

Taking on the remoaners

By Leo McKinstry

The anti-Brexit campaigners are the sorest losers in modern British history. Instead of accepting the verdict of the EU referendum, they do all they can to thwart it. In their contempt for democracy, they mirror the arrogant spirit of the unelected, unaccountable Brussels oligarchy, which has always despised the notion of the popular will.

There are two central strands to the Remoaners' cynical effort. One is to fight against Brexit through the courts and Parliament, putting every possible legalistic obstruction in the way of the drive for British independence. So they mounted a judicial review against Article 50, put down a deluge of amendments against the EU Withdrawal Bill and now try to galvanise the House of Lords into wrecking the Brexit legislation. The other, perhaps more dangerous, strategy is to wage a ruthless propaganda war on behalf of the EU. Effectively, this is a reprise of the infamous Project Fear deployed by the Government in advance of the vote. Once again, we hear the same old scare stories: that Brexit will be a disaster for the economy, trade and employment; that the process is so complicated that it cannot even be achieved in a decade; and that Britain will be left hopelessly isolated on the global stage.

The clear aim of the Remoaners is to create a climate of such anxiety, frustration and gloom over Brexit that the British people will turn against independence, either by demanding a second referendum or by pressurizing the Government into the abandonment of the entire process. But this ruthless campaign cannot be allowed to succeed. A surrender to the Remoaners would completely shatter faith in democratic politics in Britain. It would show that even the majority cannot prevail against the establishment. Amid profound public disillusion,

the EU and the Europhiles would be triumphant. Once again, Britain would be locked into the federal project, with all dreams of nationhood and a return to self-governance broken. Such an outcome would be perhaps the greatest humiliation in our island story.

The best way to defeat the Remoaners is to demolish their arguments. Already, the predictions of post-referendum meltdown could hardly look hollow. George Osborne claimed that a vote for Brexit would lead to “an immediate economic shock” and a “DIY recession.” Yet, almost two years after the referendum, economic growth is steady, the City of London is expanding, unemployment is at its lowest level since the 1970s and manufacturing order books are at their fullest since 1988. Similarly, the Remoaners’ synthetic alarmism about the alleged negative impact of border controls – such as skill shortages – needs to be ruthlessly exposed. Far from damaging Britain, tougher immigration will raise living standards, promote social cohesion, lower social security bills and reduce. After, as David Cameron once pointed out, no less than 40 per cent of EU migrants are actually dependent on welfare.

The British people need to be reminded that a return to the status quo in our relationship with the EU is not an option, for Brussels is bent on the creation of a federal superstate, where every vestige of national sovereignty has disappeared. If Britain stays in the EU, we will become nothing more than a regional province of a bureaucratic empire. Indeed, the entire Remoaner message is one of defeatism, betraying a profound lack of confidence in our country. For centuries, Britain has been a great nation, the victor in two world wars, the creator of Parliamentary democracy and the pioneer of the Industrial Revolution, yet the pro-EU brigade that we are too enfeebled to survive on our own. This unpatriotic, sneering disdain for Britain and its people shone through a recent outburst from the former diplomat Lord Kerr, author of Article 50 of

the Lisbon Treaty, who declared that "immigration is the thing that keeps the country going. We native British are so bloody stupid that we need injections of intelligent people from outside." Such self-loathing attitude infuses the Remoaners' movement. That is why it is so laughable when they talk about the national interest. There will be no nation at all if they have their way.