

Ministers and Whitehall culture

Whitehall has many talents and strengths that Ministers need to use and motivate to do their jobs. They also need to be aware that there is a kind of default mode that applies to many policies and areas that does not reflect the mood of many to make a success of Brexit and to use the freedoms it brings to help create a more prosperous and successful UK.

There are many in Whitehall who seem to regret our exit from the EU and wish to stay close to EU rules, laws and policies. There is a readiness to take what the EU says as right and necessary and to see anything we do differently as unwise. We see this most obviously in the reluctance to sort out the Northern Ireland Protocol by failing to press on with legislation to uphold the parts of the protocol that respect our internal market and reflect the wishes of Unionists as part of the Good Friday settlement. We see it in the reluctance to challenge the EU over our residual payments to them, to push back on their aggressive stance to cross border trade and in the unwillingness to remedy bad past EU legislation. One and half years on from exit and still there has been no repeals Bill, no major changes to VAT, no regaining of our fishing industry.

There is then the similar enthusiasm for a range of other international bodies. Many in the public will be alarmed if Whitehall wants us to sign a health Treaty giving powers to the WHO over the NHS.

The major controlling idea in Whitehall apart from welcoming every form of global government over us is the priority afforded to net zero policies over almost all others. This has led to the accelerated decline of domestic energy with increasing reliance on unreliable and expensive imports. Far from cutting global CO₂ this I'll judged response has increased world CO₂. It is leading to the wilding of the UK to reduce the amount of food we grow for ourselves at a time of worrying international shortages. It is often self defeating in its own terms, as we come to rely on foreign products for our needs which produce more CO₂ globally than if we had made or grown them at home. It runs down too many U.K. industries as they propose we import more instead.

These are some of the things Ministers need to change.