

Ian Murray steps down as Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland



Ian Murray MP for Edinburgh South

There is only one Labour MP in Scotland, Ian Murray who represents Edinburgh South, and he was appointed to the Shadow Cabinet as Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland in 2015.

Since the EU Referendum vote there has been a considerable political fallout. And now the Labour MP who campaigned for the Remain side has decided that he no longer has confidence in the Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, and is standing down. He is not alone.

More than half of the shadow cabinet has also resigned this morning.

Confidence appears to be seeping away from Corbyn, widely seen as the reason that the Remain campaign did not work. Meanwhile, the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, Tom Watson, has been witnessed partying till 4am at Glastonbury, and it appears that the official opposition is in disarray.

Murray posted this on Facebook just ahead of the weekend :

I rarely, if ever, post my political thoughts on Facebook, beyond a campaigning pic or a Twitter retweet. I felt tonight that it was necessary to put down some of my thoughts on the decision made by the people of the UK last night to leave the EU.

Over the last few years politics has turned into a game of the lowest common denominator. No longer do facts actually matter. What matters is what you can make people believe.

When the political system is built on such a premise the emotion of a vote overtakes the facts and any questioning of the emotional proposition is deemed "scaremongering". It is simplistic in the extreme to denounce basic concerns and questions as "scaremongering" because they paint a picture that is contrary to your own.

In terms of the EU referendum the "scaremongering" by the experts have, as of today, been correct. A massive devaluation of the £ against all world currencies, a collapse in the stock market that protects your pensions and savings, and an uncertain economic outlook that will reduce the countries credit rating. Why does this matter? Because a poorer UK economy means less money for public services, higher borrowing rates and lower jobs growth.

I don't care what any ideology espouses. If you want to take a decision that reduces the opportunities for young people, depresses wages, increases mortgages, diminishes our place in an ever globalised world and increases insecurity then we should not go down that route.

I fully understand why people have voted to leave the EU but it has been generated on false premises (Farage admits £350m to the NHS was not going to happen and his right hand man Hannan MEP says "immigration may not come down" just hours after the leave camp were declared winners.

I have been a believer all my political life that there is no right or wrong in politics but it boils down to your values and what you believe in. However, that can't apply if the adage is believing rather than facts. We are living in a post factual democracy.

And politicians have lost the confidence and ability to stand firm on an argument and try and win the debate. We can't continue with a politics of hate. We can't continue with a politics of mistruths. We can't continue with a politics that

treats the voters with ignorance and contempt.

And the worst thing for Scotland at the moment? A drive towards a second independence referendum. I know that sentence will open up a raft of social media abuse but I'm used to it by now.

We should be coming together, cross party, to work with the FM, PM and the Chancellor on making sure we don't lose jobs and our economy is not harmed by Brexit. The talk of indyref2 muddies those waters and only increases the potential problems.

As someone who represents a constituency that said NO to Scottish Independence by 65:35 and Remain by 78:22 I know what people are saying.

How can we justify the first act post EU referendum debate be to turn our political discourse into being consumed by another Scottish Independence Referendum when the economic case is as bad as it has ever been? How can we be talking about the EU with the Euro and Schengen when 40% of Scots have voted against those very principles. How can we prevent a situation where we end up with perpetual grievance upon grievance and uncertainty upon uncertainty?

Of course no avenue should be closed down at this constitutional crisis in Scotland but let's not throw the baby out with the bath water. The UK leaving the EU makes the case, in economic and political terms, all the more difficult in terms of Scotland leaving the UK now.

We need to pause, take half a step back, work together and DO WHAT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF SCOTLAND, rather than what is in the best interests of the lifelong goals of the SNP (and before you all rant that this is SNP Bad it is not. It is a statement of fact).

I'm heartbroken and disappointed today. Heartbroken because

we have decided to turn inwards as a country rather than outwards and disappointed that all the things we hold dear to our hearts like solidarity, compassion and comradeship have been cast aside.

People have had a particularly hard time since the worldwide economic crash of 2008 but the response from politicians and parliaments has been inadequate and perceived as very unfair. That is the genesis of this leave vote. A protest against both the establishment (whatever that means) and a quest for something that seems better but can't be delivered. Most of the UKs problems are not the fault of the EU or immigration but the worldwide economic crash and this Conservative Government.

Who knows what the future holds. For today and tonight it is a very bleak picture. For tomorrow, lets not wrench Scotland out of the UK and make the same mistakes for the second time.

And finally, let's spare a thought for the hundreds of our own colleagues who have lost their jobs and livelihoods tonight in Europe. They are the real heroes but have been cast aside as if nothing else matters but "taking control". Well the Leave side will now have to take control of the spiralling economic difficulties, the constitutional crisis, the potential break up of the UK and the retraction of the UK to a minor bit player in geopolitics. It will be more like out of control.

The promises given to the people of Britain were plentiful from the Leave camp. They can't deliver them and it is the poorest, as always, that will suffer the most.

This isn't "Independence Day" but a sad day for a once proud country that led the world in all the big issues of the day from climate change, international poverty reduction, financial controls and multilateral nuclear disarmament. Britains power to influence these in issues is now much

diminished.

We all have more in common than that which divides us so let's stop exploiting those divisions and insecurities to win a political debate that damages those that we seek to represent.