

The government should not lurch right but get it right

There is a run of commentary urging the Prime Minister to avoid a lurch to the right. I agree with them that saying so called right wing things in the hope that people will come back from Reform is not going to work.

The government needs to carry through its stated policies of cracking down on illegal migration and making big reductions in legal migration as promised. It needs to cut taxes more and set out a path to lower tax rates after the election. It needs to tackle the productivity collapse in the public services and get more people into better paid work. It needs to actively promote growth.

The commentators should grasp that a lurch to the left is also a very bad idea. The pro EU Conservatives have in the past done Labour type damage to country and party. Edward Heath in office lurched to the left introducing price, wage and dividend controls, presided badly over a strike, put us into the European Community and duly lost the election. John Major pushed us into the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. This delivered a boom/ bust disaster as a few of us predicted . It led directly to a colossal electoral defeat when the full damage of this EU policy became obvious. It was only a worse Labour Boom /Bust in 2009 that got Conservatives back into office. Theresa May tacked away from the Brexit she was meant to deliver and devised a bad social care policy. She managed to lose an election, only clinging on with help from the DUP. She lost support of many Conservative MPs for wanting a Labour style sell out to Brussels.

Similar voices to those who lost us those three elections and three Prime Ministers are now urging Rishi Sunak to backtrack on lower taxes and lower migration, encouraging him to cosy up to the EU, regulate more things and be governed by the views of international lawyers. History tells us this is a bad course for Conservative leaders to follow.