

Speech: PM statement in the House of Commons: 13 March 2019

On a point of order, Mr Speaker,

The House has today provided a clear majority against leaving without a deal.

However, I will repeat what I have said before. This is about the choices that this House faces. The legal default in UK and EU law remains that the UK will leave the EU without a deal unless something else is agreed.

The onus is now on every one of us in this House to find out what that is.

The options before us are the same as they have always been:

We could leave with the deal which this Government has negotiated over the past two years.

We could leave with the deal we have negotiated but subject to a second referendum. But that would risk no Brexit at all, damaging the fragile trust between the British public and the members of this House.

We could seek to negotiate a different deal. However, the EU have been clear that the deal on the table is indeed the only deal available.

Mr Speaker, I also confirmed last night that, if the House declined to approve leaving without a deal on 29 March 2019, the Government would bring forward a motion on whether the House supports seeking to agree an extension to Article 50 with the EU, which is the logical consequence of the votes over the past two days in this House.

The Leader of the House will shortly make an emergency business statement confirming the change to tomorrow's business.

The motion we will table will set out the fundamental choice facing this House.

If the House finds a way in the coming days to support a deal, it would allow the Government to seek a short limited technical extension to Article 50 to provide time to pass the necessary legislation and ratify the agreement we have reached with the EU.

But let me be clear, such a short technical extension is only likely to be on offer if we have a deal in place.

Therefore, the House has to understand and accept that, if it is not willing to support a deal in the coming days, and as it is not willing to support leaving without a deal on 29 March, then it is suggesting that there will need to be a much longer extension to Article 50. Such an extension would undoubtedly require the United Kingdom to hold European Parliament elections

in May 2019.

I do not think that would be the right outcome.

But the House needs to face up to the consequences of the decisions it has taken.