# Critics warn Starmer’s right-shift on immigration and welfare risks alienating Labour’s base



In the wake of significant political setbacks, Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer is facing mounting criticism for his approach, particularly concerning immigration and welfare policies. Commentator Tom Collins, in his column for The Irish News, has argued that Starmer's strategy of imitating right-wing sentiments is fundamentally flawed, especially in light of Labour's recent challenges in local elections.

Following disappointing results, Starmer has vowed to tackle economic issues by increasing financial support for citizens and enhancing the National Health Service (NHS). However, Collins questions the effectiveness of these commitments, suggesting that Starmer appears disconnected from the realities of many voters, particularly with cutbacks to benefits and a rising tax burden on hardworking individuals. "Voters anticipated that an incoming Labour government would confront enormous economic challenges given the Tories’ deliberate mismanagement," Collins asserts, yet many are increasingly frustrated that policies echo those of the right-leaning faction led by Farage.

Ironically, Starmer’s government seems to have adopted a stance on immigration that fails to acknowledge the contributions immigrants make to the economy. Collins argues that the Labour leadership should actively promote immigration instead of adopting defensive positions that mirror those of their opponents. This alarming trend reveals a troubling shift in political discourse, one that scornfully targets migrants at a time when unity and progress are more vital than ever.

Collins stresses that Starmer's electoral setbacks cannot be ignored, illustrating a growing disconnect between the party's direction and the values of its traditional supporters. Progressive voters, disillusioned by Labour’s shift towards punitive policies, might have opted to abstain from voting in the recent elections. He notes, “They did not support a Labour government intent on shadowing the agenda of the right.”

Moreover, Collins critiques Starmer's governance, particularly his neglect of the diverse interests of constituents beyond England. He suggests that the Prime Minister must adopt a more inclusive approach, addressing the pressing issues faced by regions like Scotland and Northern Ireland, where there is a palpable sense of alienation from Westminster.

To reclaim public confidence, Collins argues that Labour must define a clear vision with a focus on social equity and economic growth while tackling the challenges posed by global issues. He emphasizes the urgency of these efforts, calling for immediate solutions rather than vague, long-term promises.

The consequences of Labour's current policy direction, as Collins underscores, could be severe: children sinking into poverty due to restrictive welfare measures, further crumbling of the healthcare system, and escalating societal inequality and prejudice. He insists that the party must confront its obligations head-on and strive to advocate genuinely for all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable.

Collins concludes with skepticism regarding Starmer's ability to bring about meaningful change, acknowledging the complexities faced but stressing that incompetence can no longer be tolerated given the urgent needs of the populace. As Labour plots its trajectory forward, the discussions surrounding immigration, economic reform, and social justice are pivotal, not only shaping the party's identity but also influencing its electoral viability in upcoming contests.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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