

As a veteran of the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd years, former treasurer Wayne Swan is a politician with a great deal of experience with parliamentary instability. With the outcome of the election still uncertain, Swan tells Michelle Grattan Labor should approach the next period ahead in a very positive way.

“We put [forward] a comprehensive agenda for inclusive growth. What you saw at this election was the defeat of the Abbott-Turnbull agenda of trickle-down economics,” he says.

Swan says Malcolm Turnbull’s authority has been “shattered” and that he will find it very hard to assert any authority in his partyroom.

“His glass jaw-shattering speech after midnight on election night I think effectively ended his authority not just in his party but I think in the country.”

Swan says he wants to continue to speak about issues he is passionate about from the position of a backbencher rather than from the shadow cabinet.

“I want to use my time as treasurer to add to critical national debates and speak about them in a much more open way than I would otherwise if I had some form of executive responsibility,” he says.

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond the academic appointment above.

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