



Anne and Molly

**Agony Anne, globalisation's first 'agony aunt', offers sage advice to an anxious world.**

**This week, it's Britain's party leaders who have written to Anne to see what might be done about the dreaded UKIP threat.**

**Let's see what Anne has to say:**

Dear Hearts,

This week I've received an anxious letter from each of the UK's main party leaders. Flattered I am to be so honoured! But dismayed at the anguish and heartache they all so eloquently express.

David C, our valiant Prime Minister, is worried about the Conservatives' Eurosceptic underbelly leaching away to support UKIP. Ed M, meanwhile, is panicked by white working class supporters deserting Labour. And, Nick C tells me he's 'just plain worried'. Not a happy time. *Not* a happy time! I do understand how they must be feeling at the rise of the UKIP threat – the order of politics now thrown into chaos. What, they ask, is to be done? Strong emotions dominate their letters; denial, frustration, anger, powerlessness and fear. Poor, poor dears!

I have to tell you, dear reader, my canine companion, Molly, sadly passed away last summer. Never again to romp green and pleasant pastures with her. No more feisty debates on how to behave in polite society, no more spoiling her with dainty delicacies, no more jaunts to the salon for pawcues. It was so very unfair that she passed away. I really didn't want to believe it. How *could* it have happened to Molly – how could it have happened to *moi*! Coping has not been easy. Off topic, I hear you cry. But perhaps, dear hearts, my grieving process might hold a deeper truth for our dear and troubled party leaders.

For trying to deny loss, burying heads in the sand is never a good policy. Not only does it give one a pale pallor, reality inevitably comes back to haunt us if we choose not to face and work through our loss. By facing the maelstrom of our emotional turmoil we can reach a place of reconciliation with events beyond our control. Ultimately we will be in a different, stronger position than before and have a renewed sense of optimism for our future. Our *joie de vivre* will have returned!

But how? As I have written to David, Ed and Nick, the reality they must be reconciled to is that the potency of national party politics, even EU politics, is passed. Yes, my dearest hearts, it is gone – in any meaningful sense it is finished, dead, defunct, no longer! Thanks to globalisation and every nation's need to stay attractive to footloose global capital, all political parties are forced to adopt much the same competitiveness-oriented policies. The result of their "beauty contest" to keep Britain attractive to global business is that David, Ed and Nick now all look much the same! Little wonder we, voters, are deserting them in droves!

Molly, like me, adores a proper beauty contest. When she was with us, she loved nothing better than imagining herself to be the fairest Westy at Crufts. But, I ask you David, Ed and Nick, how can your beauty contest, fashioning your policies to make them attractive to global investors, corporations and markets do anything other than send voters straight to UKIP? How can it bring anything other than *more* inequality, more pollution, more fracking and more social injustice? You, our dear leaders, are the architects of your own demise!

For it is the forces of *globalisation* that have brought about the rise of UKIP and other right-wing parties – not Europe. It is not so much Europe that needs reforming, as politicians presume, but *globalisation*!

The global inequalities that drive economic migration are the global reality of which Europe is but a part. Being inside or outside Europe will make little difference. Neither, dear hearts, is unemployment Europe's fault. With labour costs being cheaper almost everywhere else than here, it is our dear political leaders themselves who must take the blame. For it is *they* who have failed to cooperate to reign in the global forces that make austerity, immigration and unemployment inevitable. Persist in blaming the wrong target, as we so often do when bereaved, and mark my words, dear hearts, our current troubles will only get worse. The solution to the UKIPs of this world lies not in tinkering with EU reform, but in realising that only *global cooperation* can offer a solution!



Grasp the global nettle and solve inequalities *globally*, dear hearts, and you'll solve the UKIP problem. Cooperate *globally* to stop the tax avoidance of the rich and the multinational corporations and you'll have the funds to spend on good public services and full employment. Cooperate *globally* to redistribute some of the wealth to developing countries, and mass economic migration will be a thing of the past. Cooperate *globally*, and you'll eliminate the forces that today feed the growing power of far-right parties. And yes, cooperate *globally*, and most importantly you'll restore meaning to our votes! Like my dearly departed Molly, you'll be truly beautiful once again!

Happily, dear Hearts, the clever Simultaneous Policy (Simpol) campaign holds out to we citizens and to politicians a clear pathway to achieving all this. Many may never have heard of it, but it now enjoys the confirmed support of 5 MEPs, adding to the 25 UK MPs from all the main parties who support it. David, Ed and Nick, take note! All this thanks to Simpol's small but spirited band of supporters who wrote to all candidates to tell them that Simpol-supporters give strong preference at all elections to candidates who have signed up to Simpol, to the likely exclusion of those who haven't.

Heavens above! Just think! Politicians who sign on have our votes and a global solution to gain. But those who don't could lose their seats: a feisty proposition if ever there was one! With many parliamentary seats and even entire elections won or lost on margins tighter than my girdle, it may not take many Simpol supporters to make it in the vital electoral interests of politicians to sign on to its global cooperation agenda.

So here, dear party leaders, is your lifeboat! My advice to you is to follow the good example of other politicians who already support Simpol: seize it with both hands! As Molly, bless her, would bark as she used to race across the lawn on spying a pigeon “carpe diem”.

With love from your beloved, Agony Anne [agony.anne@simpl.org](mailto:agony.anne@simpl.org)