

Brexit Doesn't Have to Mean Brexit

News:

British prime minister Theresa May's Brexit deal has been rejected twice by parliament, who are this week to vote on a series of proposed Brexit strategies, yet she says there is no guarantee she will abide by their decision.

The BBC reported that MPs have voted to take control of Commons business in an unprecedented move to try to find a majority for any Brexit option.

The government was defeated by 329 votes to 302 on the cross-party amendment setting up a series of votes on Wednesday to find out what kind of Brexit has most support among MPs.

PM Theresa May has said there is no guarantee she will abide by their wish. Thirty Tory MPs voted against the government, including three ministers.

The votes could make it clear what type of deal MPs support, including a "softer" Brexit, or even another referendum. BBC political editor Laura Kuenssberg says some may now "take fright" and move behind her deal. "Faced with the choice of Theresa May's compromise, or a much longer wrangle to a closer relationship with the EU, it is not impossible that the numbers will move in her favour," she said.

Comment:

Having previously removed the possibility of leaving the EU without a deal, the British government had weakened their negotiating position with Europe considerably. The current possible outcomes are a very weak deal in which Europe has the upper hand, endless delay to Brexit, or no Brexit at all. All three options, in effect, mean that Brexit no longer means Brexit in anything other than name.

Prior to May's predecessor David Cameron's ill-fated 2016 referendum, his Conservative party was split between Europhiles and increasingly vocal Eurosceptics who were buying into the xenophobic rhetoric of the UK Independence Party. Very few of the Whitehall Mandarins who are the power behind the public facing politicians, however, had much enthusiasm for exiting from the European Union. They have long felt that Britain's interest is in being a strong neighbour to a weak Europe, which can be useful to assist in limiting and even rivalling America's hegemonic global ambitions.

Cameron's referendum gamble was never intended to give a genuine choice to the people on such a major policy decision. Just as foreign and economic policy is always decided by the British capitalist elite, primarily for their own benefit, Britain's complex relationship with Europe was not about to be decided by the majority of ordinary citizens; most of whom have not studied the complex political and economic issues at all. Democracy has, and always will be, a system that looks after the powerful minority at the expense of, and who are in fear of being overrun by the common masses.

Prime Minister May's job after Cameron's gamble backfired, as a true blue conservative member of the establishment, was to secure the interests of the British capitalist elite, while appearing to champion the wishes of the people. Effectively to sabotage Brexit, while not revealing that to her Eurosceptic colleagues, which could irrevocably deepen the divide and even break up the Conservative party, were this to become apparent.

Despite all of the promises to deliver Brexit, the fact that the public were asked to vote for an essentially undefined future means that the government can still do whatever suits them, while only giving lip service to the technical detail of exiting from the European Union.

The divisions in Britain are real, and may be reflective of a deeper division within the establishment itself. The only constant is that the ordinary people's interests will continue to be ignored while the wealthy elite bicker among themselves, and play a fantastic game of deception on the general population, who naively thought that they would actually be given a choice.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Yahya Nisbet

Media Representative of Hizb ut Tahrir in Britain