

No, Mr Gove, the Withdrawal Agreement is not a good idea on any count

Mr Gove used to be in favour of Leave. Now he puts out the worst kind of Project Fear nonsense and seeks to prevent us leaving for at least another 2 years and maybe double that.

I have some straightforward questions for him:

1. When will he and Dr Fox publish the UK tariff schedule for March 30 2019 to trade under WTO rules? Our farmers and traders need to know now.
2. Will our tariff schedule set tariffs that are lower and fewer in number than we currently have to impose under EU rules?
3. What is the right balance between cutting tariffs on food to help the consumer, and keeping some tariff protection which will offer some protection against European imports for the first time?
4. What increase in UK market share in temperate foods is he aiming for once we do impose some tariffs on EU competitors?
5. Is he now going to write food production in as a central aim of his White Paper and legislation?
6. Is he going to keep environmental and health and safety and animal welfare levels the same as at present when we decide or is he going to legislate to improve them?
7. When will he announce a fishing policy that takes back control of our fishing grounds and allows our home based industry to expand?

Brexit is huge opportunity to cut food miles, grow more of our own food, to rescue our fishing grounds and land more of our own fish, and to build bigger food processing industries close to good agricultural supply. That requires the Secretary of State to stop trying to delay Brexit and stop trying to scare us, and to get on with making some decisions and putting through legislation that will be good for UK farming and fishing.