

Will Brexit save the UK Fishing Industry?

The Save Britain's Fish campaign has laid out an interesting assessment of the governments version of a transition deal (see below).

Brexit creates a golden opportunity to regain 70% of the UK's fisheries resources and rejuvenate a multi-billion pound industry for the nation – becoming as sustainable and successful as Norway, Iceland and Faroe.

Although 23rd June 2016 was a great and historic day it was merely a signal of intent – Brexit must now mean Brexit.

Tied into a punitive transition by Njordr AB

“It's appropriate for those of us in the fishing industry to expect winter storms, we are used to them, but are our Government ready for the storm of their own making? says John Ashworth.

What some commentators thought was the best news to end 2017 was that our Government managed to move the Brexit negotiations from phase one to two.

In reality it is to phase one and a half, because any notion of a transition (or implementation) period was not on the original agenda of Article 50 or Withdrawal.

The idea of a transition is an addition by government, and it is this proposal that will cause the storm when the full reality of what is proposed dawns on MPs and the

public.

The recommendations pouring out of the EU institutions for the proposed 21month transition are horrific; Continued payment, Continued ECJ judicial oversight, No representation and Acceptance of the entire EU *Acquis* (all EU law) in full.

Agreeing to this would see Britain officially 'leave' the EU at one second past 11pm on March 29th to then be back under EU law in a worse position at two seconds past 11pm as part of the new 'transition' deal.

For the fishing industry that would mean a continuation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) for another 21 months, or possibly forever, as the EU could look to dispute 'continuity of rights' with Britain having re-agreed to obey the CFP as part of a 'transition'.

Storms expose weaknesses, and for the Government it will be the weakness of their whole Brexit strategy of pursuing a transition as they try to obtain the fallacy of a 'deep and special relationship' with the EU, which Mrs May first eluded to in her Lancaster House speech.

Here Mrs May mentioned, *'The United Kingdom would seek to secure a new, deep and special partnership with the European Union'*.

This however begs the question what does Mrs May define as 'deep and special' and at what level is the starting point of this relationship based on? Is it;

a) An imitation of the present circumstances where a new relationship sees a continuation of

preferences conferred as a full EU member.

Or

b) Starting from ground zero with a clean sheet and building an entirely new relationship from there.

It's fair to say the electorate (with all the hype that has been created) think Mrs May is trudging towards an agreement similar to point (a). Whereas the reality of what the EU is offering is something closer to point (b).

The problem is that the British political class have convinced (or deluded) themselves that the EU is an economic project where continuation of a 'deep and special' relationship should be obtainable for everyone's best economic interests.

This is in stark contrast to the continental politicians pronouncements that the EU is a political project where the unity, integrity and solidarity of the project and the remaining 27 EU member States comes first.

For the European Union this is a political battle to save *'Le project'* not an economic one. The EU fears that being seen to give an 'escaping' member state 'deep and special' terms after having left would compromise the project.

This is why the EU has played an excruciating game of hardball thus far in negotiations – they are approaching it from securing the project – economic considerations come second.

It is this failure of understanding by

Continued on page 2

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Continued from page 1

the British political class (wilful or accidental), that so long as economics trumped all the EU would come to sensible terms, that has led to the current failure of approach.

Rather than accepting that there is no 'deep and special' partnership to be had and to crack on with provisions for the UK to leave with no deal, time was wasted expecting the EU to bow to economic pressure as 'Remainers' sought and hoped for continued close alignment.

As the government wasted time with this delusion, whilst being unprepared to seriously accept walking away, they have realised they needed more time and this is where the idea of a 'transition' period came from.

It is no wonder Barnier was delighted that the UK asked for a transitional period, it suits the EU very nicely, as the 'transition' is part of the deal AFTER the UK officially leaves

under Article 50 it is only in the EU's gift to give and on the EU's terms.

As the EU looks to protect the projects integrity the stringent and punitive terms the EU has laid down make clear Britain could find herself in a position of total subservience to the EU to gain a transition.

The EU will not budge an inch from their stringent terms, no matter how much the British political class will them to do so out of economic 'sense' or a feeling of how could the EU project treat its faithful adherents so.

The big question is what is the 'transition' for? What is the cost/benefit analysis? None it would seem.

As the EU has made pertinently clear a 'transition' is a period where the UK will be held in some sort of legal suspension, until we hit the end of the 'transition' whether a new deal is reached or not.

This is not an 'implementation'

period which sees a gentle unwinding towards a future 'deep and special' partnership.

Only some MP's understand what is being proposed and the legal context that will underpin it. Where we will have wasted 21 months for nothing and on 1st. January 2021 we could be no further forward despite political submission to the EU for the 'transition' after we left

Most MP's hide behind the idea that there will be a 'deep and special relationship' but that is clearly not what is on offer.

Brexit was about 'taking back control' yet what is proposed for a 'transition' is the polar opposite.

As this will go to the vote it is up to MP's to prove that they are prepared to fulfill the peoples expressed will as their elected representatives by taking back control and not signing up to a transition where the UK will be locked in to further subservience."