

The referendum was meant to cure Tory divisions - but n...

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As [Politics Home](#) reports this morning:

The Telegraph reports that the 60 members of the arch-eurosceptic European Research Group - chaired by Jacob Rees-Mogg - have handed a 30-page dossier to the Prime Minister setting out their objections to plans for a so-called "customs partnership".

One ERG source told the paper: "We have swallowed everything so far — but this is it. If they don't have confidence in Brexit we don't have confidence in them. The Prime Minister will not have a majority if she does not kill off the NCP [New Customs Partnership]."

They add:

Eurosceptics want to see Mrs May instead opt for the "maximum facilitation" option, which would see Britain accept the need for customs borders and rely on a technology-backed "trusted trader" scheme to try keep customs checks to a minimum.

But critics warn that plan - which has also been dismissed by Brussels - will do little to avoid imposing a hard border in Northern Ireland.

Standing back it is very hard to make any sense of this unless you realise that what a minority - about 20% of Tory MPs - are saying is that, come what may, they insist that the UK must have a hard Brexit that is intended to create maximum disruption for the UK and massive division in Ireland, and that if they do not get this they will pull down their own government.

In a sense there is merit in their having said this. We know where their lines are drawn.

Now May has to decide, which is something she is not good at.

Will she go with the majority of her party, and the majority in the country? Or will she go with this minority?

That is her choice. She really only has one option. And either way the Tories will, finally, be torn apart by Europe.

But maybe, just maybe, this is the point where the climb back to sanity begins because it's now clear that what the ERG want is simply undeliverable, and that no compromise with them or it on it is possible. There is therefore only one way to go, and that is in the direction of finding the best possible compromise with the EU having ignored what the ERG want. By being so blunt the ERG have made May's life easier: when there is no choice left it's easier to see what the right thing to do is.