

Another election?

I have seen no need for another election any time soon. The Conservative party has the endorsement of the electorate from 2015 for its Manifesto for a Parliament. All the time Mrs May is happy with that Manifesto, which she supported at the time, there is no lack of mandate. The government also has a major mandate from the referendum to get on with Brexit. There would be little benefit from fighting the referendum again by proxy in a General Election, where the polling shows the pro Brexit Conservative party is likely to win. If the Election simply confirms the referendum it adds little. Were parties against Brexit to do better it creates difficulties in implementing the wishes from the referendum. Anti Brexit forces would claim the public had modified their mind on Brexit. The pro Brexit forces would say the election result was mainly about non Brexit matters. It may not be clear in a multi issue election. Many people in the public just want their government to get on and do the things that need doing, without any short term need for a new public discussion and vote about the direction of the country. There is plenty to do, and the government has plenty of ideas and Manifesto/referendum commitments to carry through.

Some of those who wish Brexit ill favour an early election. It might slow things down a bit, create new uncertainties. Some who favour Brexit want an early election, thinking it would lead to a good win by the pro Brexit forces, making it easier to pilot through the Repeal or Continuity of laws Bill which the House must take up as soon as the Article 50 letter has gone. The government's critics delight in pointing out a favourable comment about the single market in the last Conservative Manifesto. That was of course superseded by the decision of the people in the referendum. Both sides in that campaign said leaving the EU meant leaving the single market, which electors then voted to do.

The case for an early election would have to rest on an inability for the government to get through this Parliament what it needs to get through to carry out the wishes of electors from 2015 and from the referendum. Alternatively Mrs May could seek a new mandate if she wished to make material changes to the 2015 Manifesto. I would be interested in your views.