

Project Fear is now Project Fact and still we stumble o...

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I would love to think each day in the unfolding Brexit disaster will be the worst. But I know that is not true. After all, we are only in the phoney war as yet: the real thing has yet to happen and will, I fear, be so much worse than things are now. That said, yesterday does take some beating.

May effectively sacked her new Secretary for Exiting the EU and is to take charge of Brexit negotiations. That's not encouraging.

Raab will, instead of going to Brussels, take back control of the national larder as food shortages are now an anticipated outcome of Brexit. Project Fear has ceased to be, I note, as a consequence: it is now Project Fact.

And Jeremy Corbyn sang the praises of Brexit, saying it would mean we could bias government procurement in favour of UK companies when that is what every other EU country already seems to do whatever the rules might say. It really is time he caught up with reality.

Then, just to add to the confusion, the government published a White Paper that said the legislation for exiting the EU, which they have just fought through Parliament and which says it will come into effect on the day we leave will not do any such thing: 29 March 2019 is now, apparently, 1 January 2021.

It's all too easy to think, quite often, that Westminster exists in a parallel universe. Yesterday provided evidence in support of that case. But it also provided evidence of something else. Many suggest that politicians are not in charge in the UK: that there is a power behind the government that really runs the country. Some think it the civil service. Others have different conspiracies. I sincerely hope that those who think such things realise that yesterday provides the evidence that this is not true.

We are in a mess. Politicians created that mess. No one but politicians can get us out of that mess. It will have massive consequences. And there is no 'deep force' to save us from it.

Well, bar one. And that is angry parents. No one has more energy or capacity for potent anger than a parent wanting to feed their child and who is prevented from doing so. If that is the situation we face next year then the dark force in the country will be angry parents who will not tolerate being told they cannot do so because of Brexit.

In 2008 Alastair Darling knew he had no choice but save the banks because there had to be food on tables and there would not have been if he had let any one of them fail. Right or wrong, that's why it happened. It may have been the wrong decision for the long term, but it was right on the day.

A decade on and what we are seeing are all the wrong decisions being taken for the long term which have the potential to crash the economy in the short term, and to create mass civil unrest in the process.

Few think Alastair Darling a towering force in British politics. He got a great deal wrong. But he saw what needed to be done at a moment of crisis. Apparently no one with much power in British politics now comes close to having his insight even though ample notice of the crisis is being given this time.

We need to worry.

And candidly, we need to change government. But there is no mechanism to do so. And no effective opposition to replace the shambles we have.

And that's the real fear.