



qualitalk

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Info campaigns and citizens' meetings were not considered, before Great Britain carried out its referendum on leaving the EU. The heads of state and government members of the 27 EU Member States displayed a far too noble reserve when it came to Britain's wrong accusations of European institutions to be the cause of their own insular problems.

Just one week before the Brexit, over one million people demonstrated in London on 23 March 2019, to remain in the European Union; close to six million signed a „remain“ petition.

A high turnout at the elections to the European parliament wishes

Chris Schuster

Brexit ante Portas

The difficult exit of Great Britain from the European Union

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Running for Europe - Young and old get together for a »Run for Europe« under the guidance of Marathon runner Alfred Sungi in Vienna's Prater, causing widespread attention among cyclists, joggers and other passers-by.

Brexit ante Portas

UK's complicated Exit of the European Union – an interim result

Great were the surprise and shock throughout Europe on 23 June 2016 when contrary to public opinion, polls 51.89 percent of voters in the United Kingdom had voted that their country leave the European Union. But, even the mantra-like, repetitive pronouncements

the statutes of its organization generally requires a 2/3 majority.

The British government dilly-dallied with the modalities of their exit. When the position of H.M. Principal Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union was newly created in 2016, his ministry worked on

Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?

- Remain a member of the European Union.
- Leave the European Union.

	Votes	Remain	Leave	Turnout
England	28.477.586	47%	53%	74,5%
N'Ireland	790.523	56%	56%	62,7%
Scotland	2.681.179	62%	38%	67,2%
Wales	1.628.054	47%	53%	71,7%
total	33.577.342	48%	52%	72,2%

46,500.001 people in the United Kingdom including Gibraltar were eligible to vote (results of the Referendum of 23 June 2016)

of Prime Minister Theresa May: „The people voted for Brexit and we have to deliver!“ it wasn't the whole population that voted en bloc for the exit from the European Union but no more than roughly one third of all eligible voters.

One can emphatically state that things do not go well with one of the oldest democracies of the world. If a referendum deals with sweeping consequences for one's countries and its neighbours and only a simple majority is required — 50 percent plus one vote —, then the losing side will resist the winning side push through uncompromisingly and at all costs. One may need to be reminded that even in small, local organisations an amendment to

the details of proposal of separation agreement without considering recommendations and objections from commerce and sciences, as well as of concerns of people in the cultural sector. No wonder that the ministry in it's short history is now with its third head, Stephen Barclay. His draft of over 500 pages was presented to Parliament for discussion quite late. Many Britons only now came to realize what the results of an exit would mean to them. An Anti-Brexit demonstration in London on 23 March drew more than one million people. Started on the website of the British Government and Parliament by Margaret Anne



With lots of humour
people are protesting against leaving the European Union London, 23 March 2019

Photo: Courtesy
Angela Christofilou
© The Independent, 2019

Georgiadou a petition to remain in the European Union resulted in such a surge of participants that the server crashed repeatedly. By midnight of 26 March 2019 nearly six million British citizens had signed the petition. It did not make an impression on the Government but the Parliament will have to discuss that petition which it will do on 1 April.

The hour of the Speaker

The speaker of Commons is selected from among the members of the governing party, in this case by Theresa May's Conservative Party (Tories). The speaker, always addressed as „Mr Speaker“, is neutral and has to assure that the rules of the house are being observed. In a dramatic declaration regarding the procedures of voting, the Speaker John Bercow had to remind the house on 18 March 2019 as follows:

„So far as our present situation is concerned, let me summarize the chronology of events. The draft EU withdrawal agreement, giving effect

to the deal between the Government and the EU, was published on 14 November and the agreement itself, together with the accompanying political declaration on the future relationship, received endorsement from the European Council on 25 November. The first scheduled debate on what I will hereafter refer to as “the deal” was due to take place on 11 December. However, on 10 December the vote was postponed after 164 speeches had already been made over three of the five days allotted for debate. That postponement was caused not by me or by the House, but by the Government. Indeed, I pointed out at the time that that was deeply discourteous to the House and I suggested that the permission of the House for that postponement should be sought. Regrettably, it was not.

„Over five weeks later, following a further five-day debate, the first meaningful vote was held on 15 January, which the Government lost by a margin of 230 votes—the largest in

The Gift Shop

In Westminster Palace, the seat of both Houses of Lords and of Commons can at the moment offer better things than the spectacle taking place in Brexit debates and votes.

Brexit-Prognosis



*Be patient
have a cuppa*

parliamentary history. Subsequently, the second meaningful vote was expected to take place in February, but once again there was a postponement. It finally happened only last Tuesday, 12 March. The Government's motion on the deal was again very heavily defeated.

„In my judgment, that second meaningful vote motion did not fall foul of the convention about matters already having been decided during the same Session. This was because it could be credibly argued that it was a different proposition from that already rejected by the House on 15 January. It contained a number of legal changes which the Government considered to be binding and which had been agreed with the European Union after intensive discussions. Moreover, the Government's second meaningful vote motion was accompanied by the publication of three new documents—two issued jointly with the EU and a unilateral declaration from the UK not objected to by the EU. In procedural terms, it was therefore quite proper that the debate and the second vote took place last week. The Government responded to its defeat, as they had promised to do, by scheduling debates about a no-deal Brexit and an extension of article 50 on 13 and 14 March respectively.

Then he continued with that whimsical smile which has become his trademark:

„It has been strongly rumored, although I have not received confirmation of this, that a third, and even possibly a fourth, meaningful vote motion will be attempted. Hence this statement, which is designed to signal what would be orderly and what would not. This is my conclusion: if

the Government wish to bring forward a new proposition that is neither the same nor substantially the same as that disposed of by the House on 12 March, that would be entirely in order. What the Government cannot legitimately do is to resubmit to the House the same proposition or substantially the same proposition as that of last week, which was rejected by 149 votes. This ruling should not be regarded as my last word on the subject; it is simply meant to indicate the test which the Government must meet in order for me to rule that a third meaningful vote can legitimately be held in this parliamentary Session.

John Bercow emphasized that the reason to bring this objection was to make Government aware that they have to test whether their conduct is lawfully admissible.

The text of Mr Bercow's explanation is per Parliamentary Record Hansard, 18 March 2019, 15:33, Volume 565, Column 776.

This declaration by the Speaker blindsided Prime Minister Theresa May, as it negated her hope to still be able to force her deal through Parliament.

Bexit Delayed

At the EU summit meeting in Brussels on 21 March 2019 the British Prime Minister received the consent to postpone the date of exit from the EU, 29 March, to 22 May if Parliament would at a third try approve the agreement as negotiated. That period of time was granted for the purpose of being able to hone the procedural technicalities to implement the agreement. However, should Parliament again vote down the agreement then

Great Britain would have to communicate its course of action by 12 April, in particular if Great Britain would or would not participate in European Parliamentary elections in May.

Time to direct questions at the Government about Exit from the European Union according to Article 50 in the House of Commons began on 22 March 2019, at 11 o'clock. Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, Kwasi Kwarteng, tried in vain to explain the next steps the Government will take. It appeared that he himself did not have any idea about it and sounded like nothing more than an echo of his boss Theresa May: „My deal, or no deal“. Kwarteng also was unable to have an answer whether a third vote about the same text would be permissible or not. Kwarteng's perplexity and prevarication led Labour MP Andy Slaughter (constituency: Hammersmith) to state: »I am tempted to ask the Minister what he had for breakfast this morning, as that might be a question he can answer. His performance is emblematic of the shambolic lack of preparedness over this whole issue. I will try a few very simple questions. Is the meaningful vote coming forward next week? If so, on which day? And if, as seems almost inevitable, it is voted down again, what happens then?

Another Labour MP, Joe Stevens (constituency: Cardiff Central) followed through with:

„Does the Minister not accept the irony—some would say hypocrisy—of the Government saying the public can have a vote neither on whether to agree the Prime Minister's deal or remain nor in the European elections

but that the House can vote three times on her deal?

There was some unsureness about the next sessions in the House of Commons because of Easter recess. Turning to the Speaker John Bercow Labour MP Chris Bryant asked if it



wouldn't be helpful to have a plan for upcoming meetings, before the end of the day:

„On a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Minister said that whether we sit next Friday, or when we sit, is entirely up to the House. Well, the House can make those decisions only if the Government have tabled something to that effect. It seems perfectly likely that we will be sitting next Friday for the reasons that several hon. Members have already mentioned. However, the Easter recess dates have already been announced—I do not think that we have voted on them as there has not yet been a motion before the House, but I may be wrong on that—and people are making plans. As it stands, the Easter recess means that we would not be sitting on 12 April, which is

The Euro Tunnel brought the Isles and the Continent closer together. The trip in a motorail between Calais, France, and Dover, England, takes only 35 minutes. Will it still be that way?



»Brexit means Brexit«
*repeated endlessly by Prime
Minister Theresa May*

one of the next dates that is meant to be important. Would it not be really helpful if the Leader of the House were to make a statement before the end of today as to the future plans for when we are going to be sitting?

As the guardian of appropriate manners in Parliament, John Bercow answered in a most lapidary way: „It would. (...Whether such will be forthcoming, I do not know, but the hon. Gentleman’s point of order contained three propositions—or at any rate, two assertions and a proposition. He was right in every particular. We will leave it there for now. I cannot add anything at this hour, but my not being able to add anything at this hour does not put me into a position markedly different from that of the Minister on the Treasury Bench)

Normally, being Leader of the House, Andrea Leadsom should announce on Thursday the time table for Parliamentary debates of the following week. But in her absence no one could make an authoritative announcement, to the disappointment of the Members.

Time for Government and Parliament’s foot-dragging and verbal sparring over points of procedure really has run out. The Prime Minister seems to still be clutching at „Brexit means Brexit — my deal or no deal.“ Already since the start, suspicion ran high that she were playing for time; instill in Members a feeling of panic so that in the end they would assent to her Brexit deal. □

Impressum

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Photo: Maurice de Chlourigon

I run for Europe because I will never run to the bomb shelter as I had to in my childhood during WW II.
The European Union stands for peace!.

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