

Brexit Reaches Parliament Today

Retrieved Thursday 7th of September 2017 08:43:36 PM

Today is the day [Brexit](#) reaches our Parliament. The first pieces of Brexit's legislation hit the agenda. The spectacle promises to be entertaining.

As always, the British political system has created an ambiguous and contradictory situation which makes a Brit proud and a European exasperated. I'm both, leaving me bemused.

The bill to be debated is a copy and paste effort. A huge amount of EU law needs to be transcribed into British law. That's probably not what the typical Brexit voter had in mind...

On the one hand, Brexit's opponents will have to speak against this to make their opposition known. On the other hand, they are thereby opposing the implementation of EU law... how ironic.

This sort of ambiguity is of course the bread and butter of a British politician. It allows [both sides to argue vigorously](#) without upsetting anyone because they're talking about slightly different matters. The Tories are just implementing EU law. Brexit opposers are opposing Brexit.

Everyone walks away having had their say and done their bit to represent their view. To a European, this is utterly mystifying because it isn't a debate about substance or the matter at hand. The hidden compromise isn't appreciated.

Brexit secretary [David Davis is making the most of the ambiguity](#) by framing today's debate in the way that favours him. Bloomberg quotes his prepared remarks according to his office:

"We are not rejecting EU law, but embracing the work done between member states in over 40 years of membership and using that solid foundation to build on in the future, once we return to being masters of our own laws. If anyone in this house finds a substantive right that is not carried forward into U.K. law, they should say so."

Parliament is just another hurdle for Brexit to get over. It's a high one given the weakened majority of the prime minister. But there are so many other obstacles that focusing on any one individually is missing the overall picture.

The question is how each hurdle will form and change the actual Brexit. Or kill it. On both counts, the news is bad.

An ugly Brexit emerges

Today's events cloud the bigger issue at hand – policy. American writer H.L. Mencken explained that "Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it good and hard."

Well it looks like Brexit is going to give it to them, good and hard. The latest leaks and negotiation rounds about the actual policies after Brexit say so.

Immigration is to be slashed to promote jobs in Britain, despite its job creation effect [and a low unemployment rate](#). Depressing slogans like "British jobs for British workers" are going to be implemented.

EU citizens in the UK may end up being treated like all others, reversing quite a bit of history and common sense. Ironically enough, Britain might develop into a bastion of European and Western values in Europe given the continent's demographic and immigration trends. But let's not go there.

We might even see the British version of Gastarbeiter – guestworkers who cross the border for a limited time wherever we have labour shortages. I used to see the Polish ones in the fields in Germany from my school bus when I was young.

We joked they took home more hubcaps than Deutschmark

And then I saw them again in Australia, pitching for a second year of the work visa by putting in months of agricultural work. We joked about the horrific conditions in which Aussie farmers kept their desperate holidaymakers. Working for a banana bender

isn't the sort of job an Australian aspires to, but Europeans seem happy to. Perhaps because of the regulations on bent bananas back home.

Anyway, now Britain is planning to adopt this model of temporary immigration. There's something demeaning about treating people merely as guest workers.

The Brexit which more enlightened Brexiters supported was to be pro-trade and immigration. We were going to get rid of the EU's stupid trade barriers and messed up economic regulations. But instead we're hell-bent on re-erecting its same mistakes.

Perhaps [I'm not the only one who thinks so](#). Signs suggest Brexit is in fact dying, not thriving.

Brexit's inherent weakness

The referendum combined many different groups of voters with completely different visions for life after Brexit. Theresa May can only deliver one such outcome. That's why she is political toast, alongside any other politician who seeks to actually deliver Brexit. They can only make a small portion of Brexiters happy, and of those only a small portion will actually vote for their party in elections.

That explains the [disastrous election for the Tories](#). It also means that the election we would've had halfway through the Brexit negotiations would've gone even worse for them. The more Brexit takes shape, the more supporters it will lose.

It's great news that we can wrestle powers back from the EU on issues like trade and migration. But the problem is, the UK's political parties no longer had established lines on those issues. That's why neither side campaigned for Brexit – it divided the major parties.

Now that Labour voters and Tory voters are back to supporting their original parties, Theresa May is left with the support of the proportion of Tories who wanted to leave – a minority of the national polity. Not good for a leader of a democratic country...

Where does all this leave **the whole Brexit initiative**?

We have a prime minister with a very weak majority embarking on policy which does not hold majority support once it's specified and is internationally unpopular. The opposition is seemingly radical and can't make up their mind on Brexit.

My prediction: Brexit will fail or be watered down [to the point it's meaningless](#). There will be a dramatic comeback for the likes of UKIP and the Liberal Democrats because the key issues dividing the nation don't run along the more established parties' lines, making people look elsewhere. There's nothing like a voter whose victorious referendum has been scorned by those in power. Theresa May's days in power are numbered.

In the end the referendum will be just like all the other times a nation's voters rejected the EU. Nothing but a protest.

Until next time,

Nick Hubble
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