

One day order will be restored: that's what we h...

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I am a little reluctant to discuss Brexit at present. What is there to say? The best that can be done is to note the continuing utter failure of our politicians to come to terms with this issue despite the impending crisis that this creates. And since opinion of almost all those I meet remains sharply divided, I also wonder what the point of debate is any more. I know what I want. The trouble is, so does everyone else, it seems. And little progress is made as a result.

What remains under discussion is what will happen. Will we extend, have a second referendum, remain or crash out?

Extend is, of course, an option that resolves nothing in itself unless a plan is attached. I see no plan to attach to it at present. And because I see little chance of the Commons agreeing on either a second referendum or extend, and none at all of it agreeing on May's deal, then crashing out seems by far the most likely option to me at present. I stress, I rule nothing out. But I would put the odds of Remain at near zero at present; a people's vote at less than 10%; May's deal at little more than that, and so crashing out at higher than 70%.

I happen to agree with Ivan Rogers that the chance that we would stay out of a trade deal with the EU, or maybe even the EU itself, for long is very low indeed. There isn't, in his opinion (which I share) a serious politician in the UK who does not think that having a trade deal with the EU is not better than not having one. The very fact that Liam Fox is scuttling round the world trying to recreate (at best) what we already have is the clearest evidence of that. So every politician who will let us crash out of the EU in little over three weeks time knows that. That this option is disastrous for the UK is known already, but I think it will happen anyway.

I happen to believe that those who say they will permit this because that is what their constituents wanted are telling the truth. It shows remarkably little courage on their part to suggest this. It reveals even less ability. They apparently have no belief to that when the facts change so should opinion. And we do, very obviously, know more now than we did. It even shows a willingness to ignore the evidence that the 2016 result

would not be replicated now. Instead it shows that we have politicians who have reduced their own status to such degree that they no longer think it their duty to lead, inform debate, and use their best judgement. History will not be kind to them.

And yet, maybe just maybe, they are the politicians of the moment. The politicians who dance to the populist press' tune. The politicians who will curry immediate favour whatever the long term cost. Politicians for whom principle is a word they have to check in the dictionary in case they get the wrong spelling. Politicians who reflect a society that has profoundly lost its way and needs a profound shock to help it re-establish what it might be.

And, I repeat the phrase deliberately, maybe just maybe we need to go through the process of having that profound shock now because that might be the only way in which sanity might be restored.

I stress, people will die as a result. Of that there can be no doubt.

And I stress that the process will be ghastly.

And the long term cost of the chaos we will create for ourselves will be very high, and I regret that for all our children's sake, in particular.

But this country has reached a point of unsustainability. Its politics do not work. Its political system does not work. Its constitution does not work, by which I mean that those countries that make up this supposedly united kingdom are not now united by very much at all. Its media does not work, and peddles a diet of lies. Its economic structure delivers extortionate returns to a very few at cost to most. It is far from being environmentally sustainable. And its whole body politic has been corrupted by a philosophy that has put self interest first as if nothing else matters. It's as if communities of interest hardly matter any more, and politicians from far too many parties do not seem to care.

And so we end up with an act of wilful self destruction, which is what Brexit is. The vast majority can see that in itself it is glaringly obviously not the right thing to do. But none of our leaders can apparently work out how they can stop an act of self-destruction that they created. In that sense they are the politicians that we may deserve right now, even if they are not the politicians that we need.

So what happens when we crash out, as I now think that we will? That's the subject of another post. But trust me, all we can say is it will not be pretty. Not for a while, anyway. And that when order is restored we will be living in very different countries.