The last days of Mrs May

Yesterday more authority drained away from the Prime Minister. By the time she got to her Statement of her revised offer on the Withdrawal Treaty the Conservative benches were much more than half empty. Those of us who stayed explained again why we opposed her draft Treaty. The front bench contained mainly her hard core pro EU supporters, Philip Hammond, David Liddington, Amber Rudd, Greg Clark, Rory Stewart and James Brokenshire. It was a fitting visual backdrop for a Statement which failed to appeal to new votes in a Commons which has already voted it down on three separate occasions.

I gave the PM the opportunity to say something to Leave supporters around the country, explaining again to Mrs May that many who voted Leave do not regard the Withdrawal Treaty as leaving. It binds us into EU rules, payments and the rest for a further 21 to 45 months with no guaranteed clean way out at the end of that period.She had nothing to say to us. She repeated the mantra that her Agreement was leaving without tackling the strong hostility to it in the country and the obvious facts that it locks us back into making big payments, accepting all their laws and allowing freedom of movement for many more months.

I find it curious that the Cabinet has not yet moved to explain to the PM that she cannot continue. A number of the Cabinet want to run for Leader, and some are actively running proto campaigns for the role of PM. They should first remove Mrs May. It is against the spirit of decent conduct to be campaigning to replace her whilst in cabinet saying they support her and her policies. It may also make it much more difficult for any of them to win, as their first leadership task is to show they know how to secure the exit of the PM they wish to replace. By evening we got word that at last one member of the Cabinet resigned because she could not go along with the Withdrawal Treaty Bill after all.Still we are not allowed to see the Bill, so worried is the government about it.

If Mrs May somehow manages to struggle on into June and puts her Withdrawal Agreement Bill to the vote, those who vote for it will demonstrate they do not understand the mood of the nation or the nature of task of rebuilding support for the government.

https://johnredwoodsdiary.com/

179 states trade successfully with the EU with no customs union or single market membership

I am grateful to facts4eu for reminding us of this important truth. You do not have to bind yourself to the EU to trade with the EU. Our industries already have mixed supply chains with components and raw materials from non EU countries getting just fine as well EU product.

The loss of Conservative leaders

My years in the Conservative party have seen several leaders destroy themselves politically through a fanatical commitment to the EU. The odd thing is they have adopted this stance when it has annoyed many members of the party and evoked strong opposition from some Conservative MPs. Worse it has done considerable damage to the country and its economy, leading to a loss of confidence by voters generally.

John Major destroyed his leadership by insisting on crippling the UK economy by putting us into the European Exchange rate mechanism. The resulting boom bust undermined the Conservative reputation for economic competence and put the partty out of office for 23 years.

William Hague refused to take us out of the pro federal EU grouping of the EPP which annoyed supporters and added to his tribulations. His slogan of in Europe but not run by it was not convincing as it was not backed by a policy to get powers back. He won back just one seat in 2001 after the disastrous result in 1997.

David Cameron argued on the wrong side in the referendum and lost, destroying his Premiership. He could have stayed neutral or backed Leave and led us out in good order after the result. I never understood why he thought Remain would win or why he let them run such a nasty and negative campaign.

Mrs May appointed advisers who clearly wanted to recreate many of the features of our membership of the EU despite the vote to Leave. Her obstinate commitment to an unacceptable lock back in Treaty which the public has decisively rejected has led to the breakdown of her authority. Cabinet members campaigning to become leader need to now create the vacancy they crave by telling her she cannot continue. She will be the third PM victim of

trusting the EU too much in ways which lose the trust of the UK people.

Mrs May's latest presentation of the Withdrawal (Delay in leaving) Treaty

Not a word or comma of the Treaty has been changed. The PM has long given up on any idea of renegotiating the Withdrawal Agreement. As it remains the same Agreement I trust Parliament will give the same answer, and vote it down. I will certainly continue to oppose it. Better still would be to get Mrs May to resign now. If her only policy is an Agreement the public and Parliament have roundly rejected, it is difficult to see the point of her staying in office.

Today she says she will table a bill and allow Parliament to amend it over the customs union, single market, second referendum and the rest. Most of these things would need negotiation with the EU and fall later in the process if and when the Withdrawal Treaty is approved. It would be a deeply damaging way of negotiating our future with the EU, having made far too many concessions in the Withdrawal Treaty.

The suggestion that Parliament could legislate for a second referendum is a particularly damaging idea. Up to this point Mrs May has always opposed this with many good reasons to do with our democracy and the promises all made prior to the Peoples vote on the EU in 2016. I assume many more Conservative MPs will now join in voting against should this proposed legislation be brought back to the Commons.

My contribution to the debate on the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (Exit Day) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2019

John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con): This is a travesty of proceedings. This is a major debate about the future of our country. This is a massive bill, committing us to making huge payments to the European Union, which we voted not to make anymore. It of course warrants a debate on the Floor of the House and a full vote of this House. I am grateful to my hon. Friend the Member for Stone for the enormous work that he has put in. His case stands completely

unanswered today by the hapless Minister asked to represent the Government on this occasion. My hon. Friend made it clear why he thinks the statutory instrument is defective, and why the proceedings pursued by the Government did not live up to the constitutional standards that we expect. There may well be a serious legal challenge in the courts following these proceedings.

I urge the Minister to go back to the Prime Minister and to think again. We did not vote in the referendum to delay our exit beyond two and a bit years, which was forced upon us by the rules and regulations of the treaty we were leaving. We did not vote to leave one treaty in order to sign up to two new and even worse treaties, the first of which has singularly failed to get through this House on three separate occasions and is universally condemned by most voters, remain and leave.

We need a Government that understand the mood of the British people. We need a Government that believe in democracy. We need a Government that understand that the British people voted with good purpose to leave. Almost three years on, they are appalled that we, their elected and collective representatives in this place, have collectively done everything in our power to delay, prevent and impede a proper leaving of the European Union.

The Committee should vote the statutory instrument down. It should unite in condemning the procedures being pursued. It should recognise that it has been packed to do the Government’s work, which the public do not want it to do. I hope that the Committee does the decent thing and surprises us all. I fear it will not, but I trust that people outside this House will note that some of us came to make the case they wish us to make. Some of us stand up for democracy, and we are appalled by the proceedings.