

Labor riding high in the polls

But wealth redistribution doesn't work forever

[Alan Moran](#)



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The Coalition, split over climate policy between wets and dries, faces an existential crisis.

While Labor is riding high in the opinion polls, it faces future headwinds as a result of the electorate not sharing the Labor elite's social philosophy. Most voters are far more concerned about a squeeze on living standards that they attribute, at least in part, to high immigration and climate policies.

And, as Alexander Downer has pointed out, political shifts across the world are, at the present juncture, far more dynamic than we have seen previously – especially towards what the establishment likes to call ‘far right’ parties.

There is no better example of this than in the UK, where Nigel Farage’s Reform UK has jumped from 7-30 per cent of the vote over the past two years.

Over the same period, similar, if less spectacular, shifts are seen elsewhere.

In Spain, the populist right VOX party has increased its share of the vote from 11-17 per cent, partly at the expense of the left (the established right of centre People Party saw its vote fall four points to 32 per cent). Meanwhile in Germany, we have seen the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) increase its polling from 21-26 per cent with the established Christian, Social and Free Democrats seeing their share fall from 50-42 per cent.

The traditional strength of the left has been its ability to attract votes from the less well-off majority by offering free stuff – which, of course, means seizing funding from the better off. In this way, a majority of people benefit at the expense of the minority who pay most of the taxes (Australia is typical, with the top 10 per cent of earners paying over half the income tax collected). Such expropriation will usually, sooner or later, impact adversely upon income levels and lead to leftist parties losing office or, as has mostly occurred in Scandinavian countries, remain in power only by making policy adjustments.

At one time, conservative parties also offered specific benefits to attract key voters: tariff protection, agricultural industry support, and restrictions on new membership of professions. Populist regulatory notions are still occasionally floated, like obligating supermarkets to increase the prices they pay farmers for produce. However, it is inconceivable – at least in Australia – that any such blandishments would form a serious part of conservative party platforms. Instead, where they are not matching or

reformulating the gifts offered by the left, the conservatives tend to focus – and only tentatively so – on reductions in spending and regulations.

This natural advantage of leftist parties have in being able to offer a majority of voters benefits at the expense of the minority is under pressure as a result of the changing composition of the left. This follows from its leading cadres and enthusiasts now comprising people who place a high priority on social matters. These elites have different values from most voters. As Victor Davis Hanson put it, the US the Democratic Party is on the periphery of general voter attitudes with regard to crime, the border, illegal immigration, foreign policy, energy, and transgender males competing in female sports.

While ordinary voters will go along with ideologically-driven policies like climate change, surveys by the IPA illustrate that, [in general](#), they place a low priority upon them. Other IPA research [shows considerable hostility](#) at a local level to wind farms.

When the implementation of Woke ideological policies has adverse effects – higher prices, migrant crime, a perceived institutional control over the family – voters will seek out other representatives.

While Scandinavian and German leftist (even green left) parties have proven to be somewhat successful in re-creating themselves and adopting policies pioneered by their adversaries, this is never easy. Many people comprising the elites who are in control of leftist parties are untethered to the economic imperatives of the hoi polloi. And some within the elites are direct beneficiaries of the leftist policy measures that are becoming socially and economically threatening – these include lawyers, social workers, and renewable energy subsidy recipients.

The political left can rarely simply abandon its most ardent and active supporters even when their influence risks electoral support.

This is illustrated by two issues that have recently surfaced in Victoria. Energy Minister Lily D'Ambrosio [has dismissed objections](#) to the proposed \$750m, 566ha, Meadow

Creek Solar Farm near Wangaratta. That same Labor government has continued support for children to be 'transitioned' without consultation with parents.

The mundane interests of the average voter in getting a better deal created modern Social Democratic and Labor Parties. For over a century in the Western world these parties have either been in power or have been denied power only by more conservative parties matching some of their redistributionist policies.

But members of leftist parties promoting traditional interests have gradually been displaced by others with strongly held views conditioned by social and environmental interests. These two wings can only co-exist if they are not inconsistent with each other. That this is increasingly no longer the case threatens the long established dominance of leftist political parties.