Twitter Thread by Richard Bentall #FBPE #3.5% Project We Told You So



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@RichardBentall

1/19

I am pretty annoyed about Starmer's statement about FoM on the Marr Show today, but I'm still not sure what the thinking behind it is. If it's just that this is not the time to talk about EU allignment, fair enough, but it could have been expressed in a more nuanced way.

2/19

Because, rest assured, there will have to be a reallignment with the EU. This will be necessitated not only by the economics but also, most likely, by unfolding events in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

3/19

I am not convinced that complete endorsement of the Tory's Brexit is required to win back the red wall seats; its not what a careful analysis of polling says and it's, frankly, treating red wall voters as idiots while pandering to their supposed idiocy (pretty patronising).

4/19

Given the well-documented harms caused to border trade, UK-based European hub distribution centres, manufacturing (e.g. BASF) and fishing that have emerged just in the first week, it's pretty obvious that THIS Brexit can't be a success.

5/19

Indeed, given that these problems have emerged in a period when cross-border trade has been at a minimum we can bet that things are going to get much worse, as the odious Gove has admitted.

6/19

This economic puncture will be accompanied by hundreds of stories of the misery caused by small Brexits (e.g. people held

up at the Dutch border today, SMEs being unable to export, cost of sending stuff to friends in the EU, pet passports etc.); some we're seeing already.

7/19

There will be also other Brexit insults: refusal to join Erasmus (which the defective Turing scheme will not adequately replace) and the troubles experienced by artists wanting to perform abroad - all wounds inflicted in the name of nationalist ideology.

8/19

And let's not forget events in the United States. Biden is a strong friend of Ireland; who knows what dirt will be found when his team takes over the White House? Trump and Farage were like evil twins; Trumpism and Brexit are part of the same ubernationalist project.

9/19

For all of these reasons and more, it is vital that Labour positions itself so it can hold the Tory government to account for the damage it has caused. Ok, give Brexit as an idea conditional support but certainly not unconditional support for THIS Brexit.

10/19

Which takes me to what Europeans should be doing and the attitude they should have to @UKLabour. I left the party under Corbyn and rejoined under Starmer. Right now I'm hold my nerve.

11/19

We know that lots of Labour members and MPs are pro-European: https://t.co/7cVfet3LTX

12/19

We also know that Labour policy can be influenced by its members and that public opinion can change - very rapidly under some circumstances (hardly anyone wanted to leave the EU in early 2015).

13/19

So a plausible way forwards involves a three-prong strategy:

1) I agree with @nicktolhurst that no party can campaign to rejoin right now. Instead we need to identify an intermediate step. It is not difficult to make a strong case for joining EFTA/EEA and/or customs union

14/19

2) We need a national nonparty pro-European campaign group which will openly make the case for (1). I see lots of interest in forming such a group, and fragmented groups already existing. How do we come together?

15/19

The campaign group should make a big fuss about every loss and f*ck up caused by THIS Brexit and should argue for piecemeal changes to the treaties which ease border problems and allign us more with the EU. This can be done while accepting 'Brexit' (but not THIS Brexit).

16/19

The campaign group needs a social media strategy. The far right have shown that Twitter, Facebook etc can be used to drive public opinion. Let's do this (while striving to be ethical). We need something like the US Lincoln Project. This requires funding - from where?

17/19

3) Pro-Europeans need to stay in Labour and use our influence to change the party from within. This shouldn't be too hard as more and more Brexit f*ck ups become evident, especially given that most Labour members are already there.

18/19

What we SHOULD NOT do is undermine Labour's chance of winning GE2024 - even a Brexit supporting Labour Party is infinitely better than the current extreme right Trumpian Tory Nationalist Party.

19/19

We must do the groundwork this year. We need to be energetic, canny, careful and, above all, persistent.

We can take back control. We can get our country back.