also a bold, broad strokes leader who mixed classical liberal economics (he is an admirer of Milton Friedman) with liberal social policy and climate change awareness.

Also, like Arnold Schwarzenegger, Boris Johnson is what journalists call “good copy.” Since bursting into public life, Boris has been the subject of water cooler, and smoke break, chatter in offices across the nation.

It appears to be a political reality that counterintuitively even negative headlines make people vote for Mr. Johnson. The argument goes that no one can generate buzz quite like Boris.

In this respect, he is like Donald Trump. We have seen how, across the Atlantic, Candidate and then President Trump has managed to move seamlessly from controversy to controversy – racking up election victory, after election victory.

The theory goes that, especially during the Republican Presidential Primaries, that being the topic of permanent discussion on cable news gave Donald Trump millions of dollars’ worth of free media; making him the candidate to beat because he was the candidate everyone was talking about.

This Trumpian approach also had the additional benefit of starving the campaigns of his opponents of the oxygen of publicity, which is vital for any political candidate, if they are going to win.

Donald Trump, who moved straight from headlining a top-rated reality TV show to the Presidency of the United States; transferred many of the TV production skills he had learnt from *The Apprentice* to the process of political campaigning and then later, governing itself. In doing so he changed the process of political campaigning forever.

The campaign rallies that are now synonymous with Donald Trump are actually micromanaged by Trump himself. He dictates the fonts to be used on all campaign banners and placards and personally selects the music for the playlist broadcast across the stadium where the rally is being held.

When Donald Trump appears on television the first thing, he seeks to check is the lighting, to ensure that he appears on television exactly as he wants to be seen.

Whether, or not, you like his politics and policies, Donald Trump must be recognized as the master of branding. His image is carefully crafted to ensure that in his every public appearance the impression the audience is left with is that of Donald Trump as a winner.

Middle America knew Donald Trump was a problem-solving businessman, because in addition to his actual record in business, he played a problem-solving businessman on TV. During the years he headlined *The Apprentice* this was the image of Donald Trump, which was presented unchallenged, that was transmitted into living rooms across the American heartland.

The main boardroom for the Trump Organisation was a set designed by the show's producers, upon learning that no such room existed in Trump Tower, because Mr. Trump had no need for one. The fictitious boardroom was built to resemble that seen in the iconic classic of modern cinema, *Network*.

In a pivotal scene in the film Howard Beale, played by Peter Finch, is confronted by Arthur Jensen, the chairman of the board for the conglomerate that owns the television network, which broadcasts Beale's show (the fictitious *UBS*). Beale has become known as the *mad prophet of the airwaves*, who although obviously unhinged, was able to tap into the anger felt by modern Americans about a world spiraling ever faster out of control.

Jensen, played by Ned Beatty, begins the scene standing at the top of the boardroom staring down Beale who is sat at the bottom of the table, down the entire length of the dark mahogany table.

In a booming voice worth of Charlton Heston's Moses, Jensen tells Beale:

You have meddled with the primal forces of nature, Mr. Beale, and I won't have it! Is that clear?! Do you think you've merely stopped a business deal? That is not the case. The Arabs have taken billions of dollars out of this country, and now they must put it back! It is ebb and flow, tidal gravity! It is ecological balance! You are an old man who thinks in terms of nations and peoples. There are no nations. There are no peoples. There are no Russians. There are no Arabs. There are no third worlds. There is no West. There is only one holistic system of systems, one vast and immane, interwoven, interacting, multi-variate, multi-national dominion of dollars. Petro-dollars, electro-dollars, multi-dollars, reichmarks, rins, rubles, pounds, and shekels. It is the international system of currency which determines the totality of life on this planet. That is the natural order of things today. That is the atomic and sub-atomic and galactic structure of things today! And you have meddled with the primal forces of nature, and You Will Atoned!

Am I getting through to you, Mr. Beale? You get up on your little twenty-one-inch screen and howl about America and democracy. There is no America. There is no democracy. There is only IBM and ITT and AT&T and DuPont, Dow, Union Carbide, and Exxon. Those are the nations of the world today. What do you think the Russians talk about in their councils of state - Karl Marx? They get out their linear programming charts, statistical decision theories, minimax solutions, and compute the price-cost probabilities of their transactions and investments, just like we do. We no longer live in a world of nations and ideologies, Mr. Beale. The world is a college of corporations, inexorably determined by the immutable by-laws of business. The world is a business, Mr. Beale. It has been since man crawled out of the slime. And our children will live, Mr. Beale, to see that perfect world in which there's no war or famine, oppression or brutality. One vast and ecumenical holding company, for whom all men will work to

serve a common profit, in which all men will hold a share of stock, all necessities provided, all anxieties tranquilized, all boredom amused. And I have chosen you, Mr. Beale, to preach this evangel.

The lighting, the dark mahogany table and Beatty's booming voice are all meant to convey the impression of a power, which is almost divinely ordained.

This is certainly how the trembling Howard Beale is supposed to have taken the speech which includes the phrase *"The world is a business, Mr. Beale. It has been since man crawled out of the slime."*, as if it were as profound as God handing Moses the tablets containing *The Ten Commandments* atop Mount Sinae.

As Jensen, who has now walked down the entire length of the boardroom, wraps up his sermon on behalf of Corporate America he places a hand on the now trembling Howard Beale's shoulder and tells him *"I have chosen you to preach this evangel."*

When met with the response *"Why me?"*, Jensen manages a reply which is both humorous and profound in its truth:

Because you're on television, dummy. Sixty million people watch you every night of the week, Monday through Friday.

Just to ensure that the biblical overtone from this scene are not lost on any of the film's audience, Finch's emotionally fragile Beale closes the scene saying, *"I have seen the face of God."* to which Jensen replies *"You just might be right, Mr. Beale."*

It was from the atheistic of this scene, with all of its religious connotation, the atheistic for the TV Trump Tower boardroom, as seen on *The Apprentice*, was derived.

The impression of Trump as this titan of industry, with echoes of Beatty's Jensen from Network, was exactly the one the producers of *The Apprentice* wanted the audience to

be left with after hearing Trump issue his immortal catchphrase “You’re Fired!” at the end of each episode.

Boris Johnson is known as Al, or Alexander to his family and close friends. The Prime Minister has sought to demarcate the private person and public figure. So “Boris” is the public persona and as with anyone we like to craft our public persona to highlight certain attributes and characteristics whilst keeping other attributes and characteristics for our private lives.

The manner in which the Prime Minister has separated the public from the private, in the separation between Al or Alexander and Boris have allowed him to craft a very memorable character. It is one which has served him well over time but it is also one which draws a stark contrast to the one the Donald J. Trump for President campaign pushed out of their candidate.

Alexander Johnson has been very successful in playing the “Boris” part – slightly bumbling, a bit scruffy but still razor sharp intellectually – an absent-minded professor – for two decades in the public eye. It would be safe to say that this is the image of Boris Johnson that is firmly embedded in the popular consciousness.

He has used this character effectively as a shield from the sorts of negative publicity, which would have had other politicians fighting for their political lives.

The jovial character of Boris Johnson was first introduced to most voters on the popular weekly satirical program *Have I Got News for You?*. He presented himself as an overgrown *Just William*. So beloved was this character that he was given a Get-Out-Of-Jail-Free card by the electorate-at-large who took his shenanigans in their stride, chalking them down to it being *Just Boris*.

In the focus group managed New Labour era of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, where Labour ministers appeared as if they had come straight off the assembly line, with pressed suit and talking points ready to deliver on demand; Boris Johnson appeared as

something of a welcome break from a politics which had become prepackaged to the point of dullness.

From September 2001 onwards the public have been presented with a succession of awful events, which have made many voters reluctant to even turn on the news, as it would leave even the most sunnily disposed amongst them depressed after.

The public has had to live through the September 11th attacks on the Twin Towers in New York, Pennsylvania and Washington D.C.; with the threat of growing domestic terrorism and those homegrown attacks which came in its wake.

Whether it be the attacks on 7/7 or those more recently in outside Parliament, at London Bridge and in Manchester in 2017, or the attack only last week again at London Bridge; the public have felt less safe as a result.

Additionally in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, Britain which had as a nation tried to avoid major conflicts, to varying degrees of success since Suez, found itself a country with a number of foreign entanglements in overseas conflicts be it the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and later Libya, or military operations in Syria; Britain seemed to be engaged in endless wars.

The Great Recession of 2008 meant that the Conservative Party had to once assume the mantle of the Daddy Party. To adapt, for our purposes, from a recent skit by US liberal, comedian Bill Maher on his weekly politically incorrect HBO satirical late-night show:

“Labour has traditionally been seen as the Mummy Party; the nurturers, the caregivers and the compassionate ones. Labour worried about healthcare and education. The Conservatives were the Daddy Party: concerned about security and fiscal responsibility. They took this role very seriously; the no nonsense keep you safe, pay the bills Party”

With the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour Party leader, the Labour Party ruled itself out as a responsible Party of government. It is now incumbent on the Conservative Party to be both the Daddy and the Mummy Party in this election. `

Faced with an ongoing terrorist threat, overseas wars, a financial crisis followed by years of austerity; Boris Johnson as London Mayor became a national treasure because he epitomized our collective need for optimism.

After the political gridlock of the previous few years, the electorate want a leader offering them optimism. The image that made Boris Johnson both famous and Teflon to incoming political attacks that of Boris Johnson as a British original is not the one we are being presented with in this campaign.

Boris did not answer a question from Sophy Ridge earlier in this campaign for fear of getting in trouble with his handlers. This does not bode well. Another politician who had an army of handlers was Hillary Clinton. Throughout the entirety of her 2016 Presidential campaign they felt that they “*got this.*” They lost.

In trying to smarten up his image with a shorter, less scruffy haircut and by placing him on a diet designed to make him less portly the campaign is in essence accepting that the criticisms previously made of the Prime Minister are in some way valid. You don't course correct when you are on the right track.

Videos of the Prime Minister walking with purpose to what might as well be Chariots of Fire look far to staged managed to be taken seriously. It also looks inauthentic and one of the attributes Jeremy Corbyn tries to play on consistently in this campaign is a public perception that he is authentic.

When the campaign used pictures of Boris with Telford workmen and their homemade, *We love Boris* sign the Prime Minister looked at home – playing the part he was born to play. It is also the Boris that the voters have come to know and love for two decades.

This Prime Minister has real grassroots appeal and no political consultant or PR professional can manufacture that. Rather than try and mold Boris Johnson into what they think a Prime Minister should look and sound like, I recommend that in the final days of this campaign his handlers ***Let Boris, Be Boris.***

In the late 1990s, when most of the modern Conservative Parliamentary Party earned their spurs message consistency was all the rage. The discipline of New Labour as personified by Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell was legendary.

It would be hard to argue the President Trump has any message consistency, yet his supporters view him as the only honest man in Washington. The reason is because whilst his message might not have consistency, it does have coherence. Therefore, Boris Johnson does not have to worry about traditional media gotcha question and tie himself in knots trying to reconcile all the things he has ever said with each other. It would be difficult for any of us to say they have been consistent in everything throughout our lives. Voters don't expect politicians to be different to them and ***Coherence Trumps Consistency.***

The hostile takeover of the Labour Party

When Jeremy Corbyn was elected leader of the Labour Party in September 2015, he was primarily treated as a come-from-nowhere candidate, who had spent his career lingering on the backbenches. However, in actual fact, he was a key player in stirring up internal Labour Party dissent regarding Tony Blair's advocacy for taking military action against Saddam Hussain.

Jeremy Corbyn was elected to the steering committee of the *Stop the War* coalition in October 2001, less than a month after the unspeakable tragedy that was September 11th, 2001. Contrary to popular opinion the *Stop the War* coalition was formed not to oppose the Iraq War but the War in Afghanistan, the country harbouring the terrorist Osama bin Laden, who has masterminded the evil attacks.

As one can imagine the sort of people that would form such a group would be thoroughly nasty people with abhorrent views. Such views would include a belief that the terrorist attacks were America's "chicken's coming home to roost" and calls for the extinction of Israel. Although the socialist campaign group of Labour MPs in Parliament all oppose war, there was not a direct correlation between membership of that group and the *Stop the War* coalition. In this we can find the origins of the differing approaches between Jeremy Corbyn and his Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell.

Corbyn was elected as Chair of the *Stop the War* coalition in September 2011, a position he only relinquished when ascending to the Labour Party leadership, only four years later. As a result of Ed Miliband's change in the rules for Labour Party leadership contests, a large proportion of those involved in the *Stop the War* coalition joined the Labour Party to support their chairman. As such, the Labour Party was taken over by an organization whose membership had swelled in 2003, in direct opposition to for Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair's foreign policy. It is from this that came the anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism that has poisoned the party of Her Majesty's Opposition.

To view Corbyn as existing in some line of succession from previous Labour socialists, such as Michael Foot and Tony Benn, would be doing them a great disservice. The tradition which Mr. Corbyn represents is something altogether far more sinister. He has managed a hostile takeover of the Labour Party. He was viewed as a somewhat harmless grandfatherly figure when the public first became popularly aware of him, but as events have shown, he was, and remains, a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Although, I maintain that Jeremy Corbyn is not a politician in the mold of Tony Benn that has not prevented the Labour Party leader from viewing himself as Mr. Benn's political protégé, even voting to leave the European Economic Community in the 1975 referendum.

Despite this Europe could never be said to be an issue which set Jeremy Corbyn's passions afire. Whilst for most of his career, Mr. Corbyn was thought of as something of a patron saint of lost causes, Brexit would not be one of them; perhaps it is because of who he would be asked to share a stage with.

During the late-90s and early-00s, Mr. Benn was a mainstay of anti-EU events, often as the solitary speaker from the left; this was at a time when the entire embryonic Brexit movement couldn't even fill a church hall. Mr. Corbyn did not join him; this was the rare occasion in which the disciple decided not to follow the prophet.

For the overwhelming majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) so fundamental is membership of the European Union considered to our nation's future that for the overwhelming majority Labour MPs it transcends whatever internal factional squabbles that might have come before.

In the immediate aftermath of the 2016 referendum, the PLP was fuming due to the consequences of Mr. Corbyn's inaction during the referendum campaign and, as a result, over two dozen members of his Shadow Cabinet resigned with 172 of his MPs supporting a motion of no confidence, in their leader.

If Mr. Corbyn had come out and made support for a “*People’s Vote*” he would have been able to finally unite the Labour Party around his leadership; in an even greater way than he was able to divide it due to his laissez-faire approach to the 2016 referendum.

The anger felt in 2016 would have turned into appreciation felt in the present. In one move he would have been able to unite the Labour Party’s living former leaders, with whom there have been tense relations, behind his leadership. He would have in one move neutralized the attack from internal critics with the Labour Party that he was somehow dangerous on foreign policy, as the Labour foreign policy establishment would have considered him to have been right on the most defining foreign policy decision in a generation.

Jeremy Corbyn could have put Theresa May’s government into check mate during the last Parliament, if he had made support for a “*People’s Vote*” official Labour Party policy. He would have had the enthusiastic support of the Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party, as well as being able to count on the support of at least 20 dyed-in-the-wool Remain Conservative MPs.

With an activist Speaker, in John Bercow, who was willing to depart from precedent and to challenge the primacy of the executive in submitting Commons business, Mr. Corbyn could have passed a bill that mandated the government to hold a “*People’s Vote*”, through the House.

Had he done so at around this time last year, we would no longer be leaving the European Union.

Whereas in the 2016 referendum, the Leave campaign had spent two years building an impressive infrastructure, whilst David Cameron tried to run a campaign on the back of a sticky note, the situation would have been reversed this time. Leave was hopelessly unprepared, while Remain was ready to out-organize and out-message a potential Leave 2 campaign.

Some of the main forces behind the initial Leave campaign would not have been able to return to the fray if there had been a 2nd referendum, at around that time. The now closed investigation into Aaron Banks would have taken him off the table, and as the Board of Vote Leave was under investigation by the Electoral Commission, at the time, they would have been ineligible to hold any role in a potential Leave 2 campaign.

Until the establishment of the Brexit Party to fight the 2019 European Parliamentary elections, and the election of Boris Johnson as Conservative Party leader and Prime Minister, in every significant way the Brexit camp managed to get everything wrong after the 2016 referendum. The notable exceptions to the rule are *The Trump Arms festivities in July 2018* and the *Brexit Advance Alternative Party Conference* in October 2018.

When the history of Brexit is written Jeremy Corbyn will go down as one of a handful of people without whom Brexit would never have happened; the others being Nigel Farage, David Cameron, Dominic Cummings, George Osborne and Donald Trump.

Given the margin of victory in the 2016 referendum was only 4%, it is very likely that if Mr. Corbyn had campaigned hard for remain, enough traditional Labour voters in northern working-class seats would have switched from Leave to Remain out of tribal political loyalty. By being noticeably absent for the majority of the 2016 referendum, Jeremy Corbyn enabled the narrative to be dominated by, the media favourite of, Tory Civil War.

This meant that voters in places such as Sunderland were able to vote Leave and feel that they would be giving an “austerity” Conservative Prime Minister in David Cameron, a bloody nose at the same time. It also meant Nigel Farage was able to push the Leave message in these areas relatively unchallenged by anyone of similar renown.

Although the 2016 referendum was about Britain's membership of the EU, the vote also gave those often disenfranchised by the UK electoral system and the dominance of party bosses, the ability to throw a Molotov cocktail at the political establishment.

Indeed, the main narrative pushed by George Osborne and the Remain campaign, "*Project Fear*" was that Brexit would hurt bankers; the same bankers voters blamed for causing the *Great Recession* in 2008.

During the referendum the Remain camp did not try to sell the public on the positive case for staying in the European Union and they lost. They did not learn any lessons from their 2016 defeat. They have spent their time, since the result, scolding the electorate and telling the voters that they made a mistake. This has only served to make people more entrenched in their respective positions.

The Remain strategy became one of trying to wear Brexit voters down; seeking to prevent Brexit through a process of death by 1000 papercuts. The theory was that if they were able to turn Brexit into a long and drawn out process story; the public would eventually throw their collective arms up in the air and go "*forget it*".

At the time of writing, it looks like this was the wrong strategy but we should forget how dangerously close to working it came.

Thankfully, the Remain camp, just like the Democrats in the US, forgot the fundamental rule of politics in a democracy – the electorate is never wrong. Forgetting this turned out to be their fatal flaw.

Tony Blair, the only senior politician on the Remain side who seemed to realise this, became Prime Minister in 1997 precisely because he acknowledged that the Labour Party had not been fit for purpose in the 1980s and accepted the fundamentals of Margaret Thatcher's market reforms. He put it to the electorate that the voters had been right and that the Labour Party had had to change. As leader of the Labour Party he had listened. In his first Party Conference as Labour leader, he abolished *Clause 4*,

the part in their constitution, originally drafted in 1918, which set out as an aim of the Party “the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange”.

He saw this as symbolic of his leading a new Labour Party. He would no longer be tied to the dogma of the past. Just in case anyone didn't get the memo, he renamed his Party, New Labour. The electorate might have been right to vote for the Conservatives in the 1980s faced with the alternative of a socialist Labour Party. Blair did not challenge this instead he moved towards the electorate and instead of scolding the electorate presented them with a fresh choice – a New Labour Party promising fiscal prudence with a social conscience. That this New Labour Party would leave the country in an economic mess, just like all previous Labour governments, is by-the-by when analyzing the effectiveness of Blair's messagecraft.

If the Remain camp had listened to the electorate and sought to offer real solutions to those underlying problems, which were unrelated to the European Union, that in part contributed to the Brexit vote, we would probably be in a very different political situation today.

The New Labour Party did not get rid of all the vestiges of the old Labour Party it came from. New Labour did not outlive the political careers of its architects Peter Mandelson, Gordon Brown and Tony Blair.

After the 2010 General Election, Labour found itself once more in opposition and with the first real leadership contest since 1994. They elected Ed Miliband and reverted back to socialist type. In retrospect, it appears quite quaint that Conservatives thought Ed Miliband akin to a *Red Menace* when faced with a Leader of the Opposition who is truly dangerous in Jeremy Corbyn.

With Jeremy Corbyn's hostile takeover of the Labour Party, he brought with him some of the most thuggish elements of the hard left and those anti-Semitic elements surrounding the *Stop the War* coalition.

In February, 7 Labour MPs, most prominent amongst them Chuka Umunna and Luciana Berger, announced they were leaving the Labour Party in order to form a new kind of politics. This would begin with the establishment of *The Independent Group* of MPs.

Another Labour MP, Ian Austin also left the Labour Party that week although he didn't join the Independent Group of MPs, he became an independent MP. He was so appalled by how the Labour Party had changed under Mr. Corbyn that he is now telling traditional Labour voters to vote for the Conservative Party in this General Election.

The Independent Group would eventually become the political party *Change UK* which would crash and burn in spectacular fashion at the European Parliamentary elections. Chuka Umunna and Luciana Berger would eventually go off to join the Liberal Democrats and are standing for the Liberal Democrats in two London seats during this General Election.

However, in February, the media did not know whether *The Independent Group* would be a new force in British politics or, as it turns out, a flash in the pan. So for the week in which those seven Labour MPs defected *The Independent Group* dominated the entire news cycle with the narrative being that of the group's choosing that the Labour party had been taken over by extremists and as a result, to paraphrase Ronald Reagan: the Labour Party had left them, they had not left the Labour Party.

The Labour leadership found themselves having to fend off questions, from aggressive interviewers, regarding the party's problem with anti-Semitism. If it hadn't already seeped into the public consciousness that Jeremy Corbyn's brand of Labour party had an anti-Semitism problem before the defections, everyone was certainly aware of it after them.

Not so privately, the feeling on the Labour backbenches was one not of anger, but more of sorrow. That colleagues, whom they very much respected felt the need to go

so far, as to bolt the party was a statement of just how bad the systemic problems, within the Party, had become.

Tom Watson, the only member of Mr. Corbyn's Shadow Cabinet who was independent of the patronage of the Party leader, struck the right chord, by acknowledging the severity of the problem and pledging to tackle it head on. This was designed to reassure to those on the Labour benches who thought that Jeremy Corbyn's response to the defections was to bury his head in the sand. Still Labour MPs could tolerate that response from Mr. Corbyn but if had responded to the criticism of his leadership by returning fire on the Independent Group, it would likely have precipitated a tsunami of defections. Tom Watson, who was known to be unhappy with the direction that the Labour Party was moving in, eventually did not defect from the Labour Party but did decided not to stand again for Parliament in this General Election.

By the end of the week Labour's Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell was giving an exclusive interview to London's Evening Standard, now edited by arch-Remainer George Osborne, in an attempt to reclaim the narrative. He used the interview to address the anti-Semitism problem within the Labour Party and gave the strongest signal yet that Labour was moving in the direction of a People's Vote.

McDonnell, who lost in his first attempt to win the seat of Hayes and Harlington in 1992, for which he is now the MP, is known to be me much more sensitive to the niceties of politics than Mr. Corbyn. Corbyn has had a somewhat sheltered political experience, having spent his career representing the *People's Republic of Islington*.

In the interview, the Shadow Chancellor took issue with his otherwise ally Len McCluskey, the General Secretary of the union *Unite*, who said that remain should not be an option on a future ballot, McDonnell makes it explicitly clear that remain would have to be an option. McDonnell went further and said that Labour is indeed moving towards a *People's Vote*. He declared "*if there was another one, I'd campaign for Remain, I'd vote for Remain*".

Europe had never been an issue that has much motivated Mr. McDonnell, or being central to his brand of politics, so it was obvious that these warm words towards wishing to remain in the European Union had been said as part of a last-ditch attempt to stop the bleeding. Wavering Labour backbenches had highlighted the importance of Mr. Corbyn's next steps, regarding the *Brexit Endgame*, as the decisive factor to whether they would remain in his Labour Party.

The choice of the *Evening Standard*, which had not-so subtle sympathies toward a *People's Vote*, was a dog whistle to Remainer Labour MPs; that whether or not Jeremy Corbyn's heart was in it, he was coming around to their way of thinking. Of course, he never did but by the time those MPs realized he was playing them for time *Change UK* was a busted flush.

The Independent Group might have been a headache for Corbyn and co, but they gave Theresa May a migraine as 3 Conservative MPs also crossed the aisle in the formation of *The Independent Group*. Whereas it would be safe to say that Luciana Berger was forced out of the Labour Party by a string of anti-Semitic abuse by members of Labour grassroots; the three MPs actively chose to cross the floor because their stances on Europe were at odds with the Tory Party's grassroots and as such the Tory defections caused little, if any, real damage to the Conservative Party.

The Tory defections also reportedly made some Labour MPs, on the precipice of joining the Independent Group, think twice. Despite there being areas of consensus between Conservatives and Labour of a centrist leaning, that did not alter the fact that the starting points for both sides come from very different perspectives. The very nature of what the role of government should be is regarded extremely differently on either side of the aisle.

Heidi Allen's comments mid-week that government should be run like a business and Anna Soubry's defense of austerity measures triggered instantaneous reactions against them, from those that dedicated their lives to the Labour Party. Heidi Allen would eventually join the Liberal Democrats and is not standing for Parliament in this

election. Anna Soubry is standing again in Broxtowe, this time as an independent candidate. *Change UK* is dead parrot.

The week following the seven defections, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, took part in [a radio interview](#), whilst on a visit to Washington D.C. He lay the blame for the UK Labour Party's widely reported problem with anti-Semitism squarely at the feet of Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party leadership.

Mr. Blair, himself a former leader of the Labour Party, told journalist Steve Inskeep that he, and others like him, had been raising the issue for the past three years, in the hope that it would be properly dealt with. He went on to explain how Labour's problem with anti-Semitism had developed:

"What has happened with the British Labour Party is that a strain of the far left has taken it over; in circumstances where, when I was leader, these people were very much on the fringes of the Labour Party and now the new leadership has brought them in."

This was not to say according to Mr. Blair that the majority of the Labour Party was anti-Semitic. He made a point of telling the American audience, that the vast majority of Labour MPs, many of whom had first being elected during his Premiership, were horrified by this.

Mr. Blair then issued a call to action saying anti-Semitism within the Labour Party *"has not been gripped and dealt with and it needs to be gripped and dealt with."*

The issue still has not been gripped at dealt with.

The UK's most senior Jewish leader, Ephraim Mirvis made a sensational intervention earlier in the General Election campaign when he wrote an open letter to *The Times* condemning Jeremy Corbyn over his lack of action in dealing with anti-Semitism and stated that in this General Election *"the very soul of our nation is at stake."*

In an interview later that day with Andrew Neil, Mr. Corbyn faced a ten-minute interrogation on the issue. Despite being given ample opportunity by Mr. Neil, he could not bring himself to say sorry.

It was only earlier this week facing tough questioning from Phillip Schofield on daytime talk show *This Morning* that Mr. Corbyn said sorry, which for him was the hardest word. I best remember Mr. Schofield presenting *Children's BBC* on weekday afternoons in the late 1980s with *Gordon the Gopher* from a broom cupboard.

As an aside, my vivid recollection of my first day of school is not getting ready, or going school, or any of that malarkey. I remember I had homework which was a bit much given it was my first day. It was a book called *Look!* There were lots of pictures and only one-word underneath them *Look!* So, I turned the page and said *Look!* over and over again, wanting to get the blasted waste of time over and done with so I could watch *Children's BCC*. It was not Philip Schofield presenting that day from the broom cupboard. It was Andi Peters and *Ed the Duck*. For some reason I have a vivid recollection of that but not of any lessons I had throughout the entirety of my primary education. The teachers didn't have a puppet duck, I suppose.

It was Mr. Schofield, who was previously of the aforementioned broom cupboard, who was able to do what Mr. Neil could not. It is of no criticism to Mr. Neil, who is the most forensic interviewer in the country, that it was Mr. Schofield who was able to extract the apology from Mr. Corbyn.

Mr. Neil is a formidable political journalist and as such delivers hard hitting interviews. Mr. Schofield because of career in light entertainment and daytime television comes across as voters do on the doorstep. Voters know when a politician is giving them BS and are blunt when cutting through it and getting to the point as we can see Mr. Schofield did:

Phillip Schofield: "Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis has said that Jews are justifiably anxious about the idea of Jeremy Corbyn becoming Prime Minister."

"A poison sanctioned from the top has taken root in Labour. 130 cases of antisemitism were outstanding against Labour members. So, here is your opportunity, now, to apologise to the Jewish community for any antisemitism by Labour members."

Jeremy Corbyn: (begins to bluster) "Look, our party has... can I make it clear..."

Phillip Schofield: (interrupts) "Just say sorry!"

Jeremy Corbyn: (still blustering) "Wait a minute. Our party..."

Phillip Schofield: (interrupts again) "No! Just say sorry."

Jeremy Corbyn: Can I say something

Phillip Schofield: (cuts him off) I want you to say sorry.

Jeremy Corbyn: Our Party and me...

Phillip Schofield: Yeah.

Jeremy Corbyn: Do not except anti-Semitism in any form

Phillip Schofield: So, are you sorry for everything that's happened?

Jeremy Corbyn: Obviously, I'm very sorry for everything that's happened?

Mr. Schofield found himself the target of Corbynite Twitter Trolls who took offense to his asking questions of Mr. Corbyn that he would face in any canvassing session outside of Islington. When appearing on This Morning, Boris Johnson asked Mr. Schofield and his co-host Holly Willoughby if they would appear in a selfie. The *This Morning* hosts politely obliged. Mr. Schofield hit back at criticisms of favouritism

towards Mr. Johnson proclaiming, *“If Jeremy Corbyn had asked me for a selfie I would have happily obliged.”*

Mr. Schofield was able to get an apology from Jeremy Corbyn relating to anti-Semitism in the Labour Party but according to chairman of the polling firm *Savanta ComRes* the issue is not influencing how most people are going to vote.

He recently did an interview with *The Sun* about recent polling conducted by his firm. *The Sun* reported:

The party's ongoing problems with anti-semitism and loss of support from Jewish voters, including the Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis' fiery allegations of discrimination at the core of the Labour party, was not translating into a drop in votes from the traditional support base.

‘It's not as if the electorate don't believe the Labour party has a problem with antisemitism, quite the opposite, they do. It just doesn't seem to be anything near as much of a vote changer as might be expected.’

‘Even the Chief Rabbi's intervention last week where he described this election campaign as being a battle for the soul of the nation, it just simply doesn't have the cut through,’ the pollster said.

This will be partially due to the effectiveness of the left in conflating the scourge of anti-Semitism with the policies of the Israeli government and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

One of the causes of confusion is how we get our information in 2019.

If you are getting all your information from algorithms being sent through a phone, it will just reinforce the biases you have, because of the pattern which develops.

During the Arab Spring, someone took a moderate, conservative and liberal and got them to do a Google Search for Egypt. For the Conservative the first results came up Muslim Brotherhood, for the Liberal Tahrir Square, where the protests were going on and for the moderate, the results came up vacation spots on the Nile. The point is that whatever your biases are, that is where you are sent and that get more and more reinforced over time – leading to people living in bubbles of their own prejudices.

In order to beat the algorithms and confirmation bias, modern campaigns must ***Cut Through with Content.***

The Labour Party does not only have a problem with anti-Semitism. There are plenty of those surrounding Jeremy Corbyn who are all types of other unpleasantness. Corbyn's Labour Party is the real ***"nasty party"***.

The Conservatives inform the electorate that Corbyn's inner circle resemble a bunch of Mafia hoods, meaning putting Corbyn into power ***would be little different than moving the Sopranos into Downing Street.***

As a picture says 1000 words, the Conservative Party can use that image which will stick in voters' minds to create all kinds of creative content.

The fact that Ian Austin, who was a loyal Brownite Labour MP, is telling voters to vote for Boris Johnson because Jeremy Corbyn is not fit to be Prime Minister is both patriotic and remarkable. Kate Hoey, who was Labour MP representing Vauxhall for 30 years is also telling voters to vote Conservative.

The letter sent to voters by Ian Austin earlier in the campaign was extremely effective, but I believe to hammer home the message in the final days of the campaign, the Conservatives should ask both Mr. Austin and Ms. Hoey to appear in an online political ad for them and ***cut through with content.***

They should appropriate the format of *Confessions of a Republican*, a political ad from Lyndon B. Johnson's 1964 Presidential campaign. In the ad, a former Republican voter, William Bogert speaks straight to camera and explains why he cannot vote for the Republican Presidential nominee, Barry Goldwater:

"I don't know just why they wanted to call this a confession. I certainly don't feel guilty about being a Republican. I've always been a Republican. My father is, his father was, the whole family is a Republican family. I voted for Dwight Eisenhower the first time I ever voted. I voted for Nixon the last time. But when we come to Senator Goldwater, now it seems to me we're up against a very different kind of a man. This man scares me.

Now maybe I'm wrong. A friend of mine just said to me, 'Listen, just because a man sounds a little irresponsible during a campaign doesn't mean he's going to act irresponsibly.' You know that theory, that the White House makes the man. I don't buy that. You know what I think makes a President - I mean, aside from his judgment, his experience - are the men behind him, his advisors, the cabinet. And so many men with strange ideas are working for Goldwater. You hear a lot about what these guys are against - they seem to be against just about everything - but what are they for?

The hardest thing for me about this whole campaign is to sort out one Goldwater statement from another. A reporter will go to Senator Goldwater and he'll say, 'Senator, on such and such a day, you said, and I quote, 'blah blah blah' whatever it is, end quote.' And then Goldwater says, 'Well, I wouldn't put it that way.' I can't follow that. Was he serious when he did put it that way? Is he serious when he says he wouldn't put it that way? I just don't get it. A President ought to mean what he says.

President Johnson, Johnson at least is talking about facts. He says, 'Look, we've got the tax cut bill and because of that you get to carry home X number of dollars more every payday. We've got the nuclear test ban and because of that there is X percent less radioactivity in the food.' But, but Goldwater, often, I can't figure out just what

Goldwater means by the things he says. I read now where he says, 'A craven fear of death is sweeping across America.'

What is that supposed to mean? If he means that people don't want to fight a nuclear war, he's right. I don't. When I read some of these things that Goldwater says about total victory, I get a little worried, you know? I wish I was as sure that Goldwater is as against war as I am that he's against some of these other things. I wish I could believe that he has the imagination to be able to just shut his eyes and picture what this country would look like after a nuclear war.

*Sometimes, I wish I'd been at that convention in San Francisco. I mean, I wish I'd been a delegate, I really do. I would have fought, you know. I wouldn't have worried so much about party unity because if you unite behind a man you don't believe in, it's a lie. I tell you, those people who got control of that convention: Who are they? I mean, when the head of the Ku Klux Klan, when all these weird groups come out in favour of the candidate of my party — **either they're not Republicans or I'm not.**"*

The online ad will not only go viral it will be easily clipable for TV and radio broadcast.

The Unlikely Odyssey of Nigel Farage

In the summer of 2016, with the referendum victory under his belt, it appeared that Nigel Farage's job was done. It was time for the gladiator to exit the arena. For the first time, in what must have seemed like forever, Nigel Farage was able to have some 'me' time and savour his hard-fought victory.

Nigel Farage had sacrificed a great deal, over the years, in his fight to make Britain sovereign, once more. He started his career viewed as something of a political curiosity; a later day Don Quixote. His campaign for Britain to leave the European Union was written off before it had even begun.

Nigel Farage joined UKIP in 1992, outraged over the Maastricht treaty. Fourteen years later, in 2006, he became the Party's leader and it is then that the British public were really first introduced to the man who would eventually become Mr. Brexit.

When he first became leader of UKIP, relations between his Party and the Conservatives were not only cordial, they were downright friendly. It would not be uncommon to find UKIP and Conservative MEPs, alongside their staffers, enjoying a beer and a smoke, in the bars of *Place Lux*, situated just outside the EU Parliament building in Brussels.

UKIP was regarded primarily, as a force in European Parliamentary elections, but little else. As the Conservatives were consistently winning those elections, at the time anyway; UKIP was hardly keeping Conservative Party campaign officials awake at night. The UKIP MEPs in the European Parliament were regarded as purple Tories; people who would have been Tory MPs in a bygone era.

Nigel Farage was certainly treated as an eccentric cousin by most Conservatives, in the early days of his leadership. In 2007, Mr. Farage turned up to a Free Spirits event run by the *Freedom Association* campaign group. He had not turned up to speak. He had just come to have a pint and to show his support for the organisation.

During the event, there was no shortage of true-blue Conservative activists, also in attendance. No one appeared taken aback by the UKIP leader's presence and, in fact, Mr. Farage could barely move for the sheer volume of well-wishers, wishing to take their photo with him or offering to buy him a pint. That Nigel Farage was leading a rival political Party appeared to be a mere technicality for most of the Conservative Party grassroots. As far as they were concerned, he was part of the family.

That the UKIP leader would have such star power was not predictable. Mr. Farage's immediate predecessor, the former Conservative Major-era Minister, Roger Knapman, had done a solid job over the preceding four years but was hardly at home in the media green room. Indeed, he had sought to import star power from elsewhere. This led to the ill-fated decision to select former Labour MP and more famously, former daytime television personality, Robert Kilroy-Silk as a UKIP candidate in the 2004 European Parliamentary elections.

Kilroy-Silk did not last a year as a UKIP MEP before he bolted the Party, to form a Party of his own *Veritas*, which in short order kicked him out. He finished his term of office as an Independent MEP. It was undoubtedly a blessing for Nigel Farage that the troublesome Mr. Kilroy-Silk had departed UKIP, a year prior to his becoming leader. As we were soon all to find out, Nigel Farage wouldn't have need to import star power from anywhere.

Being a Eurosceptic in the 1990s was considered to be a road to nowhere for the aspiring politico. It was lucky for Nigel Farage that he did not aspire to become a politician. This was a time when our membership of the European Union was not even in doubt. Despite the economic catastrophe that was Black Wednesday and Britain having to plunge out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism, both major Parties were still debating whether they should support Britain joining the Euro. As Cool Britannia became all the rage and Tony Blair ascended to the highest office in the land, the cause to which Mr. Farage had dedicated his life certainly did seem Quixotic indeed.

Then all of a sudden, Nigel Farage started to gain traction for UKIP and Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ) decided to aim their fire at him. They were not happy at the increasing number of defections to UKIP by Conservatives who could not swallow coalition with Liberal Democrats.

Many including myself were taken in by the CCHQ line that Nigel Farage and UKIP were just spoilers and could hand the keys to Downing Street to the *Red Menace* of Ed Miliband.

The Brexit vote caused me to reassess Nigel Farage. He had been given a poor hand to start with but ended up causing the political upset since the Second World War.

David Cameron did not call his bluff, he blinked. He was so sure of himself and that he could win any referendum that he gave Nigel Farage the mechanism for Britain to leave the European Union by legislating for a referendum on our membership.

If Nigel Farage had not taken the political risks that he did and risked the slings and arrows of the political establishment Brexit would not be a thing and for that he deserves the respect of all those who supported Leave.

The Conservatives failed to reach out to Nigel Farage after the referendum and with Theresa May proclaiming that *Brexit, Means Brexit* some in the Conservative Party thought that they could now own Brexit and leave him out in the cold.

Before any other British politician, Nigel Farage noticed the populist political appeal of billionaire businessman and entertainer, Donald J. Trump. *Mr. Brexit*, as Nigel Farage was to become known, connected to the Republican Party Presidential nominee through their mutual associate and Chief Executive of the Donald J. Trump for President campaign, Steve Bannon.

Mr. Brexit soon became a top surrogate for the Trump campaign and didn't bail on the man who would become President when he came under-fire over the decade old Access Hollywood tape on *Billy Bush weekend*.

When certain members of the Republican establishment were giving Mr. Trump a wide berth, *Mr. Brexit* went to the second Presidential debate, held at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, and was an enthusiastic surrogate of Mr. Trump giving his enthusiastic support to the Republican nominee, in front of the assembled world media.

Mr. Brexit was smart to, like me, bet on Donald J. Trump. When he won the Presidency, Nigel Farage was the Brit with the best connections to the new President, who has put personal relationships back at the heart of diplomacy. *Mr. Brexit* had shown he was someone the President could trust and with President Trump trust has to be earned. Despite letting it be known that his services were available, there was no outreach on the part of Theresa May's government. It was a huge error for them not to make him some sort Special Envoy to the United States; if only because, as President Lyndon B. Johnson said of his F.B.I. Director, J. Edgar Hoover *"It's probably better to have him inside the tent pissing out, than outside the tent pissing in."*

Theresa May and the Conservative Party kept Nigel Farage outside of the tent.

On the same day that David Davis and Boris Johnson resigned due to opposition to Theresa May's Chequers deal, I received a call asking if I was able to appear on *France 24 Debate* that evening. I was in bed when I got the call feeling quite sick with a bit of a fever but I remembered the words of Gore Vidal, *"Never pass up a chance to have sex or appear on television."* I agreed to be on the broadcast and as I left my flat for the studio, I grabbed a copy of *The Art of the Deal* by Donald J. Trump.

While he dominated all other political discussion Brexit coverage was the one safe space for those wanting to avoid hearing the name Donald Trump. With the exception of Nigel Farage, and maybe a couple of others, at that time, the majority of the

commentariat, regardless of differences on Brexit were united behind an unspoken agreement to refrain from speaking the American President's name. I can only imagine this came out of a fear that, maybe, like *Beetlejuice*; should you say *The Donald's* name three times, he would appear.

The residents of the *Westminster Village* liked to believe that they were living in a parallel universe; one where Donald J. Trump was not the custodian of the most powerful office in the world and Commander-in-Chief of the one country with whom Britain shares a bond which binds our two peoples together so tightly that it enables us to, in good faith, depend upon the United States for the delivery systems we need should the sad day ever come that the United Kingdom ever have the need to make use of its nuclear weapons.

For those arguing the case that it is in Britain's national interest to Remain with the European Union, President Trump's foreign policy is an inconvenient truth they would rather not address.

The President's opinion of the EU is not a positive one and he would make his dissatisfaction known to the entire international community in a forceful interview with CBS when he said of the EU:

"Nobody treats us much worse than the European Union. The European Union was formed in order to take advantage of us on trade."

President Trump destroys the key foreign policy arguments traditionally made for the UK becoming increasingly entangled with the EU; including the loss of sovereignty that entails.

Until the election of President Donald J. Trump, the British foreign policy establishment would confidently assert that our *Special Relationship* with the United States was dependent upon our taking a leadership role in the European Union.

Tony Blair articulated this in his Mansion House speech in 2000, when he argued:

“The world needs us to be different. I feel sufficiently confident in British capability to believe we have something important to offer... to be the bridge between the US and the EU would alone justify the argument I am making but our influence can and should be more than that.”

I had felt that many in the Brexit camp were not taking full advantage of the fact that we had an American President who was in favour of Brexit. I remember that when I went in to the voting booth in 2016 I was really pleased that not only would I be voting to leave the European Union but voting against Barack Obama who had said that Britain would be “back of the queue” if we left the EU and for Donald Trump who made his support for Brexit well known.

So, on the evening of Monday 9th July 2018 when host Francois Picard asked me “What’s going on right now in London”, I replied:

*“Well, everything’s going on. I think that this is the end for Theresa May. I can’t see her holding onto power now. She’s lost the biggest beast in her Cabinet. And I think that she hasn’t played her Trump Card, which is ironically, an actual Trump Card. The American President recently said to the French President; if you left the EU, we’d give you a great trade deal – a big, beautiful trade deal. But we haven’t even approached him in relation to that. We should be using our Special Relationship with America. Donald Trump is coming to the UK on Friday. And I think, that this time round, when the Conservative Party elect a leader – they might not be able to have a leader who wrote *The Art of the Deal*, but can we at least have a leader that’s read it!”*

As soon as I mentioned *The Art of the Deal*, I picked the book off the desk, which was not in shot and waved the book in front of the camera. I was glad I had agreed to the show that evening, despite feeling slightly under-the-weather and I was certain that I was right; Theresa May had not read *The Art of the Deal*.

In [an interview](#) with *60 Minutes Australia*, this April, veteran political journalist Jeremy Paxman was asked “What would you ask Theresa May if you were sitting in front of her now?”. He replied:

“Whether she ever really believed in Brexit. She says that she does. She says that her job is to deliver the commitment of the people and Brexit means Brexit and all that sort of nonsense. But actually, we know that she campaigned to Remain. So, I don’t know whether that inevitably meant that she handled, or mishandled, the negotiations badly from the start or whether that’s incidental. But the fact is she has made a mess of it.”

It was this feeling that Theresa May did not believe in Brexit and that she had made a hash of it that led to the opening for Nigel Farage and his Brexit Party. The fact that we were still in the European Union for the 2019 European Parliament elections outraged many Conservative Party members and Conservative voters.

The Brexit Party topped the ballot in those elections winning 29 seats and gaining 30.5% of the vote. In comparison, the Conservative Party came in 5th place behind the Green Party, winning only 4 seats and getting only 8.8% of the vote.

If Theresa May’s days as Prime Minister weren’t done in July 2018, they were now.

David Gauke, the Justice Secretary in Theresa May’s administration is one of the 21 MPs who were thrown out of the Conservative Party by Boris Johnson. He is now running as an Independent candidate against the Conservatives in this General Election. He is now also supporting calls for a 2nd referendum in which he intends to campaign for Britain staying in the European Union.

He is the perfect illustration for why voters and Conservative Party members felt that they could not trust Theresa May’s administration on Brexit.

There was certainly some truth that Mr. Johnson had failed to consolidate early support from other MPs during his first ill-fated try for the top job. As the starting gun

was fired on 2016 race to succeed David Cameron, the mood on the House of Commons terrace was that Premiership was almost guaranteed to Mr. Johnson, as a just reward for spearheading the *Vote Leave* campaign. But behind those confident assertions, lay the undercurrent which would eventually unravel his leadership bid. Boris had bungled the basics, as supportive Members of Parliament, and therefore votes, could be heard complaining that the would-be leader had failed to acknowledge or reply to supportive text messages that weekend after the referendum.

Boris had counted his chickens before they hatched and failed in consolidating his support. The beauty of making mistakes, however, is that you learn from them and the experience of 2016 had given Boris a good idea of what not to do this time around. In order to create a *Johnson Juggernaut*, professionals were brought in to ensure the campaign strategy was not so *hastily thought out that it might as well be written on the back of a beer mat*.

Boris Johnson had replaced the less-than-loyal Michael Gove with Jacob Rees-Mogg, the chairman of the powerful European Research Group of Conservative MPs, who he would go on to appoint Leader of the Commons.

At the *Brexit Advance Alternative Conference* in 2018, held in parallel to the official Conservative Party Conference; a straw poll was commissioned amongst the activists for who they would most like to be the next Prime Minister. Of those that took part in the poll, the majority were for Mr. Rees-Mogg. Those voters would take the endorsement of Mr. Rees-Mogg very seriously indeed.

Boris Johnson also recruited Gavin Williamson shortly after he was fired as Defence Secretary by Theresa May. Mr. Williamson played a key role in getting George Osborne and the *Evening Standard* to throw their weight behind Mr. Johnson during the leadership contest.

Lynton Crosby, the mastermind behind Mr. Johnson's two successful London Mayoral election victories, and Boris's partner, Carrie Symonds ensured that this campaign was run like a well-oiled machine.

Despite a valiant effort by then-Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, the Conservative Party membership wanted a leader who had backed Brexit in the referendum and Boris was their overwhelming choice for Prime Minister.

Once in situ, an early order of business for Boris Johnson was how to stop the bleeding to the Brexit Party. The argument that a vote for the Brexit Party would be a vote against Brexit hardly carried any sway when in some seats there were Conservative MPs, like Dominic Grieve, actively trying to frustrate Brexit. Boris also had to restore the party discipline that all but disappeared under Mrs. May's premiership.

On Tuesday 3rd September, Mr. Johnson expelled 21 MPs from the Conservative Party after they voted with opposition parties to take control of the House of Commons timetable so that they could pass a bill blocking a No-Deal Brexit. He would allow 10 of those MPs back into the Conservative Party almost 2 months later on 30th October. He did not allow MPs back who had remained a thorn in his side after their expulsion, however. Those amongst the 10 MPs readmitted to the Conservative Party that are running as Conservative Party candidates once more in this General Election have all pledged to vote for Boris Johnson's new Brexit deal if reelected.

Mr. Johnson had shown meant business and his leadership was different to that of his predecessor. Boris Johnson's former boss Conrad Black weighed into the ongoing Brexit debate on Friday 30th August with [an editorial](#) for Canada's National Post newspaper.

The Lord Black of Crossharbour has been on a leave of absence from the House of Lords since 2012, as he sought to have US convictions for fraud and obstruction of justice overturned. Many legal scholars made the case that Lord Black had been treated very unfairly. He was successful in getting two of three fraud convictions

overturned before President Trump, who has had his own experiences with overzealous prosecutors, gave him a full and complete pardon, last year.

Lord Black, who is a former proprietor of *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Spectator*, is known to be looking to making his return to the second chamber. It is unknown whether he will remain as a crossbench peer or whether he will seek to have the Conservative Party whip restored.

His editorial in the National Post made it clear that, whip or no whip; he will be standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Prime Minister Boris Johnson when he does return. Lord Black was effusive in his praise of his former protégé writing in his editorial that Boris *“has been as deft as Mrs. May was inept.”* According to the peer:

“Johnson has thrown away the scabbard and Brussels and, more relevantly, Paris and Berlin can be in no doubt that the game of chicken is over.”

From an EU perspective what Boris Johnson has to do was show that Britain was willing to walk away. The EU pretended that it had all the cards when in fact it didn't.

On 17th October, Boris Johnson announced that he had reached a new Brexit deal with the EU. He had amended the Withdrawal Agreement against all the odds; confounding the expectations of the domestic and international commentariat. He managed to get rid of the hated backstop. With this new deal, Britain would take back control of its domestic regulatory system and international tariffs, once more.

President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, borrowing a phrase from *Fox News*, called the new deal *Fair and Balanced*.

The negotiations that Boris Johnson conducted to get his new Brexit deal should not be viewed as Britain vs. the EU. All politics is local, or domestic. Angela Merkel did not want a No-Deal Brexit. A No-Deal Brexit would have resulted in the fragile German economy tipping into recession. Leo Varadkar, the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of the

Republic of Ireland is leading a minority coalition government. If there were to be a No-Deal Brexit, then the Republic of Ireland would be the country which would suffer the most. Varadkar's coalition would likely collapse and then Irish politics would be dominated by a No-Deal Brexit blame game.

In addition to this there was the issue of the boogeyman. When Theresa May was negotiating with the EU, she portrayed Boris Johnson as the scary alternative that the EU did not want to deal with. This according to Mrs. May is what would happen if she didn't get a deal and her government were to collapse.

However, in mainland Europe, Boris Johnson is considered as something of a British oddity. Nigel Farage is regarded as something entirely different all together.

The leader of the Brexit Party is connected with a number of other national populist parties throughout Europe – all linked together by the tread of their alliance association with Steve Bannon, the former Executive Chairman of *Breitbart News* and Chief Executive Officer of Donald J. Trump's successful 2016 run for the White House. I personally respect Mr. Bannon and all that he has accomplished, although do not endorse all his statements but in the corridors of power in Brussels he is a figure of hatred. I am sure he welcomes their hatred.

This also allowed Boris Johnson to make more of these ties than were actually there, and in negotiations with the EU emphasise the linkage between the success of national populist parties in countries like France and Italy and the success of the Brexit Party in the UK.

If the EU were not to give Boris Johnson a new deal, then it was a real possibility that in the chaos that would follow that Nigel Farage and his Brexit Party would be the ultimate political beneficiaries. Mr. Johnson was able to use the specter of Nigel Farage to scare leaders such as France's Emmanuel Macron that this could infect politics across the continent.

At the time Boris Johnson was conducting the negotiations for his new Brexit deal; the Brexit Party had no power in the UK Parliament as they had no MPs and no Peers. They did, however, have a large amount of power in the European Parliament. In the European Parliament elections of that year, the Brexit Party had been elected as the largest single Party in the whole body. Not only was the Brexit Party the largest single Party, it was also allied to other Parties who were skeptical of the whole *European Project*. There was plenty of scope for Nigel Farage to create *Bedlam in Brussels*.

The European Union did not want this. What they preferred to happen was for Britain to leave with a deal and for Nigel Farage and his MEPs to leave with Britain.

In using Nigel Farage as the mutual enemy with which to bond with erstwhile hostile European leaders, Boris Johnson was hardly going to get in bed with Nigel Farage and the Brexit Party.

Talk of an electoral pact between the Brexit Party and the Conservative Party were unhelpful to this strategy. Boris had to pour cold water on them immediately. Harsh words were also issued about Nigel Farage and his sometime ally Arron Banks by a senior Conservative Party source, in October, presumably with the authority of the new Prime Minister. The senior Conservative source told the press:

"Neither Nigel Farage nor Arron Banks are fit and proper persons and they should never be allowed anywhere near government."

That statement will have been made for the purpose of the negotiations than for domestic consumption, especially because those former UKIP and Brexit Party voters needs to vote Conservative in this General Election admire both Nigel Farage and Arron Banks.

However, with the Brexit deal passed through both UK and EU Parliaments, Nigel Farage will no longer need to be used as a bogeyman in negotiations with the Europeans and will be able to be used to gain a much more optimistic goal, through his

working with the Trump administration in building a special trading relationship between the UK and the USA.

Nigel Farage should be appointed the new British Ambassador to the United States.

It makes diplomatic commonsense and political commonsense. It will help to consolidate the Brexit Party/ former UKIP voter support that is being lent to the Conservative Party in this election, for future elections. Additionally, President Trump views international relations through the prism of personal relationships. Nigel Farage might not be popular with Brussels Eurocrats, but he is very popular with the President and American conservatives, having been a featured speaker at the annual *Conservative Political Action Conference* in Maryland for a number of years.

After passage of his Brexit deal through the UK and EU Parliaments, Boris Johnson will want to get started on negotiating a big, beautiful trade deal with the United States. The outgoing Ambassador Sir. Kim Darrock is outgoing because he had to resign from office due to asinine comments he made about President Trump and his administration in leaked diplomatic cables published in the *Mail on Sunday*, this July.

This weekend, Nigel Farage was on *Sophy Ridge on Sunday*. In the interview he showed that he knew the last few years were Britain's Watergate moment; when the people lost faith in their politicians. The most interesting exchange happened at the end of the interview:

Sophy Ridge: If we end up leaving the EU on January 31st, what happens to the Brexit Party?

Nigel Farage: It'll have to reform into the Reform Party. It'll have to campaign to change politics for good. Get rid of the House of Lords. Change the voting system. So much to do. And again, you'll see on Thursday; a turnout lower than the pundits expect because people have lost faith in politics.

Sophy Ridge: The Reform Party. New name?

Nigel Farage: Absolutely. I've already registered it.

I firmly believe that Nigel Farage's energy would be put to better use serving this country as our next Ambassador to the United States, instead of in forming a new political party. He does have a point that politics and our politicians need to be brought closer to the citizens of this country.

Boris Johnson should announce, in the final days, that he will appoint a commission of the top people, to report in the next Parliament, on how to restore faith in politics.

I believe Nigel Farage when he says that he cannot be brought but there is an enormous difference between being given a glorified bauble, in the form of a knighthood or peerage, and being asked to serve the nation as an essential Ambassador.

Nigel Farage's talents should be put to good use as in the immortal words of Lyndon B. Johnson, *"It's probably better to have him inside the tent pissing out, than outside the tent pissing in."*

Additionally, there will also be a need to reassure the Trump administration after Boris Johnson and French President, Emmanuel Macron were caught in conversation with Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau when he thought it would be a big and clever idea to make fun of President Trump at the NATO summit, last week.

This was unfortunately caught on camera and comedians such as Trevor Noah and Jimmy Kimmel have tried to make comedic capital out of Boris Johnson being caught in the conversation.

According to [Jimmy Kimmel](#):

“Trudeau is one thing but Boris Johnson, that’s the one that’s got to hurt most. We already knew Trudeau and Macron don’t like him but Boris. Sweet, disheveled crazy-haired Boris”

According to [Trevor Noah](#):

“And for Trump, the most hurtful thing is probably the fact that Boris Johnson joined in. That’s a shitty thing. That’s shitty, Boris. That’s a shitty move, Boris. That’s your friend. Boris is that one kid you think is your real friend and then you see him over there trying to fit in with everyone else; telling them your deepest secrets.”

Former American Vice-President Joe Biden, who is currently running for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination, used the footage in a [campaign ad](#) that President Trump will have most definitely seen.

To add insult to injury, the cold open for last Saturday’s *Saturday Night Live!*, [“NATO Cafeteria Cold Open”](#) began with a narrator reading:

“This week, during the NATO Conference in London, foreign leaders were caught on a hot mic making fun of President Trump, this included Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who Trump had considered a friend. Some dismissed it as petty high school gossip, but you should have seen what happened in the NATO cafeteria.”

The skit involved Trudeau, played by Jimmy Fallon, Macron, played by Paul Rudd and Boris, played by James Cordon refusing to let Trump sit at the cool kids table at the NATO cafeteria. President Trump was, as usual, played by the far-left actor Alec Baldwin who was so brilliantly mocked in the film *Team America: World Police*.

When Baldwin’s Trump tries to sit down, he goes *“Well Boris is my friend. Right Boris?”* Cordon’s Boris replies:

“Don’t make this harder than it already is, old bean. I’m hanging out with these guys now.”

With this as the new pop culture narrative surrounding our Prime Minister’s relationship with the US President, I can only think that appointing Nigel Farage as our Ambassador to the United States would be a very smart move indeed.

The Gathering Storms

The Brexit debate has taken up the political bandwidth of much of our political discussion since the referendum in 2016. Little else has been reported on. The political debate regarding several forthcoming crises has not really had a chance to begin.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution will soon be upon us. If you think that the technological leaps forward of the past two decades have revolutionized the ways in which we communicate, socialize and work; then the scale of the changes ahead will astound you.

Many jobs that currently exist are going to be replaced by A.I. – Artificial Intelligence, within the next 15 years. Even jobs, such as that of an accountant, will be done by A.I.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, or Age of Automation is a coming crisis, yet those in our government have been too busy with Brexit to give it the attention that it deserves. It is not only crisis management time which our government has been missing out on due to the singular focus on Brexit; there is also a huge opportunity cost.

Jeremy Corbyn's 4-day work week proposals were an attempt to appropriate an idea that has become popularized in tech circles as part of the discussion on how the coming advent of the Age of Automation could impact society. Labour tried to appropriate this idea without any real investigation into the intellectual theory behind it.

If we are going to get a 4-day week it will originate from the free market. *Microsoft Japan* recently reported that it ran a trial 4-day work week for 2,300 employees and found it increased productivity by 40%. There was no increase in the amount of overtime done by these employees over that period and the 4-day work week received 92% approval from these employees, meaning that 184 *Microsoft Japan* staff actually wanted to work the extra day.

Should the link between a shorter working week and productivity be genuine then it would only be economic commonsense for more businesses to adopt it. The trials are already being run in the free market and it appears that if we are to have a 4-day work week that it will happen organically. It is not something that should be imposed by politicians or government bureaucrats who have no idea how business works.

This does not mean that they should do nothing to prepare for the *Age of Automation* because they need to ensure that people don't fall the cracks when this rapid change occurs. It does, however, warrant more thought than the simple sloganeering of the Labour Party.

Boris Johnson should announce that he will appoint a commission of the top people to report back to the government in the course of the next Parliament with a series of public policy proposals for how to respond to the coming explosion in the use of automation.

New technologies give us the ability to truly reform the public sector. Our public services even today are **Blockbuster Video in a Netflix world**. And even in a Netflix world, Netflix is facing competition from new dynamic streaming services. Maybe even that analogy will soon be outdated.

If we are to win the *Age of Automation*, it is a matter of urgency that we reform our system of Higher Education. In terms of Higher Education, we should be looking to organizations such as online not-for-profit *Udacity*. As Sebastian Thrun, Chairman and co-founder of *Udacity* has said; one of the main problems with Higher Education in the West is that we have great institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge, Harvard and Yale but the percentage of the people able to study at such Universities is limited.

The size and cost of these institutions have created barriers to entry for most citizens. In a world where most old manufacturing jobs have been replaced by automation, with the same happening to an increasing number of service sector jobs and it only being a

few years before automation starts replacing workers in jobs once considered highly skilled; we must have a system where we can provide educational upgrades to the vast expanse of the population, at such a speed as would be currently impossible with our Higher Education system.

A job is no longer for life and if we are to acknowledge that fact, we must understand that in order for us to keep up with our own technology, education must be viewed as lifelong.

Uber has created new jobs by tearing down the barriers to entry in the taxi industry, but that which technology gives, technology can take away. What will become when self-driving cars arrive? This is only one example of the pace of technological change creating new jobs and then within a generation rendering them obsolete.

This change will not only affect the Labour market but also how we travel. Self-driving cars do not mean that companies such as *Uber* will go out of business. It just means that there will be less of a need or no need at all, for *Uber* drivers. It is companies like *Uber* who will benefit most from the move towards self-driving cars.

It is likely that the business model pursued in the transition towards self-driving vehicles will be that of transportation as a service. It means that people will be using apps to order driverless cars to get them from A to B. This will create less of a need for them having their own personal means of transportation – having their own car. This should lead to a significant reduction in carbon emissions.

The climate crisis is going to be a crisis that is solved through our technological advancement. However, the musings of such climate change activists as Greta Thunberg or those taking part in *Extinction Rebellion* are counterproductive to efforts to find real solutions to the problem of climate change. Just because these people have the loudest voices and are the darlings of the mainstream media at the moment, does not mean that they have real solutions to the problems that they are protesting.

There is more than a small amount of the Luddite in the preaching of Extinction Rebellion. However, if we are to look at the facts, as they actually are; the cost of renewable energy is plummeting, and electric cars are becoming increasingly affordable. It will not be long before electric cars become the norm.

Those that have invested in renewable energy and electric cars are primarily private business interests. These private business interests are motivated by economic growth and profit. We don't need to put an end to economic growth as *Extinction Rebellion* would have us do; we just need a *Green Capitalism*. It is certainly Boris Johnson's aim to deliver a Green Brexit.

The last couple of years have seen an unprecedented rise in the level of environmentalist legislation. Fueled in part by Sir. David Attenborough's *Blue Planet II* and *Cheers* actor Ted Danson's tireless advocacy for our Oceans, in part by growing radical activity from pressure groups such as *Greenpeace* and in part by the growing youth view within the Conservative Party that environmentalist and animal welfare issues are important; the former Environment Secretary, Michael Gove was hyperactive in bringing forward legislation dealing with these issues.

Recent YouGov research showed that 27% of the general population, and almost half of young people chose the environment as one of the most pressing issues facing the country.

Whilst in the past Boris Johnson was not traditionally noted as an environmentalist, it would be remiss of me not to highlight the impact that his partner, Carrie Symonds has had upon his thinking. Highly committed to a range of green issues, she has helped to reshape the agenda at a time when these issues are so important to the general population.

Capitalism, instead of being the enemy of climate and green progress, as viewed by many, can actually help to deliver the answer. Political will alone will not transform how individuals change their own behavior. Voting intentions across the world – from

Canadian Provincial elections to Australian Federal elections – have demonstrated that when green policies hit people in the wallet, they cease to vote for politicians driving environmental change. And that cannot go on. Long-termism has to have in its roots short-termism – and that means ensuring people aren't punished in the drive towards sustainability. It must be recognized that in reality making environmental change is often seen as more expensive or more time intensive, in a world where workers' time is at a premium itself.

The Conservative Party should focus on how *Green Capitalism* can replace socialist policies for environmental change. From examining behavioral economics, Al Gore's seminal "*Inconvenient*" documentaries and case studies of people across the country making small changes that benefit both them and the planet; positive solutions can be found resulting in policies designed to help everyone improve their own economic and personal wellbeing, whilst also helping the planet.

Ghosts of Campaign's Past

I was working as Research Director for a Republican Congressional Campaign in 2012. I couldn't have worked for a better campaign. Not only did I greatly admire the candidate and make lifelong friends, but I also had a front row seat with which to watch American politics, as it happened.

The congressional district included such liberal holidaying hot spots as Martha's Vineyard and Cape Cod and also the Kennedy's compound is in Hyannis Port. As Joe Kennedy III was embarking on his first successful bid for Congress in a neighboring district, the Kennedy clan was out in full force and I was able to amuse myself playing a game of "I, Spy, A Kennedy!"

In addition to working for the Congressional campaign, I was also liaising with officials from the State Republican Party, which was working all out to keep the US Senate seat Scott Brown had won in an upset victory two years earlier, and the Romney Presidential campaign, which was based nearby in Boston. The eventual results came as something of a shock to the Romney Campaign, in large part due to the fact that we were all getting our news from a conservative media echo chamber, much as how Democrats today are getting all their news from a liberal media echo chamber.

Dick Morris, former Bill Clinton pollster turned anti-Clinton media pundit, told Bill O'Reilly, who has the highest rated show in cable news that his viewers could expect a Romney landslide and not believe the *New York Times* opinion polls because their methodology was all wrong. He had made the same prediction in an article for popular Capitol Hill newspaper, *The Hill*.

The audience would have trusted Mr. Morris as someone who knew what he was talking about and I know many in the Romney camp did. This was the pollster who had rescued the Clinton Presidency, after the Democrat's disastrous showing in the 1994 mid-term elections and was the chief architect behind his 1996 re-election campaign.

Reinforcing Mr. Morris's predictions was so-called *Bush's Brain*, Karl Rove who even managed to try and deny the results on Fox News, as they were coming in, and restoring credibility to the network, was actually taken to task live on air by host Megyn Kelly, in a move which made her now broken career.

Mr. Morris was let go by the network soon after the election by Mr. Rove kept his lucrative *Fox News Commentator* gig but was left chastened by the experience.

Now I don't mean to be over critical of Dick Morris who inspires a lot of what I suggest in this paper. He is responsible for most of Bill Clinton's political career after all. It is just on that occasion he was very wrong. He more than made up for it when he accurately predicted the election of Donald Trump in his book *Armageddon: How Trump Can Beat Hillary*.

At a time when algorithms are reinforcing our biases when searching for news and facts on the internet, it is important to be aware of what is happening outside your comfort zone. Failure to prepare, is preparing to fail. In order to understand what is going on, so that you can develop your strategy accordingly, it is important to be aware of political and social movements and trends across the whole spectrum.

In his recent book, *Microtrends Squared*, another former Bill Clinton pollster, Mark Penn had this explanation for the bold and mostly unexpected changes that have altered the body politic in the West in recent years:

"Often two diametrically opposed trend are occurring at the same time.... Today in politics, for example there is no overall ideological shift: instead one group of moderates become more conservative and another group become more liberal, causing society to become both more liberal and more conservative at the same time, cancelling each other out.

This increasing polarization then produces even more gridlock and confusion. We can see similar ruts and pulls throughout society... Some live in a world of globalization,

while others yearn for a return to a greater nationalism. To explain this we have borrowed from Newtonian physics; for every trend there is a counter trend. It is human nature in the Information Age; every move or desire in one direction seems to inspire a counter movement by another group in the opposite direction.”

I tend in large part to agree with Mr. Penn as he offers a realistic, data driven interpretation for the changes in our politics that have stunned the punditocracy and chattering classes, as the impossible kept becoming reality: first with Corbyn’s election as Labour leader, second with the Brexit vote in the UK, third with Donald Trump defying the odds and winning the Presidency, and finally, with Theresa May’s predicted landslide in 2017 becoming a historic election landslip, as she threw away her House of Commons majority. That is, of course, looking only at Britain and America, I could go on for what would seem like forever if I were to list every impossible thing that has happened in the world since the 2015 General Election.

In the early evening of Tuesday 4th November 2016, when the experts had predicted that Hillary Clinton had the Presidency in the bag; I was interviewed by [Talk Radio](#) and said correctly that all might not be as it seemed:

“I think this could be another Brexit situation. What we don’t know is; are the hidden Trump voters actually there? States like Pennsylvania and Michigan, with heavy white working-class populations are now in play, so we are going to see what happens. People who haven’t voted before might very well turn out and vote this time.”

In the 2017 General Election campaign, Jeremy Corbyn attempted to do the same thing; by reaching out to previously agnostic voters and bringing them inside his coalition.

Most Conservatives had viewed the electorate as static, paying little attention to activating potential untapped supporters of their own, amongst those eligible to vote. It was not that the Conservatives did not actually improve their vote tally from the 2015 General Election, in many of the most marginal seats; it was simply that Labour

was able to improve on its vote tally even more with these new voters. Given that these pundits and wise men are so often wrong, it is amazing that anyone keeps listening to them.

In essence, when we are trying to *find out what the hell is going on*, some of the facts on the ground are going to make reassuring reading for the Conservatives but others are going to require uncomfortable studying, as they would provide reassurance to the opposition parties.

Additionally, we find microtrends showing that younger voters are becoming increasingly culturally conservative, take a look at their increasingly dismissive attitudes to alcohol, for instance. Other microtrends show this group of voters open to the arguments for socialism. In much of the data we look at, we find two contradicting things happening at the same time.

I have tried to use microtrends when doing my own professional political analysis; for instance, when on [*London Live News*](#) following the local election results in May 2018, I made a point of pointing out the lessons for the Conservative Party were bi-polar:

“This was a tale of two elections; The election in London, where the Conservatives didn’t do as well as they would have liked, they lost ground, where there was a Brexit backlash, where we have seen the Liberal Democrats gain because of Brexit, where a very sort of David Cameron-style, George Osborne style message would go down very well compared to what was going on in the rest of the country where they were able to gain councils like Basildon and Peterborough because of UKIP voters coming back.”

I stand by most of that analysis. In London you had seen a *Brexit Backlash*, as metropolitan Tory voters didn’t turn out, feeling little enthusiasm for the Party of Brexit. Outside of London, there was a *Brexit Bounce* where many former UKIP voters came home to the Conservatives, because before Chequers they saw them delivering on Brexit.

The danger of headlines touting a Conservative majority is that traditional Labour or swing voters will consider Labour to be so far behind in the polls that they don't have to worry about Jeremy Corbyn becoming Prime Minister.

In 2017, Theresa May did not pour enough cold water on the stories about the Conservatives heading for a landslide majority and, in a way, the last General Election became a series of Parliamentary by-elections taking place across the country simultaneously.

The expectation that the Conservatives were "*home and dry*" and that Theresa May would be safely returned as Prime Minister in the General Election of 2017 took the issue of leadership of the executive off the table for many voters.

The *Cult of Corbyn* which developed in the wake of that election was misguided in many ways; one of those was the idea that Labour exceeded expectations due to the popularity of Mr. Corbyn, when in reality, they exceeded expectations because the electorate thought Mr. Corbyn didn't stand a cat in hell's chance of actually becoming Prime Minister.

The Conservative Party will not want a re-run of this on Thursday.

Boris Johnson is the public's preferred Prime Minister but if the electorate think that he has the election in the bag – the question of the election no longer becomes one of leadership. It is essential that the Conservatives keep reminding voters that the poll that matters is the one on Thursday and that their vote could make all the difference.

There will still be seats where voters are having to weigh up which is more important, voting for a good Labour constituency MP whom they respect or keeping Mr. Corbyn out of Downing Street. As the later concerns the government of the entire nation, most of these voters will come down on the side of keeping Mr. Corbyn out of Downing Street.

This means that any move made to prejudge the election or talk of Boris having “*got this*”; might cause the opposite outcome to occur and have Mr. Corbyn moving into Downing Street on Friday.

It appears that Sir. Vince Cable stepped away from the leadership of the Liberal Democrats at exactly the wrong time. Sir. Vince is a known and popular politician. He has Cabinet level experience having served as Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills from 2010 and 2015. He also has pop culture appeal having appeared on *Strictly Come Dancing*.

Although the Brexit Party were the big winners of this year’s election to the European Parliament, the Liberal Democrats were not too far off. They won the second largest share of the vote at 19.6% and increased the number of seats they had by 15, which given that they only manage to win a solitary seat in the 2014 European Parliament elections marked quite the turnaround.

Under Vince Cable, the Liberal Democrats ran in the European Parliament elections using the slogan “*Bollocks to Brexit.*” The slogan might have used bad language, but it was clever marketing. It was designed to get attention and it did. It also made it clear to voters which party was that of Remain, in that election.

Bizarrely, after bringing the Liberal Democrats back from the brink; Sir. Vince stepped down. He was replaced by the 37-year-old Jo Swinson. If Sir. Vince thought himself too old to be leader, many voters found Ms. Swinson too young.

As William Hague learnt, you don’t want to peak too early in politics. Additionally, Ms. Swinson would end up leading the Liberal Democrats into a General Election before the voters had even really been introduced to her. This kneecapped her chances from the start.

In a spectacular error of judgment, Ms. Swinson successfully pushed for the Liberal Democrats policy on Brexit to change from supporting a People’s Vote to saying that in

the impossible event they won a majority at the General Election, they would just revoke Article 50. It seemed neither Liberal nor Democratic.

During this General Election campaign, Sir. Vince would call the policy of scrapping Brexit without a *People's Vote* *"a distraction and not a very helpful one."*

Jo Swinson had made the mistake of a novice and voters felt that she lacked the gravitas of her predecessor. She began the campaign by throwing her toys out of the pram declaring that she should be included in the first TV Prime Ministerial debate between Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn, saying that she was a potential future Prime Minister. Most voters found this both delusional and arrogant. There were echoes of David Steel's 1981 speech to the Liberal/SDP Alliance in Llandudno:

"I have the good fortune to be the first Liberal Leader for over half a century who is able to say to you at the end of our annual Assembly: go back to your constituencies and prepare for government."

The Liberal/ SDP Alliance did not form the government after the 1983 General Election. In fact, they won only 23 seats in the 1983 General Election. To be fair to David Steel, the 1983 General Election was the high watermark for what eventually became the Liberal Democrats. They received 25.4% of the vote in that that election which was only 2.2% of the vote less than the Labour Party's 27.6%. Labour won 209 seats in that General Election, the reason being that the Labour vote was concentrated in particular seats whereas the SDP/ Alliance vote was more evenly distributed across the country.

This goes to show the danger of prejudging the result of an election based upon national polls. To win you don't necessarily need the most votes, you need the most seats.

The Conservative Party won 321 seats in the 1951 General Election giving Winston Churchill a 20-seat majority with which to govern. The Liberals had won 6 seats with 2.5% of the vote and Labour won 295 seats with 48.8%. The Conservatives had won a

lower percentage of the vote share with 48.0% but due to our First-Past-The-Post electoral system were able to form a government.

Turnout remains key. One of the reasons that John Major was able to claim an upset victory in the 1992 General Election was that he was able to turn out the Tory vote. The percentage of the electorate who turned out to vote in the 1992 General Election was 77.7%; the biggest since 1959, when 78.7% of the electorate voted.

The high turnout was also driven by a sense that many voters felt to borrow a phrase from Lyndon B. Johnson's 1964 Presidential campaign, "*The stakes are too high for you to stay at home.*"

It now seems to be a distinct possibility that Jo Swinson will face the remarkable rebuke of losing her own seat of East Dunbartonshire. She has lost it before in 2015, only to win it back in 2017.

The sinking of Jo Swinson has allowed the 90s tribute act of Tony Blair and John Major to take the reins of the *Stop Brexit* movement from her. A bit like how Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger were action movie rivals in the 1980s but have now teamed up for *The Expendables* films; John Major and Tony Blair were political rivals in the 1990s and teamed up for a *Final Say* rally, last Friday.

Tony Blair's influence should not be underestimated. It is not true that the Iraq War turned the former Prime Minister into a pariah. It obviously was not a popular conflict, but it should not be forgotten that he was re-elected as Prime Minister with a 66-seat majority in 2005, after the Iraq War.

Tony Blair was Prime Minister for 10 years and although the *War on Terror* and Iraq War will always be a part of his legacy, it is not his whole legacy. Just as Brexit is part of David Cameron's legacy, is not his whole legacy. As it is, I supported the Iraq War and was arguing that we should leave the European Union as far back as 2002.

When Tony Blair left office the entire House of Commons chamber, including the opposition benches gave him a standing ovation. David Cameron and George Osborne are known to have referred to Mr. Blair as “The Master.”

What Tony Blair is skillfully trying to do now, with the help of his former rival John Major, is to give their traditional supporters permission to vote tactically. Their message is that there is no danger of Corbyn government, without his being significantly restrained at least, so that for those who want to remain in the European Union they should vote tactically to ensure a hung Parliament so that Remain MPs can force a second referendum.

As the standard bearers for their respective parties both Major and Blair are telling their traditional supporters that it is ok for them to break with their tribal loyalties, if it is to achieve this end. Given both of these men have impressive political track records the Conservative Party should realise that in the final days the voice of the so-called *Remain Alliance* is no longer the ineffectual Jo Swinson but instead two former Prime Minister’s. They should change their strategy accordingly.

The challenge in the final days is to secure the votes of Labour leavers whilst managing to reach out to those liberal Conservatives who voted for David Cameron and also voted to Remain. They might also be tempted to try and vote tactically having been given the signal to do so by politicians they deem “sensible” in John Major and Tony Blair.

Their strategy would be to force Boris Johnson into passage of his deal at the price of a 2nd referendum. This makes it a double-edged sword for the Conservative Party to push the message that there is a risk of a hung Parliament in this election.

Tactical voting could cost the Conservatives a majority in this election. I believe that those voters voting to Get Brexit Done will have got that message loud and clear throughout the campaign. I would recommend spending the final days using bite-sized achievable policies to remind voters who are liberal Conservatives that whilst they

might not agree with the Conservative Party on Brexit, it is still with them with a vision of building a brighter future.

In April, Brad Parscale, the campaign manager for President Trump's re-election campaign was interviewed by *Face the Nation*. During the interview he explained how targeting different parts of the message at different voters didn't change President Trump's agenda – it just meant voters were having the part of his message most relevant to them communicated to them by the campaign. According to Mr. Parscale:

“So what happens is the president sets his policies. Those are what they are. Now those policies are – have a range of things. On person at, you know, 1300 Elm Street could really care about immigration. But at 1305 Elm Street, they could really care about tariff policy. Now that doesn't mean we're changing what the president's message is to them. We are showing them the part of the message that's right for them.”

I think Mr. Parscale put it very well. Just because I say that the Conservative Party work to sure up the votes of those liberal Conservatives in the final days will not take away from the fact that the next Conservative government will *Get Brexit Done*.

As Robert Redford memorably asks at the end of the classic 1972 film *The Candidate*:

“What do we do now?”

What Do We Do Now?

A Uniter, Not A Divider

The overarching theme of unity should be at the heart of the messaging for the final days. The theme I propose – A Uniter, Not A Divider – in one short phrase perfectly encapsulates Boris’ strengths whilst at the same time highlighting Corbyn’s weaknesses.

As nothing in campaigns can be said to be truly original, the phrase “*a uniter, not a divider*” has been appropriated from the 2000 US Presidential campaign when the Texas Governor used it to draw a contrast between his and his opponent then-Vice-President Al Gore.

But as in campaign it is the initial impressions which are the most important, only the most hardcore of American politics junkies would immediately know of which campaign we were paying homage to.

Make America Great Again used by Donald J. Trump in 2016 was lifted from a phrase used by Ronald Reagan in his Presidential campaign of 1980; but considering the typical American voter only came to know this, if they came to know it at all, was because they heard or read some political pundit mention it when going into the weeds of campaign minutiae, the phrase became associated in the popular consciousness with the first person they heard recently use it – Donald J. Trump.

Thus, the just as the phrase *Make America Great Again* became synonymous with Donald J. Trump; so too can the phrase *A Uniter, Not A Divider* become synonymous with Boris Johnson.

Byte-Sized Policies

President Bill Clinton might be known as a natural politician but like all politicians, his career has had ups and downs. One of those downs was when the Democrats lost both the House of Representatives and the Senate in the 1994 US Midterms.

Before the midterms, he asked Dick Morris, who had been his pollster when Governor of Arkansas to do some polling for him. [According to Mr. Morris:](#)

“He (Clinton) brought me in to do some polling for him in the months, weeks really before the '94 election. And what I urged him to do was to focus on the small-bore achievements that he'd had. He has appointed pro-choice judges to the court. He had passed Family and Medical Leave. He had set up AmeriCorps, the domestic equivalent of the Peace Corps. He'd done a lot of small things like that. And I said people will like those. They'll believe that you did them and they'll be very effective in helping get your people re-elected.

But in a conference call with Bill and Hillary; Bill kept saying 'I created 6 million jobs. I lowered interest rates. I cut the deficit by a third. I want credit for all that stuff.' And I said, 'the polling shows people won't believe that.' And I said, 'the polling shows people won't believe that.' But he said 'Nope. I want credit. I did it. I'm going to educate them.' And Hillary said 'Bill, don't try and get elected for the right reasons, just try to win the election.' But Clinton wouldn't listen and proceeded down that road.”

Bill Clinton didn't listen to Dick Morris and now had to deal with the new Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich and Republican Revolution, as the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years.

Bill Clinton called up Dick Morris again and this time brought him in to mastermind his political comeback and plot his course to re-election in 1996, which Mr. Morris did skillfully. He used a collection of “small-bore” policies to create a larger values agenda which went down extremely well with the public.

He explained this in his book [The New Prince: Machiavelli Updated for the Twenty-First Century](#). The book came out in the aftermath of Clinton's Impeachment trial, in which the President maintained record high approval ratings. According to Mr. Morris:

“President Clinton issues almost daily messages through press conferences, media events and speeches to suggest measures aimed at meeting the needs of America’s families in their daily lives. Each day, Clinton speaks out on topics like teen smoking, drunk driving, school construction, educational standards, college scholarships, guns in schools, TV violence and sexual content, computers in classrooms, cell phones for community watch groups, and school uniforms and curfews.

The media constantly belittles these initiatives as ‘bite-sized’ and laments the absence of bold, sweeping presidential vision. When the media covers his statements, it is through a veil of criticism, calling the ideas ‘small-bore’, ‘opportunistic,’ and ‘unpresidential.’

But the voters seek out the ideas they want and read the president’s statements, ignoring the media’s criticism. Day after day, these ‘small-bore’ ideas have held up the president’s popularity, demonstrating his connection to the problems of the average person despite the daily pounding of scandal and congressional hearings.”

It is my suggestion that in the final days of this campaign, Boris Johnson and the Conservative Party lay out a series of bite-sized policies which put together form a values or General Wellbeing agenda designed to appeal to those liberal Conservatives for whom the message of *Get Brexit Done* has no appeal. This is not to negate the message of *Get Brexit Done* but to add an optimistic, achievable vision to Conservative Party’s message.

Continuity Cameron

On the bread and butter issue of the economy, *the Great Recession of 2008* exposed Gordon Brown's claim to have ended the cycle of *boom and bust* for the fallacy it was.

The Conservative opposition led now by David Cameron had to change its campaign strategy on a dime, if it wanted to wrest power from the New Labour, Labour Party in the forthcoming General Election.

Gone was the talk of *General Wellbeing* being of equal concern to the nation's GDP. That had been messaging crafted to appeal to an electorate which had become used to a sustained, prolonged period of economic prosperity.

Because New Labour had failed to legislate to secure our nation's prosperity in the economically sunny days of the late 90s and early-to-mid 00s, the nation found itself exposed to global markets and their fluctuations, more than it ever should have.

This meant that the Conservative Party had to once more assume the role of a clean-up crew and were not able to show the country their vision for a society at ease with itself.

It is worth noting how in the months preceding the 2008 market crash how well this message had gone down with the electorate. Boris' election as Mayor of London, followed by the Conservative Party's victory in the Crewe and Nantwich by-election, which followed soon thereafter, seemed to indicate, what former President George H. W. Bush called, "*the big Mo*" was with the Conservative Party.

That forward momentum came to a screeching halt with the 2008 financial crisis. Gordon Brown although bearing almost total responsibility for the country's unpreparedness to weather the storm, managed to reap some political benefit from it.

His narrative essentially became that in a time of crisis you need to have a grown-up in charge. David Cameron had to ditch talk of *General Wellbeing* because when people are losing their jobs and the economy is in freefall, talking about how we should have equal concern for *General Wellbeing* as for the country's GDP doesn't go down well on the doorstep.

Because it took the better part of a decade to clean-up Labour's mess, many in Conservative HQ still have the mindset of the "*Age of Austerity*". However, in this election whilst there might have been political paralysis when it came to Parliament, when it comes to pocketbook issues; in this election voters are making their choice in a time of peace and prosperity.

This means that the Conservative Party should look back to what message worked for them best when they last fought elections during a time of peace and prosperity.

Policy Proposals

Here are just a few policy proposals that the Conservative Party should put forward in the final days.

The technological changes which have made our lives easier in some ways have also resulted in certain negative unintended consequences when it comes to society.

Politicians have always had to deal with a certain amount of press scrutiny, which occasionally crosses the line. Now this problem is one shared with the public, as social media puts people under consistent peer scrutiny, which also occasionally crosses the line.

Young people especially are facing mental health issues as a result of the rise of social media, be it living with a sense of social isolation or body image issues.

While the giant social media companies are amassing wealth, influence and power; they are doing little to compensate society for the negative externalities of their services. This is an issue which will have to be dealt with by the next government. But for parents, teachers and caregivers; they need help dealing with this social crisis now. This is a problem that keeps them up at night and it is one of *General Wellbeing*.

An inexpensive and achievable policy for the Conservative Party to put before the electorate is to put forward a scheme, similar to one currently running in New Jersey, of providing workshops for those parents, teachers and caregivers who are having to look after adolescents attached or addicted to smart phones and/or social media. It is all well and good providing lessons in school for teens about mental health and social media, where because they are teens, a sizable percentage of the classroom will not be paying attention, but we are not providing those who care for them, the tools with which to look after them.

In this “*brave new world*” there is no user’s manual for parents because we have not been here before. The parenting challenges they faced are not ones faced by their parents or anyone before them. It would be unsurprising to find many of them feeling that they were going into this blind.

What parents want is not the *Nanny State* to tell them how to look after their kids but government that has their backs and can provide them with the tools to cope with the challenges of parenting in the 21st century.

Another reasonably inexpensive byte-sized policy that the Conservatives should announce in the final days would make a huge difference to those in adult social care by making positive use of new technology. Virtual Reality headsets, which retail at around £2,300 each, allow those elderly people with limited mobility to be transported to special places without having to leave their safe environment. A start-up in Akron, Ohio has piloted a program of taking senior citizens on virtual reality trips. They found it eases pain, anxiety and stress. Virtual Reality is proven clinically to mitigate pain by 30%. It also helps combat the sense of isolation.

Young people can often find themselves in need of their ID; slightly older people do to. In October, Governor Jared Polis of Colorado signed an executive order launching a Colorado Digital ID, as part of their myColorado app. Given that we can use our smart phones to travel on public transport in London and pay for goods and services on our credit and debit cards, it seems silly that government hasn’t caught up with the times.

Theresa Szczurek who is Head of the Governor’s Office of Information Technology said of the Colorado Digital ID:

“The world has gone mobile and so has Colorado... Coloradans would like to access State government services in the same way they do other transactions, and that is securely, anywhere, anytime from their smartphone.”

Most voters don't believe the Labour Party when it promises universal, free broadband. They also balk at the potential cost. A digital ID, similar to the one available in Colorado, might not be as flashy as free broadband, but it is achievable and realistic. Many voters would find it a convenience that the government could achieve at an inexpensive cost. The Conservatives should announce this policy in the final days.

One of the roles of government is to stop people falling through the cracks. Around 90% of adults with autism are either unemployed or underemployed. This is completely unacceptable in a civilised society.

A New York non-profit *Luv Michael* [looks to empower adults with autism](#). *Luv Michael* is a granola kitchen where the product is made predominantly by adults with autism.

Their aim is to provide a protective environment for adults with autism who have aged out of school and to give them a sense of belonging. The kitchen is upstairs in their Tribeca facility and there is a classroom downstairs where certified special education teachers teach the paid employees to be food handlers.

The Conservative Party should either set up or assist the setting up of facilities modelled on *Luv Michael* across the UK.

The final policy is to work with business in providing more after-school activities for kids as part of their corporate social responsibility. The policy is laid out in more detail in a paper I wrote with Dr. Peter Hill, earlier in the year; [Tackling Knife Crime Through After-School Activities](#).

