

Scotland & EU crisis: The project of a socialist Europe is now urgent and tangible

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THE PROJECT OF A SOCIALIST EUROPE IS NOW URGENT AND TANGIBLE

Vote counting has now started. We will know the referendum result within a few hours. It has been a tough few weeks, intense, at times oddly interesting, and full of surprises for us in the Left specifically. We saw responses we had never expected, and reactions we would have never guessed. This was an adventure designed by right-wing forces, a conflict between two different conservative tendencies which ended up affecting other groups in the British society in different ways. It was a strange experiment, and as it sometimes happens with experiments, there were a couple of unexpected results, particularly for the Left.

We lived some hard moments as we saw some of us taking (what some thought as) peculiar positions, directions we could not grasp. We argued for hours on end on social media, email lists and in steamy rooms. We delivered passionate speeches while noticing that some of us were looking at the floor. But this didn't stop us from going to the pub afterwards, drinking and chatting, hugging each other before leaving. These were some beautiful moments, more beautiful than we have realised.

In some strange way this referendum might have actually intensified the existing bonds between comrades. We argued very hard, but didn't fall out with each other. Perhaps this was possible because in the Left we have very different reasons to argue. Our disagreements generate so much anxiety because we feel responsible for protecting the world, society, the working class, the planet and the environment from the exploitation, greed and abuse of the elite. We don't argue for selfish reasons: to save our property, our bank account, privileges and tax exemption. We get impatient with each other because we are worried about the consequences of a wrong move for the future of the world. We feel responsible to stop our comrades from contributing to a future disaster.

We argued very hard about this referendum, but we still agreed on one thing: the importance of a strong left movement in Europe as a focus in our immediate next steps. We agreed on this 100% whether we were advocating Remain and Leave, and only disagreed about the method of how to get there. And because this was our point of connection, we kept repeating it, especially in the last few days. Something amazing has actually happened, the consequences of which we have not fully realised yet. It is not that we never knew the only solution for the future is a socialist Europe, and a powerful united European Left. Of course we knew this, because we are internationalists. But we knew it in a theoretical kind of way. Yet strange things can happen as part of the lived experience of the struggle. We can learn new things, we can become more aware of certain nuances, we can become more familiar with ideas and methods through living them, and this sometime triggers a qualitative change.

A change has happened this week. The idea of the socialist Europe became increasingly more present, more real, more tangible, more normal and more obvious in our thoughts, words and discussions. It established itself in our sentences, spoken and written, in each attempt we made to deal with the absurdity of this right-wing referendum. This is a major shift. We now know what we

have to do. We feel it. It has become part of our concrete way of thinking about the future, of our plans.

In or out of the European Union, a new chapter is starting tomorrow morning. The SSP, together with RISE and other left forces in Scotland, Britain and Europe, are ready to start building a powerful European Left movement. This task has now moved from theory to practice. It has now become a concrete project.

Some of us will be on our way to European countries tomorrow morning and over the weekend. There are elections in Spain and also the 10th Convention of the Left Bloc in Portugal. We want to share these important experiences with our European comrades. In or out of the European Union, we are more determined than ever before to build a socialist Europe. This is a qualitative change that came from the most peculiar process, our struggle to cope with the absurdity of this right-wing referendum.

Watch this space and join us in this new chapter. Let's work together for a powerful European Left.

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P.S.

* <https://www.scottishsocialistparty.org/project-socialist-europe-now-urgent-tangible/>

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