

# Iain Dale: May moves Article 50 – and the BBC plunges into a period of national mourning

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Listening to the BBC coverage of triggering Article 50 earlier this week, you'd have thought that we were entering a period of national mourning.

It started with the *Today* programme, which relished interviewing anyone who had anything negative to say – and believe me, most of their carefully-chosen guests did. In the section I listened to they had one pro-Leave business guest. She was given all of two minutes to make her case. The five or six Remainers were left to witter on with hardly a challenge from the presenters.

We're going to have two more years of this. But the die is cast. Article 50 has been triggered; there is no going back. I had hoped that there would be a realisation from the likes of Nick Clegg and Hilary Benn that the course to take now is unite behind Brexit, and make the best of it. I suppose it was always a forlorn hope. Clegg seems to have cast himself as Remainer in Chief, having declared that "the phoney war is now over", and that Brexiteers must be held to account "for their false promises".

If he wishes to go to war with the British people over the way they voted, that's up to him. We should admire those who stick to their principles – but we shouldn't have any truck with politicians who fight the battles of the last war. Everyone's attentions should now be directed to how we make a success of Brexit – or if you are of a less optimistic persuasion, make the best of a bad job.

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It says a lot about the state of the British media that on the day before Article 50 was triggered, all we could talk about were the respective legs of the Prime Minister and the Scotland First Minister. Who'd have thighed it?

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I wonder when Keir Starmer looks himself in the mirror – and with that gelled hair, he must do so quite often – does he see the reflection of John Moore staring back at him

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A lot has been written about the rise in inflation during the last few weeks. Those who know nothing about economics appear to attribute it all to Brexit and the fall in the pound.

The truth is more simple. Since Brexit, the price of oil has risen by about 60 per cent, and the effect has now begun to come through in the inflation figures.

Were the rise in inflation all connected to Brexit, the rate would be far higher. In fact, it's only 0.1% higher than Germany's rate, and on a par with that of most of the rest of the main EU economies.

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Alex Salmond is a genial cove. I host him every Wednesday afternoon for a half-hour phone-in on LBC. He and Nicola Sturgeon are adamant that Scotland should have its own deal, since voted to Remain by 62 per cent to 38 per cent.

I am sure that Salmond genuinely believes the case he is making. And of course, I am also sure that if Dumfries & Galloway or the Borders vote in a second Independence referendum vote to remain in the UK, he'd also allow them their own special deal to stay in the UK. And pigs might fly.

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There were two new books out this week which may be of interest to ConservativeHome readers. Sayeeda Warsi has written a book called [The Enemy Within](#), which is allegedly how some people described her when she was a minister in the Cameron government.

It's certainly not a kiss-and-tell account of her time in government. Instead, it's a thoughtful tome about the place of Muslims in Britain today. It's incredibly well-researched (and heavily footnoted), and I hope it gets a much wider readership than simply Muslims who are interested to read about the views of Britain's first Muslim cabinet minister. It deserves to.

Douglas Carswell has also written a weighty tome called [Rebel](#). It's a call to arms to overthrow what he calls the oligarchs and political interests that control our society. It's a powerful polemic, and ought to have a readership across the political spectrum. It's certainly not a right-wing treatise; indeed, at times you think you're reading the words of someone on the far left.

Some of his solutions for dealing with out-of-control capitalism could come from the pen of Jeremy Corbyn. Indeed, if the latter has any sense, he will read this book and adopt a lot of its conclusions. But as I say, the key phrase there is "if he has any sense". No doubt he and his little helper Seumas Milne couldn't bring themselves to read a single word of a book they would regard as being written by someone on the extreme right. And therein lies their problem. Carswell is far more in tune with the views of the ordinary Brit than they ever will be.

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I like interviewing Amber Rudd, although I don't do it that often. On Wednesday, she was on my LBS show talking about triggering Article 50. I

asked her if she thought that people on both sides should moderate their language and stop the insults.

"Yes," she said: "they should". I immediately retorted, "Well, that's enough about you and Boris." She giggled and said: "Well, I rather let myself in for that one, didn't I?" Good on her. It's a pity that more politicians don't react in the same way rather than go all hoity-toity.