

A sovereign people delegate to a sovereign Parliament

The Brexit vote was based around the proposition that we the people need to take back control from Brussels of our laws, our borders and our money. Brexit voters wish to recreate a strong UK Parliament, answerable to voters, with sovereign powers. The MPs keep their jobs for as long it pleases the voters, who decide at election and by election time if their Parliament is exercising their sovereignty in the way they wish.

The Remain MPs just do not understand this central idea of people's sovereignty. They have done all in their power over many years to remove power after power from the UK Parliament and therefore from UK voters by transfers to the EU through a series of Treaties and through acceptance of all ECJ rulings, Directives and Regulations the EU makes. They misled the country over the extent of the power grab by Brussels, sought to deny Parliament proper debates and votes about much of the law and decisions coming from the EU, and where debate was forced over EU laws rightly had to tell us it did not make any difference what Parliament thought or said as laws, decisions and judgements made by the EU could not be amended or set aside by our Parliament.

Now they are seeking to thwart popular sovereignty by appealing to our law courts. They ironically claim they are seeking to buttress Parliamentary sovereignty by asking judges to set the Parliamentary timetable, and to interfere in the legislative process. This achieves the very opposite. A sovereign Parliament (sovereign because it is derived from the sovereignty of the voters) sets its own timetable, decides what it will debate and legislate or how else it will make and communicate its decisions. If a majority in Parliament disagree strongly with government direction of the timetable then they have many options to overturn the decision or the government.

The Gina Miller judgement created a costly delay in our departure from the EU – around £7bn of extra EU net budget contribution for starters. It required Parliament to legislate a decision it had already taken, the decision to send the Article 50 letter. Parliament did so by a very large majority, showing the demand for a longer legislative means of expressing the decision made no difference to the will of Parliament than that we should leave. Mrs May was wrong not simply to legislate straight away to cut down the loss of time and head off the legal challenge. The legal challenge weakened Parliament by placing the Courts above Parliament in an important matter of political judgement.

It is to be hoped that the courts this coming week understand it is not their role to tell Parliament when to meet or what to debate. It is for government to lead this. If the Parliament has lost confidence in the government's judgement in these matters then it is for a new Parliamentary majority to emerge to vote the government down. We do not elect the judges. We cannot sack them at an election if they cease to please. The decision on how and

when to leave the EU is one that only Parliament can take. It has to take it in the knowledge that it promised to take us out of the EU following the vote. If MPs do not keep their word on this they should expect voters to show their strong disapproval when next they judge the performance of the members of this Parliament in an election. Either Parliament gets us out soon, or the sovereign people will demand a different Parliament.