

The government has to understand there is no deal on offer from the EU

The government says it wants a deal. It means by this it wants an all embracing agreement on the future relationship including a free trade deal within it. The Opposition says the government must have an agreement, whilst making it clear it will seek to vote down the kinds of agreement the PM has in mind. All this is an irrelevance. The EU has been clear and consistent throughout. All it is offering is a one sided surrender Agreement or Withdrawal Treaty. Its main aim is to sign the UK up to this to take £39bn off us which they are not entitled to unless the UK is foolish enough to sign such an Agreement. Only if the UK signs up to such a damaging idea will they then discuss the details of a Future Partnership Agreement.

There are several good reasons why the UK must not sign any Withdrawal Agreement before we leave on March 29th 2019. We will leave in accordance with the two laws Parliament has passed to do so, unless Parliament repeals or amends those laws which this government assures us it will not do.

First, the UK will have no bargaining clout at all once we have signed the Withdrawal Agreement. The main thing they want is the money. If we also throw in accepting all their rules and regulations for another 21 months or longer, they have no incentive to move on or to make a decent offer.

Second, we need to spend that money at home on our priorities. That was one of the main reasons many of us voted for Brexit. A government which promised in its Manifesto to implement Brexit and take back control must not give the money away again.

Third, the UK needs to get on with implementing a fishing and farming policy that is good for home production and for our environment. We cannot stay another 21 months or longer in the CAP and CFP, as they are very damaging to us.

Fourth, the UK needs to put in place its own migration and benefits policies, as promised by the government following the Referendum

Fifth, we need to respond positively to the many offers of Free Trade Agreements from other countries, which we could not do if stay locked in the Customs Union.

Those who think there is an Agreement to be had need to come clean and accept that as far as the EU is concerned the only thing on offer before we leave is a penal Withdrawal Agreement. There is nothing in the draft of that Agreement that guarantees something better in a possible Future Partnership Agreement.

As the government has failed to table a free trade agreement during the 2 years 4 months they have so far been negotiating, accepting the EU false sequencing of the talks, there will not be one on offer before March 2019. We

must therefore just leave, and then table one the day we leave and see what happens. The reality of us leaving without signing a Withdrawal Agreement is the best way to a Free Trade Agreement in reasonable time. Otherwise the EU will continue delaying and they will be laughing all the way to the bank to pay our large contributions in. There is no cliff edge, and trade will continue after March 29th. It's more imports than exports, and the UK will not stop the food and medicines coming in to our ports which will by then be completely under our control.