

Resistance

Britain will leave the EU but WHEN WILL THE EU LEAVE BRITAIN?



'Sorry, Davide, To make sufficient progress it will cost you an arm AND A LEG!....'

To most people, the government's handling of Brexit looks **chaotic!** What is really going on? Is **'no deal'** likely?

On the plus side, the EU is resigned to us leaving; analysts Oxford Economics put the chances of us remaining past March 2019 at only 5%.

So Britain should leave the EU, but according to the ideas in the PM's Florence speech, not much would change. We would keep EU law and even potentially be under the European Court (ECJ) for post-Brexit judgments for 2 years. (Open Europe's Pieter Cleppe hinted that the speech had been 'Brussels-dictated').



The media is often more interested in sensationalism, conflict and unnamed quotes rather than substance.

Politico.eu suspects a cunning plan: *'The Brits are usually so organised...'* Are we aiming to play for time to put pressure on the EU side or prey on where the EU27 are divided?

Other rumours hint that PM May cannot make a decision as the Cabinet is divided (on balance pro-Remain) or – based on the poor White Papers – the government is simply out of its depth, and maybe looking to the EU for the initiative. Remember also that the government was loathe to make its negotiating position too clear either as shortfall would be criticised or the EU would make concessions dearer

Admittedly there is clarity in some areas, e.g. wanting a Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (CFTA), but it is seen as much more likely to be in place in 2022-23 than by March 2019.

Some see the hand of a 'charity', the Legatum Institute (LI) which 'has a reputation for advocating hard Brexit' according to Lib Dem MP Tom Brake. He complained that it had regular meetings with DEXEU officials, but was told that it also had discussions with quite a few pro-EU politicians like Lord (Paddy) Ashdown.

Ironically LI states that it is formally neither for nor against Brexit and its director Shanker Singham is a joint UK-US citizen who voted Remain in 2016. He favours leaving the EU Customs Union and Single Market but both sides making their intentions towards a CFTA clear to business. He accepts that interim arrangements are needed, so proposes seeking a 'WTO Waiver' to keep trade flowing. This is far from a 'no deal' approach.



On Radio 4, Singham agreed with Charles Grant (Centre for European Reform) that both EU and UK wanted a deep FTA that went well beyond Canada's CETA. However he also talked up the likelihood of there being no free trade deal.

There have been headlines on some food prices then going up 30-40%. Assuming we could get food imports – there are also stories about planes not being allowed to fly, ports clogging up, 17 mile tailbacks on Kent motorways...



Oxford Economics rates 'no deal' as 40% likely, with falling back onto WTO-only trade terms then being 70% likely. (The most likely outcome is seen as a withdrawal arrangement with a transition, 60%, with a FTA then most likely at 50% (Customs Union 15%, Single Market only 10%).



The Remainer media don't miss a chance of a doom and gloom story, but there is evidence that the public is switching off.

If negotiations resulted in a 'no deal' deadlock, the lack of legal agreements would point to chaos on Brexit Day. However Mark Littlewood (IEA) and Transport Secretary Chris Grayling claim that it could be prevented.

Pascal Lamy, former WTO head and European Commissioner, said *"WTO lawyers can be pragmatic... the main thing is that trade should be hampered as little as possible."* He added *"with goodwill on all sides"*, which would be a tall order if talks had broken down.

A serious impasse could be escalated to the WTO, which has a level of law above EU law. The EU knows that the goals of treaties are binding, and the WTO commits it towards the stability of the world trading system.

It is also UK and EU policy to have free trade with major trading partners, which might be one reason why trade was not top of the negotiation agenda.



Current EU Presidency plans include seeking *"ambitious, balanced and comprehensive bilateral free trade agreements"*. It couldn't be clearer!

The BBC's Katya Adler is known for being impartial and has reported that the impasse is basically about **money**. Lamy adds that when it is *"about numbers"*, usually there is a solution.

An impasse in the early days of any negotiation should not come as a surprise, with both sides acting tough. Big concessions were hardly likely before the Tory party conference and the German elections.

These elections should put the FDP party into coalition government. It is pro-business, pro-trade and will push for the UK not to be punished.



The Battle for Britain

Joey Jones, head of public affairs at consultants Weber Shandwick sees the EU as resigned to Brexit but with **no desire to punish the Brits** and German newspaper DW notes that Merkel's CDU party is "open to a strong partnership with Britain after Brexit negotiations are done."

Media rumours put the EU failure to be flexible down to France and Germany, but President Macron's honeymoon with voters is already over, and he won't want militant French unions and farmers on his back over trade.

German and Austrian elections nailed the lie that 'populism is dead after the Brexit vote', and EU leaders will not welcome a voter backlash in European Parliament elections after Brexit.



'Merkron': A new 'special relationship' but might find that others won't let them dictate....

In stressed times, some countries even want longer-term suspension of 'Schengen' free movement of people.

CRACKS IN EUROPEAN UNITY

Assumptions are about to be put to the test on 'EU unity' (which often doesn't exist apart from not wanting to pay more) and 'the integrity of the Single Market' (which doesn't truly exist in areas such as financial services). Former MEP Vicky Ford showed how 'cherry picking' goes on in practice.

EU negotiating terms are also to be tested. In normal negotiations, both sides ask for more than they really want to make room for **compromise**.

The EU does not regard its legal system as being absolute; it has been over-ruled by the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the WTO. Maybe a good time for us to remind it that political and economic **coercion** is banned by the UN Charter that it is supposed to respect?

The Institute for Government has produced an interesting document 'Dispute Resolution after Brexit' on alternatives to the UK being under the European Court (ECJ).

Whereas the impression has been given that the EU27 are united in negotiations, federalists have moaned that when it comes to the crunch, EU leaders look after national interests. There may yet be some interesting compromises, not least because the clock is ticking... European Council President Tusk let it slip that **the EU is not preparing for 'no deal'**.

Bear in mind that there is likely to be both a withdrawal agreement and a longer-term relationship agreement in time, as Martin Howe QC reminds us.

In the short term, an unprepared UK won't have the capacity to agree many new trade deals or repeal many EU laws, so we will be stuck more-or-less with current arrangements. The PM will be doing well to transfer existing trade deals made by the EU for us and to stop customs problems on Brexit Day.



This is hardly ideal, but if there's a lesser of evils, it would be to just manage Brexit in one piece and provide the foundations for real independence. That will provide an inspiration for other countries to break free as the EU gradually implodes.

Securing withdrawal would also make future EU membership unlikely as it would involve joining the Euro.

Restoring true self-government will need reviewing policies as well as laws; for instance possible involvement in the EU Erasmus (education) and Horizon (R&D) programmes; plus tie-ups at local government and Local Enterprise Partnership (business) level

NEVER AGAIN!

Britain is yet to be liberated, but it's never too early to think of how to stop future generations making the mistake of 1972 and signing away their birthright. Campaigners have been in contact to suggest building a library, physical and online, to keep the best souvenirs, pamphlets etc. Any suggestions, please get in contact.

Local contacts report Open Britain leaflets being given out in a high street and 'Stop Brexit' stickers being stuck in stations. Whereas we all deserved a good break after years of hard graft, we cannot leave the initiative to the Remoaners. There are many good comments being made on newspaper websites, but some Twitter users would welcome a wider following.

Apart from raising spirits over Brexit, the dangers of staying in need airing.



Sadiq Khan and friend at a Britain in Europe rally. He featured prominently in the Remain campaign and TV debate.

The London Mayor has never been shy of parading his pro-EU feelings or seeking the limelight. Strange then, that this summer he launched a much under-publicised consultation. Using very softly-softly language, he raised the prospect of a Khangestion Charge across London.

The existing Congestion Charge is flat-rate, but under a draft Directive out just 3 weeks earlier, it would have to be converted to a complex pay-per-mile charge. The EU had been incubating its plans before our referendum under 'Energy' discussions. Experts doubted if his intentions were to cut congestion as road speeds would drop, or boost air quality, as he ignored other ideas that would have been more effective.

His Mayor's Transport Strategy plans were similar to the 'Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan' that Birmingham City Council admitted was following an EU demand for all cities to develop.



Despite the propaganda blitz and the government's confusions, an ORB poll found that people feel we're better off out of the EU by 40% to 37%

The BBC blamed the collapse of Tonbridge firm Southern Salads on Brexit, but the local paper showed it was down to over-expansion and poor foreign currency management.

www.newalliance.org.uk/ref1017.htm

has fuller coverage, references and links to several interesting articles.



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P & p by New Alliance, PO Box 13199, London SW6 6ZU
info@newalliance.org.uk,
Tel: 07976 414913

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