

It is occasionally noted that these columns can be cynical in tone. To refute this spurious and unfounded accusation, let me begin by congratulating Jeremy Corbyn for successfully uniting his party....to vote for the Liberal Democrats in the recent European Elections.

Snigger.

You must feel sorry for Magic Grandpa though. Since ascending to the throne, Jezza has overseen defeat at the 2017 General Election, retreats at 2 sets of local elections and the ignominy of finishing below the Liberal Democrats in a European Election. It is not the performance of a government in waiting no matter how much his Twitter army claim to the contrary. Mind you, it is a performance that surpasses that achieved by the Conservative Party. The self-proclaimed natural party of government has watched its councillor base evaporate and seen its MEPs reduced to a number small enough that they'd all fit inside a taxi.

Which is precisely what has been ordered for Mrs May.

Yep. The end of the least exciting will-she-won't-she story has concluded with Mrs May announcing her departure for June 7th. She'll hang around as PM until the next leader is chosen following a process expected to conclude by the end of July. So far, everyone but the kitchen sink has declared an interest in succeeding her. God knows why. I honestly cannot think of a less appealing job right now than trying to manage Brexit through Parliament. Boris Johnson starts as the warm favourite, with other names in the mix including Dominic Raab, Sajid Javid, Jeremy Hunt, Michael Gove and Kit Malthouse (Google is your friend...). So far, discussions have centred around who will tell the European Union that no deal is very much back on the table in the harshest terms, which presumably means speaking louder and slower in the hope they understand. For those who cannot face the prospect of watching the contest closely, I wholeheartedly recommend following Rory Stewart on Twitter as somebody running a more unusual campaign that has, so far, included debating Brexit at a McDonalds in Barking and confessing to smoking opium at a wedding. We're a long way from the Maybot running through fields of wheat...

All this has happened, in part, because everyone's favourite political beer swigger and chain smoker has remerged to win the European Elections. Nigel Farage 2.0 is upon us. Same style, but better advisers, Farage has burst back on the scene with a party that has no policies, no members and no executive committee to trounce all before him and give us the spectacle of Ann Widdicombe going to Brussels. The last tango in Paris will be an unedifying one if Strictly is any guide... If it is, let us not forget, what the people want, and democracy ensures they will get it good and hard. They also however wanted increased representation for the Green Party and the Liberal Democrats. Both had stupendous nights and Vince Cable departs the stage with his head held high as one of the true big beasts of modern politics. Alas, things did not turn out quite so well for ChangeUK, although watching your interim leader endorse another party on the eve of the poll is perhaps not optimal preparation. As for UKIP, they managed to win more milkshakes than votes and few tears will be shed as Tommy Robinson and Sargon of Akkad return to the online world of fringe politics.

And yet, for all the excitement of the last month, it really is plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. New leaders don't change either the arithmetic of parliament or the attitude of our European comrades. When the dust settles on what has been a fascinating month, the cold hard reality of extracting the UK from the EU will continue. New brooms...same ticking clock.