

News story: Foreign Secretary statement on civil society in Egypt

I am deeply concerned by recent moves to restrict political and civil society life in Egypt, including an intrusive new NGO law, arrests of political party activists and the blocking of news websites.

Our vital fight against terrorism should not be confused with obstructing peaceful democratic and social participation. The best long term defence against extremism is to protect people's right to contribute freely and peacefully to a strong economy and open society.

SNP manifesto: what it means for businesses

We have now launched our manifesto for the General Election on 8 June. It's packed full of ideas on how we can protect jobs, boost economic growth and improve productivity.

Mackinlay should do the decent thing and endorse the Brexit candidate in South Thanet

Following the announcement by the Crown Prosecution Service that charges are being brought against the former MP and current Tory candidate in Thanet South, Craig Mackinlay and others over electoral fraud in the last election, Nigel Farage has said,

"Am I pleased that these charges have been brought? Yes, but I believe there should be more people being charged due to what looks like wholesale electoral fraud by the Tories in recent by-elections and during the last election.

"What it means now it will be a straight fight between Labour and UKIP and I will be in Thanet tomorrow to support our excellent candidate."

Sturgeon again pledges to prop up Corbyn government

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- Sturgeon again pledges to prop up Corbyn government

2 Jun 2017



Nicola Sturgeon has again promised to help Jeremy Corbyn form a government – this time by saying she’ll support the Labour leader on an “issue by issue” basis.

It’s the latest indication from both Labour and the SNP that they are plotting a post-election alliance.

The First Minister appeared on Radio 4’s Today programme, where she admitted the SNP wanted to form a “progressive alternative” with Labour.

If follows admissions from Labour sources that they wanted to “cut a deal” with parties like the SNP after next week’s vote.

The Scottish Conservatives warned Labour that the nationalists’ first demand would be a second independence referendum, something Jeremy Corbyn has said he’s “absolutely fine” with.

Scottish Conservative candidate for Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk, John Lamont, said:

“Nicola Sturgeon made it clear today that she’d be happy to form an alliance with Jeremy Corbyn next Friday.

“Top of her shopping list would be a second referendum.

“And given Mr Corbyn has said he’s ‘absolutely fine’ with this, there is a real risk of them dragging Scotland back to yet more division.

“As today’s poll reveals, Labour is too weak to take on the SNP right across Scotland.

“That means there is only one way to stop Nicola Sturgeon in her tracks next week and that is by voting for Ruth Davidson and the Scottish Conservatives.

“We are on the up, we have what it takes to beat the SNP and we can send Nicola Sturgeon a message she can’t ignore.

"It's quite clear after today: a vote for Labour risks a second referendum. A vote for the Scottish Conservative can stop it."

For more on the story, visit:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2017-40131538>

Labour sources said the party wants to "cut a deal" with the SNP on June 9:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/04/reports-state-labour-will-pursue-election-deal-with-snp/>

And the first item on Nicola Sturgeon's shopping list would be a second referendum:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/05/sturgeon-and-corbyn-confirm-indy-ref2-would-be-first-priority-of-snp-labour-alliance/>

Green Party: We will stand up for free movement



2 June 2017

*** Party points to OBR statistics which show negative economic effect of ending free movement**

*** Lucas wants Britain to retain free movement, and remain a member of the Single Market**

The Green Party will today launch a staunch defence of free movement. Speaking in Sheffield the party's co-leader Caroline Lucas and former leader, Natalie Bennett will defend migrants' contribution to Britain and pledge their support for continued free movement within Europe.

Caroline Lucas, who was one of few politicians to stand up for free movement in the EU Referendum, will say that migration has 'enriched' Britain both culturally and economically. She will slam the other parties for 'failing to make the case for free movement' and accuse the Tories of 'facilitating a race to the bottom on migration' and 'sacrificing our economy on the altar of ending free movement'.

She will point to figures from the Office of Budget responsibility which show that cutting migration to 185,000 (well above the Tories' target) will cost the treasury up to £6bn [1].

A recent study by the London School of Economics has blown apart a number of

key myths around migration [2], saying: "Immigrants pay more in taxes than they take out in welfare and use of public services. UK-born individuals, on average, take out more in welfare and benefits than they pay in taxes. So immigrants help to reduce the budget deficit. There is little evidence that immigrants have negative effects on crime, education, health or social housing."

Caroline Lucas is expected to say:

"The Green Party is proud to celebrate free movement and the huge contribution that migrants have made to Britain. It's easy to blame immigration for the lack of school places or GPs but it's also wrong. Free movement has hugely benefited our economy and made our communities richer. The challenge is to ensure we all share those benefits more fairly and equally.

"Free movement enriches and diversifies our communities. A culture that's rich in diversity is exposed to new ways of thinking, new ideas, new languages and new opportunities. It is outward thinking, rather than self-limiting.

"The economic arguments for free movement are strong too. We'd be a poorer country without the taxes EU nationals pay, and the work they do in our hospitals, care homes and councils. Without free movement, there is a very real risk that the economy will not be able to generate enough tax take to support current levels of investment in the NHS or other public services – levels which have already been cut to the bone."

Natalie Bennett, who is herself a migrant from Australia, will say:

"Britain's political culture is awash with migrant-blaming rhetoric. As someone who came to this country from abroad, and is now proud to call it my home, I find it particularly disturbing to see politicians continuing to blame all of this country's problems on migration. We know that cuts to schools, our hospitals in crisis and the housing shortage are the fault of failed government policies, not migrants. Migrants may be a convenient scapegoat for those in power, but the truth is that people coming to Britain from abroad make a huge contribution to our economy and our society."

Notes:

1. <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2016/11/6bn-year-cost-cutting-immigration>
2. <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/ea039.pdf>

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