

Undermining the UK's bargaining position

The Supreme Court decision has one obvious impact on the UK. It weakens the government's attempts to get a renegotiated Agreement with the EU. It has led to the EU casting doubt on the government's grip on events, and given hope to those in EU councils who argue that hanging tough and playing it long is the best approach for the EU to adopt given the political uncertainties in London.

I confess I have always been sceptical about the ability of the UK to pull a decent Withdrawal Agreement out from the one sided and unfair Agreement Mrs May put her name to. The problems with it are much wider than the backstop, as we often discussed. Part of my reason is so many in the UK establishment seem to be on the EU's side. I am not, however, in any doubt that there is far more chance of getting an improved Agreement if the UK unites behind its government negotiating team than if opposition forces continue to send every signal to the EU that it will repay them to hold out rather than making sensible concessions.

The opposition focus on the need for an agreement is bizarre. They will not set out the detail of what sort of an Agreement they want. They confuse the Withdrawal Agreement with the Future Partnership Agreement. They deny the existence of various Agreements all ready for an exit without signing the Withdrawal Agreement.

In practice there is no such thing as a No Deal Brexit. There will be a many deals Brexit. There is such a thing as an acceptable Withdrawal Agreement given EU determination. The Opposition both say we need one and then vote it down every time it appears. They seem to be saying they will do everything they can to stop Brexit altogether. They also greatly strengthen the bargaining hand of the EU making it even less likely we will be offered a deal they would vote for.