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As the [Guardian](#) has reported, the government is still refusing to confirm its intention to scrap up to 90% of tariffs after Brexit. There is good reason for it not doing so.

First, to admit this is to also admit that the UK is not ready for Brexit. The means to collect many tariffs that should be owing will not exist when Brexit happens. In other words, the government has failed to plan for the outcome it will be delivering.

But, second, and much more importantly, they are not admitting this because very large numbers of jobs will be threatened by scrapping tariffs. The fact is that whilst we might have free trade with the EU we do not with many other nations on earth for very good reason. The tariffs we impose protect UK jobs. Remove the tariffs and those jobs disappear. The biggest gainer will be China, of course.

The government is, unsurprisingly reluctant to admit that this is what free trade means. And that what bringing back control means in the context of Brexit is giving away the jobs of very large numbers of British people in agriculture and manufacturing, in particular.

The backlash to this is going to be very strong. Deliberate acts of vandalism rarely appeal strongly, and that is what the government is delivering for the UK economy.