

If you can't swear now you never will

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Do we have to discuss Brexit? Again? I suspect that we do. Much as I would rather not.

My reaction to last night's vote was rather more graphic than the language I usually publish, or even use that much. It was:

We're fucked

No deal here we come

Shit

I apologise for the rawness. It was how I felt then. And to a large extent it is how I feel now as well. The failure of the Commons to find a way through this is utterly baffling when this is a problem wholly of their own creations, for both allowing Article 50 without a plan and voting to leave with No Deal as a default.

Of course I blame the Tories. This is a problem of their creation. They have to take much of the responsibility for this mess.

But Labour failed to back the Joanna Cherry amendment last night that attempted to block No Deal, making it all the more likely as a result. That was unforgivable.

And too many MPs are still standing out for unicorns - options that are simply not available - all of which mean May can still, in her state of delusion, think her option is still possible.

What happens now? Of course I do not know. No one does. Except that April 12 looms large and I am now back to thinking there is an 80% or more chance of No Deal on that day when before 10pm last night I was rather hoping we would go well below 50%. But there are still matters worth considering. Several stand out.

First, Nick Boles may compromise on his motion now he has quit the Tories. It's staggering that it takes a man to have a brush with death to break the Tory

stranglehold, but that's what seems to have happened with Boles. And maybe, just maybe he will now link Common Market 2.0 with a People's Vote and both can make progress together. It would be better than No Deal.

Second, with a three hour political cabinet this morning anything might happen to the Tories. With this political Cabinet meeting having to then follow on with a two hour Cabinet proper meeting the chance of fights breaking out is very high. We can hope a lot do not make it to the end as ministers. Even more than ever open warfare amongst the Tories can only help make clear just how hopeless their management of Brexit has been. As importantly, it will increase the chance of compromise being reached in the Commons.

Third, Labour might just realise it has to work with the SNP in the national interest. But I really will not hold my breath on that.

Fourth, the Speaker may allow more sensible voting procedures on Wednesday to permit a solution to be found. Transferable voting is surely not beyond the wit of this parliament?

Fifth, maybe, just maybe the EU will remain tolerant of our stupidity.

And sixth, heaven knows, if we could try Common Market 2.0 and a second referendum we might just reach a solution that could then be taken back to the EU for renegotiation.

Saying which, I know this will not appease those who wish we crash out. And I do know that they have grievances galore, many of which I share with regard to unjust treatment. But sometimes, it has to be said, making things worse is not a solution. Because that is what No Deal will do, in every conceivable way. And I think it my right to say so, and to argue that realising this is democracy in action.

But let's be clear: democracy as we have known it is on its last legs, however you look at it. And that more than justified my language on Twitter last night.