

If the EU will not negotiate...

The Prime Minister has made an offer to the EU to get talks started to allow us to leave with their blessing on October 31. The EU has responded in their time honoured way by rubbishing any feature of the proposal that is better for the UK than the unacceptable Withdrawal Agreement which perished in Parliament and got under 9% support in the Last European elections. It is most important now that the UK does not do what it always did under Mrs May and make further concessions. The EU has found it all too easy to refuse to budge and watch as the UK negotiates with itself and against itself.

I voted for Boris Johnson as leader because he promised to take us out by 31 October, and he confirmed the Withdrawal Agreement was dead. He must learn from the bitter experiences of Mr Cameron and Mrs May that the EU does usually overplay its hand and radicalises many UK voters against it by its conduct.

Mr Cameron asked for too little in his attempted renegotiation and was offered even less as a result. That led directly to the referendum defeat, as he did not even secure the return of UK control over benefits when we had often be assured by UK governments that social security remained under our control.

Mrs May always refused to dig in or to cease making concessions. Every time the EU dug in she gave more ground. The result was a disastrous Withdrawal Treaty which united Leave and Remain in opposition to it.

The present PM needs to tell the EU that his Irish border proposals to get talks going are neither an invitation to assume the text of the rest of the Withdrawal treaty is fine, nor an invitation to get rid of all the best bits of the border fix from the UK point of view in subsequent one sided compromises.. The press when the PM launched the ideas said it was take it or leave it. To change that approach now would be seen as weakness in Brussels.

The best way forward now is to offer a Free Trade Agreement and no Withdrawal Agreement.