

The Prime Minister's tasks

As the PM takes up arms against a sea of troubles it is a good idea to determine which are the battles to fight and where his powers as PM can make the most difference. His five aims set out clearly at the beginning of the year were a good start.

The PM is with all Conservative MPs the custodian of the 2019 Manifesto. The central theme was to get Brexit done. The millions of Brexit voters who backed us did not just mean to complete our tortured exit, but to follow up to secure some Brexit wins. There is still much to do to deliver.

The EU has behaved badly to Northern Ireland, distorting the meaning of the Protocol to enforce laws on NI against its will, to impede GB to NI trade and to refuse to respect the UK internal market and sovereignty of our country clearly set out in the Agreement. Worse still, the EU has undermined Stormont and the Good Friday agreement. There can be no compromise on these central constitutional matters. Unionists expect the UK to stand up for their interests as the EU does for the Republic. The PM should be friendly but firm with the EU and hasten the passage of our NI legislation. We are quite entitled to legislate an answer all the time the EU refuses to understand why current arrangements subvert the peace agreement.

The PM's first priority he told us is to stop illegal migration by small boats across the Channel. We now have the freedoms to legislate and to instruct our courts and border authority accordingly. The legislation should be clear and targeted on the specific issue of illegal arrivals and can include a clause telling the courts that the Act overrides any other laws and rules that courts might like to apply, including any European Court of Human Rights intervention. We held out against votes for prisoners without leaving the ECHR and can exempt ourselves from any ECHR attempt to impose illegal travellers on us.

His second priority must be to get growth back into the economy. His wish to get borrowing down in five years time is best advanced by getting growth, as growth brings higher revenues and less benefit spending. His wish to get inflation down will be assisted by more investment in additional supply of things like energy and food which have fuelled the inflation.

His third priority is to cut NHS waiting lists and waiting times. That requires better management of the substantial extra money and additional people committed to the NHS in the last three years.