

Johnson wants to throw away peace - and it's imp...

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:06 am

I spent yesterday feeling very angry.

I've known, and written about, Johnson's duplicity, lying and consequential corruption of the standards of government before now, but the deliberate (and not denied) intention to renege on the Transition Agreement reached with the EU, and only signed into law by Johnson's own government in January this year, offended me more than all those things.

I have no doubt that this is because this gameplay on his part threatens the Good Friday Agreement (GFA). The trolls have been out in force saying it does no such thing. But without claiming to be an expert in the GFA I dispute this.

That's firstly because those who are expert in the GFA clearly disagree. The concern on this issue, and agreement that the GFA is under threat, appears commonplace everywhere but in the Conservative Party. The US Congress expressed its concern in a vote yesterday.

Despite that trolls are claiming the experts are wrong because the GFA makes no reference to the EU single market and customs union. There is, however, good reason for that. It's because they were as much issues taken as read, and beyond the need for definition, within that agreement as was the calendar used for the purpose of defining dates. There comes a point when drafting any agreement when what is obvious does not need to be defined: it simply is.

And in this case the GFA was built on a foundation of the customs union and single market that Johnson is now threatening. Food supplies, veterinary services and many other arrangements cannot now be effectively separated across a land border in a small island that cannot properly function without the agreements reached in the Transition Agreement - which is why they were reached and insisted upon by the EU. The Irish electricity agreement, which operates seamlessly across the border now, is similarly impacted, with the threat to it implicit in Johnson's plan having enormous consequences.

It is argued that that these are not as important as sovereignty issues. But again, I disagree. The absolute virtue of the GFA was it left so many sovereignty issues hanging that all could believe what they wanted on the issue whilst the border effectively disappeared, which suited literally everyone because peace was the bigger prize, which means that these are very definitely sovereignty issues.

And now Johnson wants to put that border back in place in a way that can only create tension, north and south of it, and do untold economic, social and political harm.

And what really annoys is me is that I literally have no idea what this destruction is for. At best it is hinted that it is because the UK cannot now comply with the EU's rules on state aid. The ridiculousness of that is staggering. For decades Tories argued that the state should not pick winners and losers and that doing so was to undermine free markets. And now they will sacrifice international agreements - and even one that brought peace for more than twenty years - to do what they have always condemned.

In the circumstance do I have the right to be angry? I suggest so. I think we all should be livid.

But the trolls are still out supporting Johnson's right to destroy all he surveys. And in that case I fear Tory MPs will do his bidding.

The consequence is that all the time my sense of foreboding grows.