

# Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed

Before readers start getting too angry about the agreement between David Davis and Michel Barnier over the terms for an interim relationship with the EU, it must be pointed out that the handshake between the two men does not mean that everything is done and dusted.

The transitional arrangements are only part of an overall deal which have to be approved by the European institutions and national parliaments, including our own. We are still a long way from reaching this point.

On this website, we have already explained why the transitional terms on offer from the EU are unacceptable. It will be very hard to follow it with a truly clean break. We most certainly don't need to be shackled to the EU's customs union and any ongoing participation in the Common Fisheries policy would be the ruination of our fishing industry. Fishing for Leave didn't mince its words in a recent press release – it is nothing less than a capitulation by a weak government.

Just to remind readers about our fisheries:- The UK's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 200 nautical miles/median line was established by a British Act of Parliament – the Fishery Limits 1976 Act – but because of our membership of what was then the EEC, that zone was promptly handed over to the EEC, to become EEC/EU waters, right up to the low water mark, and the resource within that zone also became EEC/EU resource, managed by them and not us.

In 1983 the EU established the quota system, shared out amongst the member states by means of what is known as “relative stability keys”. These keys do change when a new member joins or one leaves.

At 11pm, 29th March 2019 the UK's EEZ is returned to our Westminster Parliament, who must take full responsibility under the guidelines of International Law – UNCLOS3. At that moment all EU quota ceases to exist in the UK's EEZ.

It is then down to the UK Government with the support from a majority of the Westminster parliamentarians how much of the British peoples resource they intend to give away. There is no negotiation as such.

The EU has no legal authority to demand anything, because in just over a year's time, the UK will become an independent coastal state under third country status. Unfortunately, it seems that our government is willing to concede to demands which the EU has no right to make.

There is hope that the deal may yet be torpedoed. The Committee for Exiting the European Union could not come to an agreement on a report not about the transitional deal *per se* but extending it. Jaco Rees-Mogg, in his characteristically eloquent manner, called the majority report (which he and six colleagues refused to sign) a "prospectus for the vassal state". He also called the its authors the "High priests of Remain". Mr Rees-Mogg also fired a shot across the bows of Theresa May in an article for the Daily Telegraph. "The United Kingdom will not accept being a subservient state" he said. "In the case of tariffs, once we have left the EU, it is non-negotiable that our trade minister should be able to respond to any threat of increased tariffs from other nations as suits our national interest, not the EU's," He went on to add "In the words of one country's frustrated trade negotiator, Britain has to decide if it is a serious country or a joke nation. It would be humiliating for others to have cause to think thus of us."

Trade issues are not the only cause for concern. Since the Brexit vote, our government has signed a number of agreements with the EU on military cooperation, without consulting

Parliament. The details can be found on the Veteran for Britain website, which we would thoroughly recommend to anyone wishing to follow this subject in greater detail. This article in particular warns of the potential dangers that will result from this and it seems that ministers have indicated they intend to make the UK's role in the agreements permanent via the exit treaty. The Government's published negotiation aims include a proposal to stay in the European Defence Fund and defence industrial programme. This essentially means that we, as a free country, will be ceding our defence to an organisation we voted to leave.

On another key issue, the European Arrest Warrant, one concerned correspondent wrote to his MP about its dangers, which are well- reported on this website, only to be told that we were intending to stay a signatory of the EAW and that was that.

To end where we began: nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. The battle is not lost yet, but our government, whether through incompetence, deceit, spinelessness or all three, is not delivering the Brexit for which we voted. As a democracy, we are given the chance to tell our politicians what we think of them. We in CIB will ensure that they will get the message well before the next General election – indeed, well before any deal is ready for signing. Recent developments are discouraging, but for the good of the country we love, the fight must and will go on. Sadly it appears that our real enemies are not in Brussels (let alone Moscow) but in Westminster and Whitehall.