

I have more confidence in the government than Ministers do

Ministers fanned out yesterday to spread gloom and doom around the country about what will happen if we just leave next March. It was a poor version of Project Fear, without even any novelty to amuse connoisseurs of this most popular political genre. We were told that the ports will jammed by our own Customs officials, leading to long delays. I don't believe them. The UK can put in the capacity it needs to handle any additional checks. If it fails to do so it will just have to let the lorries through against their pre filed electronic details as they do today whilst they put in capacity for additional checks. That is what I thought Customs officials had already told us.

So Ministers, I don't believe you. I think the UK port and government officials will handle it just fine. You will not have to resign for failing to plan and equip our ports properly for the task. I am sure you are up to it.

I also enjoyed the contradictions in the stories. We were told that in a worst case there will be six months of delays, yet the Health Secretary only thinks we need six weeks of stocks of medicines. It was a curious irony from the BBC that to describe what it would be like they looked back to what had actually happened to cross Channel trade in 2015 when we were still firmly in the EU. It was unhelpful then to face the disruption, but we got through it. I cant see why this should be bad like that, when on both sides of the Channel the authorities tell us they want it to work on 30 March.

Still the UK government has failed to set out its schedule of tariffs for March 30th. The Trade Secretary has promised me it is due any moment, so why shouldn't I believe him. I trust the schedule will say there will be no tariffs on imported components for UK car factories, shooting that particular fox of the Project Fear campaign.

Project Fear has done great damage to the reputation of the UK establishment. It has led them to make all too many nonsensical forecasts. It reminds Leave voters Remain still have nothing positive to say about the EU they seem to love so much. I was amused to see several Ministers decided to fulfill the instruction to meet business to tell Leave voters they were wrong in or near their own constituencies so their time was not completely wasted.