

Mrs May: a product of the past

The Deeper Malaise behind Mrs May's Inept Handling of Brexit

The European Union Carried on by Other Means

Mrs May is a product of the past and this shows in her poor political leadership and shambolic handling of the Article 50 negotiations, which are currently going in the direction of a Brexit in name only. The past to which I refer is the culture of increasing political deference to the European Union (EU) and dependency which goes back to Edward Heath and has been continued by subsequent Conservative and Labour prime ministers up to the present day. Over a period of years, it has evolved into a paradigm (or conceptual framework of ideas, assumptions and perceived wisdom) which set the direction for many subsequent policies and actions. The only notable exception to this past paradigm is (perhaps) Mrs Thatcher who claimed to be inspired by free market economists Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman. Unfortunately, only at the end of her premiership, for example, in her famous "no, no, no" speech did she stand up to the EUs centralising control freaks and arrogant ideologues and only after being deposed from office did she advocate leaving the EU.

Escape from (conservative) Reality into the EU

At the heart of any notionally conservative party is a major dilemma for its strategists and leaders:- how to expand its popular base beyond the core support of the conservative

mind, the sort of people who make up the majority of party members. This means, in effect, developing a second unique selling proposition rather than making traditional conservatism popular among many. Tory strategists believed that they needed to project an image, though not necessarily a reality, of eclectic, inclusive modernity. At one time, the EU appeared to provide this modernity. It could, therefore, be accepted for political expediency even if it contradicted core values or British national interests.

The EU comfort zone for Politicians and Public Servants

For any prime minister, regardless of political label – and also for the Civil Service – the EU provides a useful comfort zone. There is the appearance of eclectic modernity, a 'world stage' on which to strut, a means of escaping responsibility and the respectful acceptance by equals and their subordinates. Simple, just follow the EU's (mainly greater German) social, political, economic, regulatory, monetary and fiscal lead. Who wouldn't find this reassuring especially as it offers an escape from political turbulence and the need to be competent while providing a means of avoiding blame should any major mistakes become public?

The EU's corrupting comfort zone

The uninviting (and courageous) alternative to the EU's comfort zone requires a Prime Minister who is to be accused by opponents of being insular, parochial, jingoistic, elitist, 'out in the cold', 'out of step' with the EU and/or 'behind the times'. Small wonder Edward Heath's successors became such EU-centric 'modernity' idealists who were prepared to deceive the public whilst selling out British national interests and sovereignty. Mrs May would need to be a very determined person to escape the strong force of this ingrained political behaviour, going back over forty years.

The EU undermines UK Governmental competence

As ever more activities of government were transferred to the EU over the last forty odd years there has been a hollowing out of competence, though not necessarily of numbers, in the Civil Service. The result is that in many fields the expertise and motivation required by the government of a sovereign country no longer exists within the UK. As a newly-independent country it will take time to re-establish missing expertise and then achieve positive results in our national interest.

The Referendum Vote for Brexit caused a paradigm shift

Times have changed. The 17,410,742 voters who backed Brexit in the 2016 Referendum have decided the EU is not the future which they want for our country. This is a major paradigm shift with wide-ranging long-term implications. The EU is now the past and modernity is being redefined as embracing exciting future possibilities outside its claustrophobic clutches. The new modernity has not yet solidified into a paradigm and can potentially include anything from re-invigorating democracy with a more collaborative form of government to re-discovering world leading skills based on long standing national strengths, heritage and culture. For more on this, see The National CV .

Mrs May is failing to adapt to the new Brexit inspired modernity

Mrs May is having considerable difficulty elucidating a new post-Brexit vision to accord with the Referendum's paradigm shift and resulting new modernity. She is stuck in the obsolete paradigm. Dependence and deference to the EU is so ingrained into the structure of No. 10 Downing Street that Mrs May can't let go of the past and the old EU-centric view of modernity. There is little or no evidence of her using Brexit as a great facilitator for tackling the big issues facing our country. Instead, her mindset is rooted in the spin, language, actions and policies of the past.

Talk of 'A deep and special relationship with our European partners' is more a cry for continuing belonging than a confident assertion of independence. Worse still, the EU has been allowed to make the running with Mrs May, Mr Davis and the Department for (not) Exiting the European Union repeatedly caving in to its increasingly unreasonable demands. At the moment, the worst legacy of these cave-ins is the appalling Transition Deal which would make this country into a temporary then a permanent EU vassal state. There is also, to highlight a few others, the surrendering of UK fisheries, defence and defence procurement to EU bureaucrats and the enthusiasm to allow British citizens to be subject to the worst justice systems in the EU through the retention of the European Arrest Warrant.

The EEA/EFTA Paradox

Whilst obviously being unwilling to leave control by the political EU, Mrs May somewhat enigmatically chose to leave the existing frictionless trading simplicity of membership of the Single Market (and wider European Economic Area, EEA). She has never explained why this reckless decision was made without a practical plan for leaving the EU which would still allow us to retain near frictionless trade.

However, gullibility and ignorance are hinted at in her Lancaster House speech 17th January 2017 where she appears to have accepted the disingenuous claims of the EU leaders regarding the inviolate nature of the four freedoms. In reality, the EU is happy to break these principles when convenient so to do. For example, the EU's proposed Withdrawal Agreement, Article 13 (Protocols NI) allows the EU or the UK, amongst other things, unilaterally to restrict immigration from the other party (to the agreement). In other words **the EU can restrict immigration into the remaining Member States from the UK, and the UK can restrict immigration from the remaining Member States into the UK.**

Nowhere to hide

A policy of spin and handing over more and more political decisions to the EU no longer cuts it post-Referendum. Endless vacuous mantras and blaming the EU for failing to deliver a successful, opportunity filled Brexit is sounding increasingly unconvincing outside the Westminster bubble. With time running out, the country needs to know the truth. Mrs May probably already knows what she must do to save Brexit from being in name only and to prevent trade with the EU facing severe disruption. The only viable option is to re-join the free nations of Europe in The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) whilst temporarily remaining in the single market under much more flexible and favourable conditions in a bespoke version of the EEA Agreement. (further information see [The EFTA/EEA Solution to the Current Brexit Impasse](#), [Brexit Reset](#), [Eureferendum.com](#), various posts on [Campaign for an Independent Britain](#) and affiliates)

Moving onto this escape route (from the EU with the least potential disruption to existing trade) in the coming crisis will need effective crisis management and something like a modern day Brexit Operation Dynamo. Will Mrs May deliver or should the Conservative Party expeditiously choose someone else who can?