

The last thing Theresa May is going to look today is an...

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I am teaching much of today and may have little time to react to the Article 50 ruling. I do, in any case, accept that there are lawyers better able to comment on its immediate consequences.

But what if, as expected, May loses? Three questions arise.

First, why did she take the case if this was the only likely outcome? Why waste the money? Why pretend she had an option when that was not the case? What sort of judgement does that reveal?

Second, why has she delayed doing anything until told to do so in that case? Is that the definition of taking back control? Wouldn't a white paper have made much more sense after the first hearing?

Third, why now be forced into a panicked reaction with too little time for real debate before the artificial 31 March deadline? What does that say about who is in charge here?

However looked at, appealing this case was a political act of misjudgment. In itself it may not be that important (I don't know the decision as yet). But the particular is not the political issue here. The political issue is about appearing to know what you're doing and being in control of it - which was the core desire of those who voted Brexit. And the last thing I expect Theresa May is going to look today is anything like being remotely in control.