



Political Notebook by George Pascoe-Watson

Britain's top pollster Peter Kellner brings his crystal ball to Portland's HQ tomorrow for an exclusive pre-election briefing - and what a weight is on his shoulders.

Who can now predict the outcome of General Election 2010 with any accuracy?

So much appears to have changed since last Thursday when the LibDems were trailing in the polls and facing the prospect of losing seats.

Nothing is now certain after last week's TV debate launched them into territory they have never visited before.

They can't win the general election - but they can change the course of history.

David Cameron's pitch to the nation - a youthful voice of change - seems to have been trumped by Nick Clegg.

Most of the electorate had never been exposed to the LibDem leader before and his assured performance, and ability to differentiate himself from his Tory and Labour rivals, have sent his party's ratings soaring.

Mr Cameron is now focusing on one message: a vote for the LibDems will guarantee five more years of a Gordon Brown premiership.

He has decided not to go for Nick Clegg's jugular but Tory HQ has agreed Mr Cameron must pull apart LibDem policy.

This morning Mr Cameron tore up plans for a party election broadcast which had been designed to attack the PM.

In its place he has recorded a film in which he pledges to clean up British politics in the wake of the MPs' expenses scandal.

You can bet he will spend more time in Thursday's round two televised debate talking at the cameras rather than his opponents and the studio audience.

I wonder whether or not Anita Dunn and Bill Knapp, President Obama's communications experts, gave Mr Cameron the right advice when they prepared him for last Thursday's opening debate.

Insiders say Mr Cameron will be "relentlessly positive" about his plans for government and steer clear from launching a personal assault on his LibDem rival.

But he will repeat the message: I'm the only man who can deliver change for Britain.

The Tory leader knows that 80% of voters - according to virtually all opinion polls - have already decided they want a new Prime Minister.

His task is to persuade enough people in the right constituencies to choose him.



A Labour and LibDem-run government would undoubtedly change the voting system forever, making the chances of a Conservative administration a distant prospect in the future.

There is much to play for.

My LibDem sources are, understandably, trying to keep their feet firmly on the ground after a raft of opinion polls showing they were in first place over the weekend.

And ICM poll for tomorrow's Guardian puts the Conservatives back in the lead on 33%, with the LibDems second on 30% and Labour trailing on 28%.

But they are prepared for a far more aggressive attack by both the PM and Mr Cameron in Thursday night's Sky News showdown.

Indeed, privately they tell me they would welcome the chance to talk about their manifesto to a public which has been virtually starved of LibDem information.

They say Mr Clegg is ready to be ganged up on so he can prove he has the answers, is seen as central to the debate in British politics, and can reinforce his message that he offers new politics whilst his rivals are stuck in their old-fashioned ways.

Some LibDem strategists tell me they are on course to win Tory seats in the marginals and far from losing MPs in this election, will increase their numbers dramatically.

It is certainly now impossible to predict the outcome of General Election 2010.

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