

News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

13th May 2019

News Highlights

Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

UK high streets in a downward spiral

- [The British Retail Consortium says 1 in 10 of all high street shops is lying empty](#). The national town centre vacancy rate was at a four year high of 10.2% last month. Struggling high street shops are trapped in a downward spiral

Private equity firms shun the UK for Europe

- [James Seagrave, global head of financial sponsors](#) coverage at BNP Paribas in London says the UK market has become sclerotic as a result of Brexit. The main issue for any private equity firm seeking to buy up a UK company is the almost impossible task of assessing the risk they are acquiring

ONS data says manufacturers stockpiling for March Brexit helped economy grow

- [There was GDP growth of 0.5% in Q1, because](#) of unprecedented stockpiling by manufacturers who were fearful of the impact of a No Deal Brexit. It was an improvement on 0.2% from the previous quarter. However, the service sector and construction sectors have gone into reverse in March, pushing GDP down for that particular month by 0.1%

Hundreds of foreign doctors are mulling leaving the UK over crippling working visa and use of NHS fees

- [More than 500 doctors from outside the EU voiced their concerns to EveryDoctor](#), a campaigning organization run by medics to improve how the profession is treated. Hundreds of overseas doctors are considering quitting the NHS protesting at being charged thousands of pounds a year for visas and healthcare in order to work in the UK.

Football faces Brexit chaos over EU player transfers to UK clubs

- [At the end of the post-Brexit transition period](#), set to be January 2021, there is a mid-season transfer window for football teams. There will no longer be an any automatic right for an EU player to work in the UK and Whitehall is worried that many clubs are not working on addressing these concerns

Richest in Britain got 25bn Euros richer since the Brexit vote

- [A survey reports that the 15 Britons on the Bloomberg Billionaire Index](#) have added £21.5bn to their fortunes since the country voted to leave the EU in 2016. This includes £14bn so far this year

Brexit talks will tie up Whitehall for years, warns top UK diplomat

- [Peter Ricketts, former national security adviser](#) and head of Britain's diplomatic service, is warning

that the next stage of Brexit negotiations are going to make the current mess look like a simple affair, and it will tie the civil service up for a long time. These negotiations, he expects, will go on for years and encompass pretty much the entire Whitehall, as detailed negotiations have to be worked out for everything from trade to financial services to data transfer, transport, fisheries and nuclear and gas supply

- [Irish Deputy PM, Simon Coveney, warns the Tories](#) changing their leader won't change things when it comes to the Irish border or trade arrangement - realities do not change based on personalities
- [UK International trade secretary, Liam Fox](#), said there are no winners in a trade war, only casualties - as President Trump raises tariffs on a huge number of Chinese goods and China looks set to retaliate

Rumours ministers may try and bring Theresa May's Brexit Withdrawal Bill back to Parliament this week

- [Jacob Rees Mogg warned that any move to strike](#) a deal with Jeremy Corbyn would unite the Brexiteer ERG, who would vote against her. Tory MP Phillip Lee said there were significant numbers of Remain Tories who were also hostile to a deal with Corbyn
- [More than two thirds of all Labour MPs would reject](#) a deal without a second referendum, Sir Keir Starmer told The Guardian. If the point of such an exercise is to get a sustainable majority in Parliament you cannot do it without a confirmatory vote

Mixed messages coming across about the cross-party Brexit talks

- [Some say they are progressing in a positive fashion](#) while others, such as Shadow Health Secretary, Jonathan Ashworth, said 'talks are not getting very far as Theresa May is unprepared to compromise'
- [Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell](#) said the talks with the Tories were disintegrating as leadership contenders were literally fighting amongst themselves in front of the Labour representatives, making a deal impossible
- [Amber Rudd warned Tory rebels that Theresa May](#) could make a comeback and urged them not to move against her until a Brexit deal is reached. She said cross-party negotiations were at a delicate stage and that launching a bid to oust her would deepen the current crisis

Dire funding situation leaves the Tories struggling for party HQ rent

- [iNews reported that Tory funding has dried up](#) so badly that the party is struggling to pay rent on its HQ. Concern among activists deepened as James Hosking, one of the party's most prominent donors, defected to Nigel Farage's Brexit Party. iNews was told Conservative HQ is paying for things on a month by month basis and they are waiting to see who would take over at the top as reserves are drying up

New polling suggested the Brexit Party is set to win more votes than Labour and the Conservatives combined

- [The latest Opinium poll on voting intentions](#) puts the Brexit Party on 34% with Labour on 21%, the Lib Dems on 12% and the Tories on 11% in fourth place

Multi-millionaire who donated £200K to the Brexit Party is former Tory Party donor

- [Financier, Jeremy Hosking said he has given £200,000](#) over the last two to three weeks to the Brexit Party. Hosking broke cover, telling the Telegraph. He said donated to Farage as he did not

want to see the dilution of Brexit, as was happening under Theresa May's leadership

Reconciliation in the UK could take a generation - said Gordon Brown

- [Speaking at the launch of Christian Aid week](#), Brown said there were two competing visions in this country. One was isolated, inward-looking and disengaged, the other outward-facing and internationalist. He said he was worried that divisions are now so deep and so pervasive that it could take a generation for them to be reconciled

Guy Verhofstadt visits the UK to back the Liberal Democrats

- [In a visit to London, Verhofstadt joined Lib Dem](#) leader Vince Cable saying they were 'offering an alternative to nationalism' and that they were the only strong pro-European party in Britain

Change UK launched its Charter for Remain in a bid to secure the anti-Brexit vote

- [Brexit was the biggest symbol of our broken system](#), said Heidi Allen the party leader, as she launched the Charter for Remain for the Euro Election. The Charter calls for a referendum on remaining in the EU and sets out how EU membership could be used to push for change on domestic and international issues

Candidate row shows there is trouble in Remania

- [The Lib Dems, Greens, Change UK and Renew](#) wanted to field a single pro-EU candidate in the Peterborough June by-election to take on the Brexit Party and Labour. It was going to be OFOC convener, Femi Olowole. Then at the last moment it all fell apart

Scotland does not want Brexit, said Nicola Sturgeon, at the launch of the SNP's Euro election campaign

- [Nicola Sturgeon said she was sending an unequivocal message](#) to Theresa May that Scotland did not want Brexit in the SNP's campaign for the European elections. Sturgeon was insistent that any Brexit deal must be put back to the people in a second referendum

Nigel Farage explodes at BBC's Andrew Marr on air as the journalist tries to grill Farage on his previously controversial statements

- [Pushed on his previous comments about liking Vladimir Putin](#), loosening gun control, banning immigrants with HIV from coming to Britain, Mr Farage tried to initially defend the claims but quickly lost his temper at the line of questioning. He then demanded to be asked questions about the European Elections instead

Have I Got News for You episode featuring Change UK leader Heidi Allen pulled due to the Euro Elections

- [Allen said the party has written to the BBC](#) claiming that the broadcaster was providing Nigel Farage with unduly favourable coverage and squeezing Change UK out by pulling this episode of HIGNFY

Nigel Farage's chauffeur driven 4x4 crashed into a pub landlord's car - Farage just upped and left them in a mess just hours before his Question Time appearance

- [The landlord was travelling with his small son, who was left screaming as a result of shock](#) from the car

accident. 'Farage stepped out of the Range Rover, collected his bag from the boot and walked off. He did not have the common decency to see if we were OK and never looked back,' the landlord said

The Times reports that islamophobic Tories are trading in their party cards and joining Nigel Farage's Brexit Party

- [A dossier compiled by the anti-racist researcher, MatesJacob](#), shows how large parts of the Tory and UKP grassroots have migrated to the Brexit Party - among them groups of white nationalists and prominent al-right figures.

Labour and the Tories have gone AWOL on Brexit

- [Matthew d'Ancona wrote that the Tories believe just changing](#) your leader makes all the complicated issues that no one seems to be able to resolve suddenly fix themselves. Meanwhile, Labour is oblivious to the deepening divisiveness of the Brexit debate and simply thinks if it speaks nicely to everyone it can heal the nation. Hardly ideas grounded in reality or fact, are they?

UKIP candidates urging followers to switch to the dangerous far-right social network Gab

- [This network has no restrictions on anti-semitism](#), misogyny or racist content and has been regularly used to promote murder and terrorism. Gab describes itself as a vehicle for free speech. Its distinguishing feature is that it is where most of the extremists end up after being pushed off the mainstream social media networks

Economic Impact

The Brexit effect: private equity firms shun UK for Europe

The main issue for private equity firms when it comes to British companies is the difficulty of assessing the risk they are acquiring. Even seasoned investors such as Howard Marks, who have made hundreds of millions of dollars investing in high-risk situations, are not sure how to go about investing in the UK. "Whether to invest in anything is always a question of the relationship between price and value, as well as the outlook for value," says Mr Marks, the co-founder of Oaktree Capital who has made himself a billionaire from a career of investing in complicated deals such as raising large distressed debt funds to invest in undervalued assets. "I don't know enough about these things to know whether the balance is currently attractive." He adds: "All I know is that value in the UK is reduced from what it was two to three years ago, because Brexit introduces so much uncertainty and downside risk . . . maybe they've moved down so much that assets are cheap." James Seagrave, global head of financial sponsors coverage at BNP Paribas in London, says the UK market has become "sclerotic" as a result of Brexit.

<https://www.ft.com/content/7dbefce0-6d92-11e9-80c7-60ee53e6681d>

UK high streets 'in downward spiral' with one in 10 shops empty

One in 10 shops in UK town centres are lying empty, according to figures that underline the scale of the high street crisis. The national town centre vacancy rate climbed to a four-year high of 10.2% last month, according to the British Retail Consortium (BRC) vacancies monitor. The vacancy rate has risen in each of the last four quarters to give the highest reading since April 2015, up from 9.9% three months ago. The BRC's chief executive, Helen Dickinson, said some struggling high streets were trapped in a downward spiral: "Empty shopfronts, particularly for larger stores, can deter shoppers from an area. This effect can be cyclical, with the long-term decline in footfall pushing up vacancy rates, particularly in poorer areas."

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/may/13/uk-high-streets-in-downward-spiral-with-one-in-10-shops-empty>

UK economic growth picks up as stockpiling bolsters manufacturing

Britain's economy strengthened in the first three months of the year, with growth of 0.5% helped by unprecedented stockpiling by manufacturers fearful of the impact from a no-deal Brexit. It was an improvement on 0.2% growth in the previous three months and was bolstered by the strongest quarterly performance for manufacturers since 1988, with factory output up 2.2%, according to the figures from the Office for National Statistics. However, widespread uncertainty about the Brexit negotiations proved to have a greater impact in March as the services sector and construction sectors went into reverse to leave GDP down 0.1% month on month.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/may/10/uk-economic-growth-picks-up-as-stockpiling-boosts-manufacturing>

Administrative Fall Out

Hundreds of foreign doctors mull leaving UK over 'crippling' fees

Hundreds of overseas doctors are considering quitting the NHS in protest at being charged thousands of pounds a year for visas and healthcare in order to work in the UK. Medics from around the world are considering taking their skills abroad, angered by high charges and fees. Immigration rules mean they must pay thousands of pounds a year for a working visa, and £400 a year for them and each member of their family to use the NHS. More than 500 doctors from outside the EU have voiced their concerns in testimonies given to EveryDoctor, a campaigning organisation run by medics to improve how the profession is treated.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/may/12/hundreds-of-foreign-doctors-mull-leaving-uk-over-crippling-fees>

Brexiters want us to glory in isolation. Their vision is introverted and selfish

Two competing views of what it is to be British in the world are at the root of the Brexit deadlock. Until we reconcile them we can't move on

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/12/brexiters-britain-vision-introverted-selfish-brexit-gordon-brown>

Football faces Brexit chaos over EU player transfers to UK clubs

The new immigration regime is set to be rolled out from January 2021, at the end of the transition period that would come as part of the Brexit deal on offer from the EU. However, January also marks the mid-season transfer window, when clubs desperately attempt to secure last-minute deals to bolster their squads. There are concerns in Whitehall that some clubs are not alive to the changes, which will mean European players lose the automatic right to come and play for British sides.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/12/football-brexit-chaos-over-eu-player-transfer>

Richest in Britain got €25bn richer since the Brexit vote

At least one group of UK residents is flourishing in Brexit Britain: An exclusive club of billionaires. The 15 Britons on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index have added £21.5bn (€25bn) to their fortunes since the country voted to leave the EU on June 23, 2016, including £14bn so far this year.

<https://www.irisht Examiner.com/breakingnews/business/richest-in-britain-got-25bn-richer-since-the-brexit-vote-923461.html>

Dutch artist shouts 'CANCEL BREXIT' as he sculpts Theresa May being beheaded on Weston-super-Mare beach

A Dutch artist has said "cancel Brexit" as he sculpts the Prime Minister being beheaded on a Somerset beach. Sculptor and activist Johannes Hogebrink is currently creating a depiction of the beheading of Theresa May using sand at Weston-super-Mare beach. As Britain prepares to leave the EU, he said "to cut off England from Europe is to cut off her head", and added that if people can't "understand" his art then they "shouldn't be allowed to vote"

<https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/dutch-artist-shouts-cancel-brexit-2858608>

NHS EU exodus is 'unsustainable' says Oxford MP

Brexit is 'unsustainable' for the NHS, according to Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran. Her comments come after Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) recorded a 'significant rise' in the number of nurses quitting their posts during March. As reported in this paper on Tuesday, the trust, which runs the county's acute hospitals including the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, has seen a higher number of EU nurses leaving, particularly Spanish nurses due to Brexit 'anxiety'. Speaking yesterday, Ms Moran said: "It is deeply upsetting to hear that hard-working EU staff members are leaving the NHS in droves in Oxfordshire – the Conservatives should be ashamed."

<https://www.oxfordtimes.co.uk/news/17631045.nhs-eu-exodus-is-unsustainable-says-oxford-mp/>

The UK will remain deeply intertwined with the EU after Brexit - just how much, the courts will decide

Much has been written on the relationship between Parliament and the government in the wake of Brexit. Very little attention has been given to the role of our courts after Brexit, which should not be overlooked. There are two important reasons why we should focus on this, writes Martin Brenneke (Aston Law School). First, judges will be key players in delivering the goals of the statute that takes us out of the EU, the EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018. Second, this Act has the potential to intensify the shifting of power from Parliament to the courts.

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/05/09/the-uk-will-remain-deeply-intertwined-with-eu-after-brexit-just-how-much-the-courts-will-decide/>

Man told to remove his 'bollocks to Brexit' hat before his FlyBe flight | Latest Brexit news and top stories

A man was told to remove a woolly hat with "bollocks to Brexit" on it before he could take his seat on a flight because another passenger reportedly found it offensive. IT consultant Derek Knowles was boarding FlyBe's flight BE664 from Knock, in west Ireland, when a flight attendant said he would not be allowed to sit down while he had his hat on. "She just took exception to it," said Derek. "She was polite but firm, saying it might be offensive to other people and I'm not allowed to wear it on the plane." The airline has since said that a passenger had complained about the hat, and even followed up by writing to FlyBe's CEO about it later.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/bollocks-to-brexit-hat-on-airline-1-6042512>

Political Shenanigans

Battle for Brexit: May and Corbyn face brutal defeat if they try to do deal

The warning comes amid rumours that ministers may try to bring the Withdrawal Bill before Parliament as early as Thursday. Jacob Rees-Mogg has warned the Prime Minister that trying to strike a deal with the Labour leader in ongoing talks has reunited the Brexiteer European Research Tory MPs in opposition to any deal. Remainer Conservative MP Phillip Lee, the first minister to resign over Brexit, said that the 14 or so Tory MPs on his side of the debate were set to oppose the deal.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1126058/brexit-news-theresa-may-jeremy-corbyn-joint-deal-jacob-rees-mogg>

Brexit news latest: More than two thirds of Labour would reject Brexit deal without second referendum, Sir Keir Starmer has warned

The shadow Brexit secretary has warned that without a second referendum, up to 150 Labour MPs would reject a Brexit deal. Sir Keir Starmer said more than two-thirds of the party's 229 MPs could reject a deal in his first major interview since talks with the Government began almost five weeks ago. Speaking to the Guardian ahead of another meeting on Monday, Sir Keir said he doubted any agreement that was not set to be ratified by a public vote would pass through Parliament. "A significant number of Labour MPs, probably 120 if not 150, would not back a deal if it hasn't got a

confirmatory vote," he said. "If the point of the exercise is to get a sustainable majority, over several weeks or months of delivering on the implementation, you can't leave a confirmatory vote out of the package.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/starmer-150-labour-mps-would-reject-brexit-deal-without-referendum-a4140421.html>

EU' Guy Verhofstadt tells Brit voters it would be 'insane' to back Farage in Euro elections

The European Parliament's chief Brexit negotiator has told British voters it would be 'insane' to re-elect Nigel Farage as an MEP, as the Brexit Party stormed to a commanding lead in the polls. Former Belgian PM Guy Verhofstadt tweeted that the Brexit Party leader 'would rather go to the pub than fight for British interests in Europe' in his latest interjection in the UK's European election campaign. It comes after Mr Verhofstadt said he didn't know whether Brexit would happen, and on the campaign trail with the Lib Dems said the coming vote was a chance to send message 'to the continent to say never repeat Brexit again.'

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7020489/EU-Guy-Verhofstadt-tells-Brit-voters-insane-Farage-Euro-elections.html>

Failure to deliver Brexit has fuelled support for Farage's party, says Gardiner

The shadow international trade secretary, Barry Gardiner, has said parliament's refusal to deliver Brexit has led directly to the surge in support for Nigel Farage's Brexit party, and is allowing him to dictate what the departure terms should be. Gardiner, who is among those on the Labour frontbench most sceptical about the idea of a second referendum, criticised the former prime minister Tony Blair for recommending in an Observer opinion piece that voters could opt for anti-Brexit parties in the European elections on 23 May.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/12/brexit-failure-to-deliver-support-nigel-farage-party-barry-gardiner-labour>

Reconciliation in UK could take a generation, says Gordon Brown

The divisions in the UK are so deep and pervasive that reconciliation could take a generation, Gordon Brown has said. The country was facing competing visions of its future: isolated, inward-looking and disengaged, or open, outward-facing and internationalist, the former prime minister said. Speaking at the launch of Christian Aid Week in Westminster on Sunday morning, Brown set out a passionate defence of the international aid budget and the importance of the fight against global poverty before addressing the themes behind the Brexit debate. The UK had endured three years of "almost internecine division", he said. The debate triggered by the Brexit referendum raised a fundamental disagreement about what it means to be British. "And I'll be honest, my worry is that the divisions in our country are now so deep and so pervasive that it could take a generation for us to reconcile these differences, bring people together and find a unifying vision of our country and a sense of purpose and direction that takes us forward into the modern world," Brown said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/12/reconciliation-in-uk-could-take-a-generation-says-gordon-brown>

Forget the polls. Even if the Brexit Party succeed at the European elections, it'll have no impact on Brexit

Even if Nigel Farage won every single vote, he could not guarantee frictionless trade, he could not prevent a post-Brexit recession, and he could not solve the Irish border riddle. Nor could any other politician

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/editorials/brexit-party-european-elections-poll-latest-nigel-farage-lib-dems-a8910516.html>

Labour fears Tom Watson coup if Jeremy Corbyn strikes deal with Theresa May

Allies of Jeremy Corbyn fear his deputy, Tom Watson, could launch a coup within days if the Labour leader agrees to strike a Brexit deal with Theresa May that is not subject to a confirmatory

referendum. Sources close to the Labour leader have become increasingly alarmed by Watson's behaviour after he began recruiting colleagues to join his Future Britain group following the defection of eight Labour MPs for the Independent Group — now Change UK — in February. There are fears in Labour's high command that Watson is establishing a party within a party that could eventually take control of its finances and MPs. The fears have been fuelled by claims that more than 100 Labour MPs will demand a firm guarantee that any Brexit deal is put to a confirmatory referendum before endorsing a "Westminster stitch-up". A senior Labour source said: "There has been lots of chatter for months about the idea of Labour MPs resigning en masse if Corbyn backs away from a second referendum. But it's clear as day to many of us that there will be an internal challenge for the leadership first before there is any kind of further break away from the party."

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/labour-fears-tom-watson-coup-if-jeremy-corbyn-strikes-deal-with-theresa-may-l629k99bx>

Keir Starmer: Brexit deal unlikely to pass without confirmatory poll

The shadow Brexit secretary said he feared the party risked losing its remain voters after worse than expected losses in the local elections, but he warned Labour remainers tempted to vote for the Liberal Democrats or Change UK that only Jeremy Corbyn's party could deliver a fresh referendum. In his first major interview since talks with the government began almost five weeks ago, Starmer: Suggested a referendum must be part of any package agreed with the government. Said Labour could call time on the cross-party talks within days if it became clear no new offer was forthcoming. Warned Theresa May would further damage the prospect of any deal if she set an imminent departure date from No 10. Said the option was "on the table" to face Nigel Farage or Tommy Robinson in an EU elections debate. Starmer, a human rights lawyer for 20 years, is to be the key face of Labour's EU elections campaign, which will be framed as a battle of values.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/12/keir-starmer-brexit-deal-unlikely-pass-without-confirmatory-referendum-interview>

Tony Blair warns a no-deal Brexit would spark a 'silent revolution'

If we go ahead and tumble out of the European Union with a no-deal Brexit of the sort that Farage and Boris Johnson and these people want, you are going to get a silent revolution in this country as well. "There are people who are going to feel so strongly about this, that I just say this to both main political parties - they're going to sweep them away."

<https://news.sky.com/story/tony-blair-warns-a-no-deal-brexit-would-spark-a-silent-revolution-11717842>

Brexit: Cross-party talks to break deadlock 'are not getting very far', Labour shadow minister says

Cross-party talks to break the Brexit deadlock are "not getting very far", a senior shadow minister has said, dealing a further blow to hopes of a breakthrough. Jonathan Ashworth, the shadow health secretary, claimed the government was refusing to agree to Labour's demands for a customs union with the EU and accused Theresa May of being "unprepared to compromise". The comments contradict claims made by those involved in the negotiations, who have repeatedly said that talks have been "constructive" and made progress.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-news-latest-labour-talks-conservatives-theresa-may-a8910346.html>

EU elections: key dilemma for remainers is who to choose

Our Devastated Pessimist group are young. They make up 53% of 18- to 24-year-olds, but only 21% of those aged 65-plus, and are well educated and middle class: 44% of the AB social class, but only 24% of DEs. This makes them natural Labour supporters but they are particularly angry with Labour, with more than half agreeing that, on Brexit, "Jeremy Corbyn is more concerned about his political career than the national interest". Disappointment in Corbyn is palpable as his apparent fence-

sitting challenges the “man of principle” positioning he successfully occupied in the early days of his leadership.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/11/in-eu-elections-devastated-pessimists-hold-key-to-turnout>

Liberal Democrats are 'only pro-European party in Britain', Guy Verhofstadt says

Guy Verhofstadt has claimed the Liberal Democrats are the only truly pro-EU party in Britain as he joined Sir Vince Cable for campaigning in London. The European Parliament's Brexit co-ordinator endorsed the Lib Dems ahead of EU elections later this month, saying they offered an “alternative to nationalism”. Speaking alongside Sir Vince in Camden, north London, he said: “The reason I’m here to support the Liberal Democrats is there is only one pro-European party in Britain and it is the Lib Dems.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/liberal-democrats-brexiteu-guy-verhofstadt-pro-remain-european-elections-a8907986.html>

Theresa May warned Gavin Williamson had bad-mouthed her when she became PM but she said he was her ‘b*h now’**

Theresa May was warned about Gavin Williamson's bad mouthing when she became PM, but dubbed him “my bitch now”. The former Defence Secretary, who she sacked two weeks ago after accusing him of leaking secrets, is a well-known Westminster plotter. Yesterday, Mr Williamson avenged his firing by branding Mrs May's decision to hold Brexit deal talks with Labour as “a grave mistake”. The Premier's aides reported the senior Tory MP – who was then Chief Whip – to her in 2016 for allegedly telling other MPs she was “a charisma free bitch”. But in a defiant riposte that showed the PM thought she could control Mr Williamson's ways, Mrs May told her staff: “Well he's my bitch now”.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9059056/theresa-may-warned-gavin-williamson-bad-mouthing/>

The Observer view on the European elections and Nigel Farage's malign message

Farage's success is at least as much explained by the eagerness of mainstream politicians to yield to his brand of politics, rather than to challenge it. On Europe, Farage has only ever stoked anti-EU sentiment without ever offering constructive fixes. He has consistently got away with telling untruths: that the EU is on the cusp of creating a pan-European army; that EU membership costs the UK £55m a day; that three-quarters of British law is made in Brussels. He has repeatedly praised Norway as a model for the UK's relationship with the EU in the past, but last week denied it.

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/12/the-observer-view-on-european-elections-nigel-farage?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter

Brexit backer tops Edinburgh's rich list - overtaking Harry Potter author JK Rowling

The billionaire reportedly responsible for introducing Arron Banks to Nigel Farage's campaign to leave the European Union has topped a league table of Edinburgh's richest people for 2019. Capital-born businessman Jim Mellon was estimated to be worth around £1.1 billion – placing him tenth on the overall UK rankings – in the latest Sunday Times rich list.

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/people/brexit-backer-tops-edinburgh-s-rich-list-overtaking-harry-potter-author-jk-rowling-1-4924510>

Brexit news latest: Amber Rudd warns Tory rebels not to move against PM as ‘she can make a comeback’

Amber Rudd has warned Tory rebels that Theresa May could “make a comeback” and urged them not to move against her until a Brexit deal is reached. The Work and Pensions Secretary described the current phase of negotiations as a “delicate time” and that launching a bid oust the Prime Minister would only deepen the crisis. Speaking on BBC Question Time, Ms Rudd admitted that cross-party cooperation was at this stage needed to break the impasse and to find the “right compromise”.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/question-time-amber-rudd-tells-rebel-tories-to-not-move-against-pm-until-br>

[exit-deal-reached-a4138666.html](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-4138666)

BBC's Laura Kuenssberg sets date by which Theresa May will be GONE as Tories LOSE PATIENCE

BBC Political Editor Laura Kuenssberg warned the Prime Minister might be set to face a leadership contest by the end of July. The date, speculated by Ms Kunesberg on Brexitcast, is based on the BBC veteran's knowledge of Theresa May's allies changing their tune since the results of the local elections last month. And with the Conservatives set to lose further public support at the European elections later this month after the Government's mishandling of the Brexit negotiations, the Prime Minister's position looks very unstable.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1125516/Brexit-news-Theresa-May-resignation-date-BBC-news-Laura-Kuenssberg>

European elections: Change UK launches 'Charter for Remain' in bid to secure anti-Brexit vote

Change UK has sought to market itself as the party of Remain as it put the NHS, climate change and fighting Brexit austerity at the heart of its European election campaign. Acting leader Heidi Allen said Brexit was the "biggest symbol of our broken system" as she launched the newly formed party's "Charter for Remain" ahead of the 23 May contest. The blueprint pledges to campaign for a referendum with remaining in the EU on the ballot paper and to fight to ensure any Brexit deal has a confirmatory vote attached. It also sets out how the UK could use membership of the EU to push for change on domestic and international issues.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/european-elections-2019-change-uk-brexit-climate-change-nhs-vote-a8908661.html>

Labour 'doesn't exist to stop Brexit' says Corbyn ally Richard Burgon after European manifesto launch

Labour "doesn't exist to stop Brexit", the shadow cabinet minister Richard Burgon has claimed in comments that risk angering pro-EU members. Mr Burgon - an ally of Jeremy Corbyn - made the remarks after the Labour leader launched the party's manifesto for the European elections in two weeks' time. Mr Corbyn insisted Labour was neither a Remain or Leave party, and rather appealing to both sides of the debate as he made "no apology" of attempting to "offer something to everyone".

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-labour-richard-burgon-manifesto-european-elections-corbyn-a8907551.html>

EXCL: Sir Mark Sedwill 'facing the axe as Cabinet Secretary' if Brexiteer becomes Prime Minister

Sir Mark Sedwill faces the axe as Cabinet Secretary if a Brexiteer wins the race to become Tory leader, PoliticsHome has learned. The Whitehall bigwig, who is also Theresa May's national security adviser, is unpopular with a number of high-profile Conservatives. They include Boris Johnson and Michael Gove, both of whom are tipped as possible successors to the Prime Minister.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/conservative-party/news/103785/excl-sir-mark-sedwill-facing-axe-cabinet>

Brexit: Renewed hope for second referendum as Theresa May's deputy discusses 'research' with opposition leaders

Theresa May's deputy has given fresh hope to second referendum campaigners by saying another vote was "perfectly practical", according to two party leaders. Change UK leader Heidi Allen said David Lidington, the Cabinet Office minister, had "clearly done his research" on the mechanics of a Final Say vote when she attended talks alongside Liberal Democrats Sir Vince Cable and Jo Swinson.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-news-latest-second-referendum-vince-cable-david-lidington-a8909401.html>

Lib Dem leader Vince Cable claims the Government is secretly planning to hold a second Brexit referendum

Lib Dem leader Vince Cable claims that Theresa May's deputy revealed to him in a meeting that a second Brexit referendum could be imminent as secret 'planning' in the Government is already underway. Mr Cable said that David Lidington has mulled over the 'perfectly practical' idea. The Twickenham MP said he left a Thursday morning meeting with fellow remainder Heidi Allen and Lidington feeling sure that there are secret plans in place.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7017605/Lib-Dem-leader-Vince-Cable-claims-Government-secretly-planning-hold-second-referendum.html>

Farage cannot be allowed to dictate Britain's future. He must be thwarted

So, the big message: vote. Because your vote will affect their vote. Who to vote for if you're on the anti-Farage side of the ledger. There are unequivocal remain parties - Liberal Democrats, Change UK, Greens, SNP and Plaid Cymru. If, because of Labour's equivocation, you simply won't vote Labour, then vote for them. If, like me, despite everything, you can vote Labour, then vote Labour. But whatever you do, vote! This is not a vote to choose a prime minister or a government. It is a vote for the Farage Brexit - or against it.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/11/farage-cannot-be-allowed-to-dictate-britains-future-he-must-be-thwarted>

Brexit talks 'on the brink of collapse' as Tories 'disintegrate' says John McDonnell

Brexit talks are on the brink of collapse after Labour heavyweight John McDonnell accused Tories of "literally falling out in front of us". The Shadow Chancellor said there was a growing sense of frustration round the talks, with Conservative leadership contenders fighting among themselves and making a deal impossible. The administration is falling apart. "In terms of different points of view, nothing new has been put on the table - in some instances it has gone backwards. "It's so precarious. We're dealing with an institution that might not be there in three weeks. " Theresa May is living day by day. You can't run a country on a 24-hour programme."

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-talks-on-brink-collapse-15244819>

Voice of the Sunday Mirror: Labour is ready to provide leadership if Tories aren't

John McDonnell puts his finger on the problem which faces the whole nation. The country is sailing in a rudderless ship of state whose crew might chuck the skipper overboard at any moment. We hope these talks succeed. We hope Brexit will be sorted out once and for all. But like the shadow Chancellor, we are sceptical. And because Brexit occupies every Tory waking moment, there is a vacuum of ideas needed to solve the nation's ills. The country is crying out for leadership. And if the Tories cannot provide it, Labour is ready and willing.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/voice-mirror-labour-ready-provide-15283689>

It is the country's future that matters, not the prime minister's

Brexit is obviously important, but it seems clearer now that the only way it will be resolved is through a fresh referendum. This is no longer a matter of supporters of EU membership, such as The Independent, trying to frustrate Brexit. The Leave movement has crashed its own project. By failing to unite behind the prime minister's withdrawal agreement it has prevented the UK from leaving. There is no majority either in parliament or in the country for a no-deal Brexit, which is what the candidates in a Conservative leadership contest are likely to advocate. Therefore, it seems that a majority in the House of Commons must eventually come round, one way or another, to giving the people a final say on the Brexit question.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/editorials/theresa-may-boris-brexit-editorial-leadership-contest-second-referendum-a8909621.html>

Socialists plan EU-wide minimum wage if they win control of European Commission

The EU's centre-left is planning to introduce a continent-wide minimum wage to correct the bloc's "neoliberal failures" if it wins control of the European Commission after this month's elections. The socialist group, in which the UK Labour Party sits, could capture the commission presidency for the first time in decades, with Dutch social democrat Frans Timmermans as its candidate to replace Jean-Claude Juncker. With Brexit delayed the UK is set to participate in the elections on 23 May - and with a strong showing expected for Labour, it could be British MEPs that take the socialists over the line to be the biggest group in the European parliament.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-minimum-wage-eu-labour-european-commission-a8908761.html>

Labour warned plans for £10-an-hour minimum wage could have 'grim consequences'

Professor Len Shackleton, from the Institute of Economic Affairs think tank, said Labour's announcement made clear it was in "a bidding war" with the Tories and had closed the door on experts on the Low Pay Commission. Accusing politicians of preferring to "pluck pay increases out of the air", Prof Shackleton said: "This would mean doubling the pay of young people who understandably have fewer skills and less experience than older colleagues. "Such a rate hike could raise youth unemployment to levels comparable with those in continental Europe. "The possible dangers of a political bidding war over minimum wages have been highlighted time and time again.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/labour-warned-10anhour-minimum-wage-could-have-grim-consequences-a4140001.html>

These are the first European elections in history to feel enthusiastic about

My apologies for recent absence from this space: I have been attempting to finish my late Thatcher studies. As a result of this temporary detachment, it has been easier to discern a deeper pattern in the repetitious deadlock in Parliament and the astonishing fact that we are now about to take part in elections for a European Parliament in which we do not intend to sit. This pattern first became visible 30 years ago. But before I explain this, did you see Brexit: Behind Closed Doors on Wednesday and Thursday nights? Probably not, since it was on BBC 4, and your idea of fun may not involve being trapped in the colourless offices of the European Parliament in Brussels and Strasbourg for two hours

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/10/first-european-elections-history-feel-enthusiastic/>

You don't have to be great to hear the Tory call to greatness

You may have become aware of a worsening background hum to British public life. Think of it as "the clamour". This is the very specific sound heard by Tory MPs reluctantly deciding that it falls to them to answer the call for a leadership bid. The clamour. So many separate clamours. The Tory leadership field is now the size of the Grand National, though unfortunately many of the runners would find themselves intellectually outclassed by a steeplechaser.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/10/tory-leadership-leadsom-raab-baker>

SNP faces fines for data protection breach after election mailing error

The Scottish National party faces being fined for a breach of data protection laws after sending out tens of thousands of European election mailings to the wrong addresses. The Information Commissioner's Office confirmed on Friday morning that the SNP had referred itself for investigation after voters across Scotland received letters addressed to strangers or neighbours. The ICO said it was investigating under stricter EU data protection regulations, which carry significant fines for privacy breaches. The election letters were signed by the SNP leader, Nicola Sturgeon, and urged voters to back the party on 23 May. The wrong recipients included Monica Lennon, a Labour MSP, who did not recognise the person Sturgeon was addressing.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/10/snp-faces-fines-for-data-protection-breach-after-election-mailing-error>

Candidate row shows there is trouble in Remainia

Remainers from the Lib Dems, Greens, Change UK and Renew wanted to unite behind a single pro-EU candidate to take on the buoyant Brexit Party, as well as Labour and the Tories. They just couldn't agree on who that one candidate should be. It was understood to be Femi Oluwole, a law graduate and member of the Our Future, Our Choice group. Gavin Shuker, a former Labour MP who is Change UK's convener (not to be confused with its leader or chief spokesman), blamed "senior Labour figures, including senior figures campaigning for a People's Vote" who had "made it clear that they would strenuously disrupt the campaign and obstruct an independent candidate". It is almost as if Labour would rather win the seat than not win the seat. Given that Labour won it by only 607 in 2017, any dalliance with smaller parties risks handing victory to the Tories.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/candidate-row-shows-there-is-trouble-in-remainia-n5g2lqqw2>

Second Brexit referendum would be doing SNP's work, Boris Johnson claims

"By undermining the verdict of the EU referendum, they are undermining the decision of 2014 and they are doing the work of the SNP and they are threatening the union. And let us be in no doubt the damage the nationalists would do. They would not only destroy the oldest and most successful political union in the world, they would destroy the very concept of Britain."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/10/second-brexit-referendum-would-be-doing-snps-work-boris-johnson-claims>

Sajid Javid warns Brexit could be cancelled if MPs fail to back Theresa May's deal by October

The Home Secretary said he feared anti-Brexit MPs would bring forward legislation in an attempt to revoke the Article 50 process in a bid to prevent the UK crashing out without a deal. The UK was due to leave the EU on 29 March, but that deadline has now been pushed back to 31 October because of the Prime Minister's failure to win MPs' backing for her deal at three Commons votes.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/foreign-affairs/brexit/news/103797/sajid-javid-warns-brexit-could-be-cancelled-if-mps-fail>

@Channel4News "Aren't you just winding everyone up by being here?" The European Parliament's Brexit Coordinator Guy Verhofstadt

"Aren't you just winding everyone up by being here?" The European Parliament's Brexit Coordinator Guy Verhofstadt - who also heads the European Liberal group - is challenged while campaigning for the Lib Dems ahead of the European elections.

<https://twitter.com/Channel4News/status/1126860351172116482>

Brexit ULTIMATUM: EU warns Tories removing Theresa May will NOT change deal

Theresa May is to be hauled in front of an emergency meeting of the National Conservative Convention (NCC) in June after grassroots Conservatives demanded her resignation over her failure to deliver Brexit. Irish deputy Prime Minister Simon Coveney, however, warned the party changes in the leadership will not have the European Union change their stance on the controversial backstop included in the divorce deal to avoid a hard border on the island of Ireland. Speaking to BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Mr Coveney said: "These realities don't change. This is not a personality-based issue, it's an evidence-based issue."

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1125276/Brexit-news-Simon-Coveney-UK-EU-withdrawal-deal-backstop-Ireland-Theresa-May-resignation>

Guy Verhofstadt: I don't know if Brexit will happen

Guy Verhofstadt has said he does not "know" if Brexit will go ahead. Questioned on this during a visit to London, the leader of the liberal group in the European Parliament told reporters: "Ask Theresa May." Meanwhile, European Council President Donald Tusk said there was a "20 to 30%" chance Brexit would not happen. But Home Secretary Sajid Javid told the BBC it was "still possible" to get Theresa May's withdrawal agreement with the EU through Parliament. The House of Commons

has rejected it three times, with the deadline for Brexit being delayed from 29 March to 31 October.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48232168>

Europe must never repeat Brexit, says Guy Verhofstadt

The European parliament's Brexit coordinator, Guy Verhofstadt, has warned that the UK's decision to leave the EU has already done "far more damage than has ever been predicted". Appearing alongside the Liberal Democrat leader, Vince Cable, at a European election campaign event in Camden, north London, on Friday morning, the leader of the Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe said he wanted to send a message to people on the continent to "never repeat Brexit again". Verhofstadt, a former prime minister of Belgium, has been criticised for comments he made in a BBC documentary, in which he joked that Olly Robbins, the UK's chief negotiator, had asked him for Belgian citizenship. His aide was also recorded describing Theresa May's actions as insane and pathetic. Asked about the comments, Verhofstadt said the description of the prime minister had been taken out of context and the Robbins anecdote was "a funny joke. Where is your British sense of humour? I hope that in Brexit you don't lose that. Your famous sense of humour."

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/10/guy-verhofstadt-never-repeat-brexit-again-mep-warns>

'I'm a Lib Dem' declares EU's Brexit co-ordinator Guy Verhofstadt

The European Parliament's Brexit co-ordinator has declared himself a Liberal Democrat as he joined the party on the campaign trail in London. Guy Verhofstadt said the Lib Dems offered an alternative to nationalism and predicted a surge for Remain support in the upcoming European elections. He joined Vince Cable's party in Camden, north London, after they launched their European election manifesto "B***** to Brexit".

<https://news.sky.com/story/im-a-lib-dem-declares-eus-brexit-co-ordinator-guy-verhofstadt-11716091>

Nigel Farage says he wants Theresa May to remain Prime Minister 'as long as possible' to help him recruit Brexit Party members

Farage quit as head of the party after the UK voted to leave the European Union in 2016, only returning to frontline politics with his new party in January of this year. Asked if May and Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn should be worried about his newly-formed party, he responded: "As leader of the Brexit Party, I want Theresa May to stay in office as long as possible as she's doing a fantastic job of recruiting for us.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/9042292/nigel-farage-theresa-may-prime-minister/>

'Dire' funding situation leaves Tories struggling for party HQ rent

Funding for the Conservatives has dried up so badly that the party is struggling to pay the rent on its headquarters, it has been told. Concern among activists and MPs deepened yesterday as James Hosking, a City financier and one of the party's most prominent donors, defected to Nigel Farage's new Brexit Party. The failure to secure Brexit is one of the main reasons for the crash in donations, with backers unwilling to provide more cash until the issue is resolved. Senior Tory sources told it the situation has become so "dire" that party headquarters was struggling to pay the rent at its £51m Westminster home. "They are currently paying for things at a month by month basis," the source said. "It is like the dark days of opposition when donors were waiting to see who would take over and reserves were drying up."

<https://inews.co.uk/news/dire-funding-situation-leaves-tories-struggling-for-party-hq-rent/>

Why the Liberal Democrats' "Bollocks to Brexit" slogan is a stroke of genius

The Liberal Democrats unveiled their manifesto for the European elections last night in Shoreditch. It was what we've come to expect from the party: a slick, well put together event that said - both explicitly through a speech given by leader Vince Cable and implicitly through its smooth execution - that they are the largest, most well-organised pro-Remain party and that anyone who wants to stop Brexit should back them at this European elections. They also chucked in plenty of Green

lovebombing, managing to talk up their own environmental credentials without mentioning – or more importantly criticising – their competitors in that field. But all anyone can talk about is the party's election slogan: "Bollocks to Brexit". The broadcasters and most of the papers are talking about whether or not they have gone too far with their manifesto's new message.

<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2019/05/why-liberal-democrats-bollocks-brexit-slogan-stroke-genius>

Scotland does not want Brexit says Nicola Sturgeon at launch of SNP campaign

Nicola Sturgeon has sent an "unequivocal message" to Theresa May that "Scotland does not want Brexit", as she launched the SNP's campaign for the European elections. The First Minister joined the party's six election candidates in Edinburgh for the launch, and demanded any Brexit deal must be put back to the people in a second referendum.

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/17631298.scotland-does-not-want-brexit-says-nicola-sturgeon-at-launch-of-snp-campaign/>

I'm campaigning for a confirmatory vote. This is what I say to Leavers

If Labour had won the 2017 election, we would have left Europe on March 31st 2019 with a customs union, meeting our six tests – the least worst option. But we didn't, and they couldn't pull off any agreement, and now their extreme right Brexiteers are trying to trash our economy, environment and workers' rights so they can make a killing offering them to their friends as a firesale for Trump's America. I can't allow that to happen. Not without a confirmatory vote, at the very least, to ensure that Brexit is really what people want. I am not saying it brings Leave voters round to my way of thinking but I am pretty sure they know where I stand. And, generally, they respect that.

<https://labourlist.org/2019/05/im-campaigning-for-a-confirmatory-vote-this-is-what-i-say-to-leavers/>

Sir Graham Brady considering running to replace Theresa May as Tory leader

The Tories' most powerful backbencher Sir Graham Brady last night opened the door to his own run for the party's leadership. The 1922 Committee chairman has been tipped to stand in as an interim PM if the Brexit crisis deepens. Quizzed on whether he would be prepared to be the next permanent Tory leader, Mr Brady would only say he is busy at the moment running the troubled 1922 Committee. He added cryptically: "It would take an awful lot of people to persuade me. "I'm not sure many people are straining at the leash at the moment to take on what is an extraordinarily difficult situation."

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9049994/sir-graham-brady-considering-running-replace-theresa-may/>

Love Corbyn, hate Brexit? Labour's EU elections dilemma - podcast

Jeremy Corbyn launched Labour's European elections manifesto with a renewed promise to back a second Brexit referendum in certain circumstances – but to also respect the result of the first. Yet for ardently pro-Corbyn Europhiles such as Momentum's Laura Parker, it has been a tough balancing act to support.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/audio/2019/may/10/love-corbyn-hate-brexit-labour-eu-elections-dilemma-today-in-focus-podcast>

Dominic Raab Pockets £73,000 In Donations From Financiers Linked To Tax Havens

Tory leadership favourite Dominic Raab has netted £73,000 in donations from financiers linked to tax havens. The donations include £29,000 for a staff member in Raab's office from the IPGL hedge fund, which is owned by ex-Tory treasurer Michael Spencer. Spencer's hedge fund was named in the Paradise Papers in connection with a subsidiary based in Bermuda. Private banking group Arbuthnot donated £44,000 to Raab's office. The bank's owner Henry Angest is also named in the Paradise Papers in connection with a subsidiary of his bank based in Barbados. Overall, Angest has donated nearly £7m to the Conservative Party.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/dominic-raab-tax-havens_uk_5cd45169e4b0796a95d82002

Theresa May is refusing to set a firm resignation date before her Brexit deal is passed by Commons

She fears pinning down the date before her deal approved by the Commons would see ... But despite the PM's refusal so far, Sir Graham Brady is still insisting Mrs May fulfils his demand for a timetable to leave No10 no matter what at her showdown meeting

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9049926/theresa-may-refuse-resignation-date/>

Now even TORY MPs are backing Nigel Farage and the Brexit Party ahead of Theresa May because they're so furious with the PM

Tory MPs are openly praising the Brexit Party and discussing why their voters are abandoning them ahead of the EU elections. Several high profile Brexiteer MPs have been lavishing praise on Nigel Farage and his army as they grow more frustrated at Theresa May's inability to deliver Brexit. Today Crawley MP Henry Smith said the Brexit Party boss was doing better than the PM. He told his local paper The Argus: "I won't be surprised at all if more voters turn to the Brexit Party.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9039055/tory-mps-backing-nigel-farage-brexit-party-theresa-may-prime-minister/>

WATCH: 'You're lying to the people' - Gavin Esler takes to task Brexit Party candidate

Martin Daubney was left squirming as Esler tried to hold him to account for what he called a "lie" over who the former Newsnight presenter had called a "village idiot". In a lively discussion on the BBC's Politics Live programme, Esler said that the Brexit Party was using a "hugely simplistic message" and that it was "worse than that because it contains lies." It led to Esler confronting Daubney for the way his party had used the Change UK candidate's comments to suggest he called every Leave voter the "village idiots". A suggestion that had been amplified by Piers Morgan on social media. Esler, however, pointed out this was in relation to Michael Gove's comments on experts, and was not made about all Brexiteers, something Daubney would not acknowledge. Esler joked it was up to Daubney if he wants to "self-identify" as one, but he had not accused him of being in this category. He explained: "What I said was we need more experts in British politics, we fewer Chris Graylings, we need people who know what they're talking about.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/gavin-esler-and-martin-daubney-on-bbc-news-politics-live-1-6041402>

The Lib Dem 'Bo*cks To Brexit' Slogan Sounds Flippant, But Holds A Serious Message**

'Bollocks to Brexit'. That's the slogan on the front of the Lib Dem's manifesto, which is officially launched this evening in east London. It isn't the usual sort of language used in a formal document by a political party, but these are not usual times. These are desperate times. The most pressing issue facing any of us in this country is that B-word - no not bollocks, but Brexit. If it goes ahead it will be the most damaging thing for us, our economy and our children in generations. The issue is far graver than a petty linguistic debate. People are getting their knickers in the twist over the use of a word that is officially categorised by Ofcom as 'medium level' of offensiveness. What that means is that it can't be used on TV or radio before the watershed. Well, bollocks to the watershed. Anyone too young to stay up beyond the watershed isn't old enough to vote anyway. The message is not about creating good PR. It's about stopping Brexit - the most pressing issue in politics right now.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/lib-dems-brexit_uk_5cd444a2e4b09f321bdd1d2b

It's not true to say that Labour's Brexit position is ambiguous

Labour's position is to secure a general election and a softer Brexit deal than the Conservatives with this parliament - or, in the event that it cannot get either of those, to support a public vote to resolve the deadlock. It is, by any definition, a pro-Brexit policy because its first preference is for Brexit to happen.

<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/elections/2019/05/it-s-not-true-say-labours-brexit-position-ambiguous>

European Parliament elections: Brexit Party to win more votes than Labour and Conservatives combined, new poll suggests

The Brexit Party will earn more votes than Labour and the Conservatives combined in the European Parliament elections, according to a new poll. The latest Opinium poll on voting intentions shows Nigel Farage's party has galloped into first place ahead of Labour with 34% support - doubling the existing gap to 13 points in the last fortnight. It also showed the Tories continue to stagger behind in fourth place with 11% support. Labour, coming second with 21%, has fallen seven points in the last fortnight and the Lib Dems are in third position with 12%, having risen five points.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-party-doubles-lead-over-labour-in-eu-elections-poll-a4140021.html>

Additional sources: ([Sky News](#))

Donald Tusk: chance of Brexit being cancelled could be 30%

The chances of the UK staying in the EU are as high as 30% as the country would be likely to reject Brexit in a second referendum, the president of the European council, Donald Tusk, has said. The bloc's most senior official claimed the British public had only truly debated Brexit after the 2016 referendum and there was significant reason to believe the leave vote could be reversed. Describing the decision by the former British prime minister, David Cameron, to call the vote as a political miscalculation, Tusk said he would expect a different result in a vote today given what had been learned about the consequences of leaving.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/10/donald-tusk-chance-of-brexit-being-cancelled-could-be-30>

Additional sources: ([The Independent](#))

Multi-millionaire who donated £200,000 to the Brexit Party is former Tory party donor

The businessman who handed a six-figure sum to the Brexit Party is a former Tory party donor worth £375million, it emerged yesterday. Financier Jeremy Hosking, 60, who owns a major share of Crystal Palace Football Club, said he has given £200,000 over the past two to three weeks. Nigel Farage had repeatedly refused to reveal the identity of the businessman who made the vast donation to his new party - originally thought to be £100,000. But Mr Hosking broke cover yesterday, telling The Telegraph: 'On a Sunday chat show last weekend it was [claimed] that I have given £100,000 to the recently formed Brexit Party. 'This is not the case. I have given £200,000, and urge all who wish to see a proper Conservative Party in Britain to support the BP as much as they can. If the Conservatives insist on diluting Brexit, what hope is there on other issues where a robust Conservative position needs to be advocated?

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7016573/Multi-millionaire-donated-200-000-Brexit-Party-former-Tory-party-donor.html>

Additional sources: ([Daily Telegraph](#))

Political Setbacks

Brexit: Nigel Farage explodes at BBC's Andrew Marr live on air, accusing him of 'most ridiculous interview ever'

Nigel Farage has launched a furious rant at Andrew Marr during a heated appearance on live television, accusing the BBC presenter of conducting the most "ridiculous" interview ever. The Brexit Party leader reacted with fury after being asked whether he still agreed with a series of controversial statements he had made in the past. Pushed on his previous comments about Vladimir Putin, gun control and immigrants with HIV, Mr Farage initially tried to defend the claims but quickly lost his temper at the line of questioning and demanded he instead be asked about this month's European parliament elections.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nigel-farage-andrew-marr-show-brexit-party-polls-interview-bbc-a8910206.html>

Additional sources: ([Evening Standard](#))

Change UK asks BBC to explain pulling Have I Got News For You

Change UK has written to the BBC to call for a full explanation of the decision not to air an episode

of Have I Got News For You featuring its interim leader, Heidi Allen, claiming the broadcaster was providing Nigel Farage with unduly favourable coverage. The newly formed party also raised concerns over the fairness of the BBC's coverage of Change UK and demanded an urgent review of the decision to "exclude" them from a BBC Wales election debate on Sunday before the European elections. Change UK's campaign coordinator, Chris Leslie, raised concerns and referred to Nigel Farage's appearance on Have I Got News For You in 2014 in the run-up to the EU parliament elections, although it was unclear if this fell within the pre-election period.

https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/11/change-uk-asks-bbc-to-explain-pulling-heidi-allen-have-i-got-news-for-you?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter

Additional sources: (BBC News) (Daily Telegraph) (BBC News) (iNews) (Daily Mirror) (Daily Mail) (The Independent) (Evening Standard) (The Guardian) (Sky News)

Brex-hit and run? Nigel Farage's chauffeur-driven 4x4 crashed into me and he just 'upped and left' hours before Question Time, claims pub landlord

Mr Tranter told The Sun: 'He lives two miles away and loves a pint, but he won't get one from me. Man of the people, my arse. 'As far as I'm concerned he's barred.' Farage, 55, last night denied the allegations and claiming he checked nobody was hurt, before adding: 'If I'm banned, then it's not too terrible is it?' Mr Tranter, who has been visited by Farage at the George and Dragon pub in Westerham, Kent, in the past, had just been to drop his wife at the station and was driving home when the two cars collided in nearby Titsey. Mr Tranter, whose 1986 Jaguar Series 3 Sovereign was written off, added: 'We crashed with an enormous bang. Farage could not possibly have failed to hear George screaming. I ran out to see if my little boy was OK. 'Farage stepped out of the Range Rover, collected his bag from the boot and walked off. 'He didn't have the common decency to see if we were OK, and never even looked back.'

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7017155/Pub-landlord-accuses-Nigel-Farage-walking-away-car-crash-hours-Question-Time-appearance.html>

Additional sources: (Metro.co.uk) (The Sun) (Daily Mirror)

Eurocrats remind us why we voted for Brexit

The star of the show is Guy Verhofstadt, the European parliament's floppy-haired Brexit coordinator, who was followed by TV cameras during the period in which British negotiators tried, and failed, to get Britain out of the EU. Any dispirited Brexiteer who needs reminding why they voted three years ago to leave the EU should watch it. I suggest that my Remainer friends should watch it too and then try telling me, with a straight face, that our future lies in an organisation as ghastly as this.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-antics-of-eurocrats-makes-brexiteer-more-vital-than-ever-5wq3lrp5>

Additional sources: (The Economic Voice)

Corbyn-style socialism will never provide the resources our precious NHS needs

I wish you could have been with me the other day when they showed me round the mental health facilities in my constituency in Uxbridge. You would have found it impossible not to have been moved. There was a toddler, a little girl, who had been born with a complex neurological condition - not unlike cerebral palsy - which was so severe that at first the doctors had held out little hope of improvement. She was sitting on the floor of a warm, bright room, decorated with colourful prints. She wore special spectacles, and a brace on her arm to help her co-ordination. On one side of her on the mat was her mother, and on the other was a young man - a therapist trained in dealing with exactly this kind of clinical issue

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/12/corbyn-style-socialism-cannot-provide-resources-magnificent/>

Tony Blair launches most critical attack yet on Jeremy Corbyn over Brexit

Tony Blair has launched his most critical attack yet on Jeremy Corbyn's Brexit policy, claiming it meant the party was "doomed to fail" in last week's local elections. The former prime minister and

leading campaigner for a second referendum says Labour's "destructive indecision" of trying to face both ways "pleased no one" and let down the country. Writing in The Observer ahead of an interview on Sophy Ridge On Sunday on Sky News, Mr Blair says that "despite everything" he will vote Labour in the European elections on 23 May.

<https://news.sky.com/story/tony-blair-launches-most-critical-attack-yet-on-jeremy-corbyn-over-brex-it-11717590>

Polling guru John Curtice explains 'remarkable' rise of Brexit Party putting May on BRINK

"Having failed to deliver Brexit, the Conservatives now find themselves in a degree of electoral trouble. "Essentially amongst those who would still vote Conservatives in a Westminster election, that's not a diminished number, around a quarter to 30 percent of people who would still vote for the Conservatives in a Westminster election, say they are going to vote for the Brexit Party.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1125763/Brexit-news-UK-EU-Theresa-May-Sir-John-Curtice-European-election-BBC-European-Union>

Jess Phillips calls on social media sites to end hate speech profits

The Labour MP Jess Phillips has called for social media companies to stop hate preachers from profiting from their presence on online platforms, and called for political candidates to be banned from discussing raping politicians. YouTube stripped the ability to earn money from Ukip candidate Carl Benjamin's account on Friday, after he joked about raping Phillips. West Midlands police said it is investigating Benjamin's comments to establish if an offence has taken place. Benjamin stated in a tweet from 2016 that he "wouldn't even rape" Phillips, who is the MP for Birmingham Yardley. In a YouTube video uploaded to his channel more recently, Benjamin said that "with enough pressure I might cave". Phillips said on Saturday that there must be a "code of conduct" that would sanction parties if candidates fall foul of the rules. "I would back something that stopped somebody as part of normal political discourse talking about raping another politician, yes," she said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/11/jess-phillips-calls-on-social-media-sites-to-end-hate-speech-profits>

Nigel Farage loses his temper as BBC asks him about something other than Brexit

Nigel Farage lost his temper in a live TV spat today as the BBC asked him about something other than Brexit. The rattled Brexit Party leader blasted the "most ridiculous interview in my life" as he was grilled on his past remarks about the NHS, foreigners and climate change.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/nigel-farage-loses-temper-bbc-15418808>

Theresa May must go now if the Conservative Party is to survive

What is Jeremy Corbyn's single most idiotic statement? It's a crowded field, but his claim on Thursday that a second referendum could be "a healing process" is surely a strong contender. Since the 2016 vote, positions have tragically hardened on both sides. What began as a civil conversation has ended as something closer to a civil war. Reasonable arguments about trade, sovereignty and budgets have descended into a ghastly kulturkampf. Leavers are dismissed as dim-witted oiks led astray by demagogues. Remainers are caricatured as self-satisfied snobs who despise their own country. Language that used to be considered beyond the pale - "traitors", "Nazis", "saboteurs" - is now habitually employed

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/11/theresa-may-must-go-now-conservative-party-survive/>

'Islamophobic' activists trade in Tories for Nigel Farage

The dossier, compiled by the anti-racist researcher MatesJacob, demonstrates how large parts of the Tory and Ukip grassroots have migrated to the Brexit Party, among them white nationalists and prominent alt-right figures. One Facebook page with more than 4,000 members called "Brexit party supporters" is run by Simon Dearsley, who as recently as last month claimed to be a Tory party member. The tattoo artist has posted an image of himself impersonating Hitler and shared articles about "Islamic immigration" and the "genocide" of white Europe, writing "Enoch [Powell] was right". The similarly named group, "the Brexit Party — Supporters", with almost 14,000 members, is run by

Luke Nash-Jones, an alt-right activist of the pro-Donald Trump organisation Make Britain Great Again. He was involved in an incident last year when Trump supporters raided a socialist bookshop in central London and ripped up magazines while chanting right-wing slogans. Police were called and Nash-Jones was later suspended from Ukip. Another group, "Nigel Farage Mr Brexit", is jointly run by Andrew Spencer Machin, who has boasted about burning Korans and said that "Islam must be banned from Europe". The other administrator, Abigail Winsor, sought to downplay an attack on a mosque in Birmingham by writing "Smashed windows isn't a violent crime".

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/islamophobic-activists-trade-in-tories-for-nigel-farage-xn2mqmzzl>

Nigel Farage interview: 'At the end of this campaign the Brexit Party will be a lot bigger than the Conservatives'

Theresa May had made a pre-dawn dash to Brussels to sign an agreement with the EU that already appeared to renege on some of her key pledges to Brexiteers. Mr Farage, using characteristic language, declared in a newspaper article that the "great Brexit betrayal" had begun. He was, he recalls with just a hint of glee, roundly mocked for doing so. Now, 17 months on, the former Ukip leader is leading a new party that is threatening to all but wipe out the Conservatives' footprint in the European Parliament next week, having existed for little over three months. He and his cohort are planning to cause maximum disruption

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/12/nigel-farage-interview-end-campaign-brexit-party-will-lot-bigger/>

EXCL Nigel Farage brands BBC 'the enemy' after angry interview over past statements

Nigel Farage brands BBC 'the enemy' after angry interview over past statements

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/uk-independence-party/nigel-farage/news/103815/excl-nigel-farage-brands>

Farage criticised for using antisemitic themes to criticise Soros

Nigel Farage's Brexit party has described criticism by Jewish groups and MPs as "pathetic" after it emerged he repeatedly used themes associated with antisemitism to criticise the financier George Soros. Following strong condemnation of Farage's use of language, echoing other conspiracy theories popular with antisemites, during interviews with the far-right US website Infowars, a Guardian investigation has found he called Soros "the biggest danger to the entire western world", among other comments. The Community Security Trust, which monitors and counters antisemitic sentiment, said Soros was a favourite hate figure among far-right antisemites. "Instead of dismissing these concerns, Nigel Farage should ensure that his language does not help these ideas to spread in British politics," the charity said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/12/farage-criticised-for-using-antisemitic-themes-to-criticise-soros>

Both Labour and the Tories have gone awol on Brexit

Extraordinarily, most Tories see no contradiction or impropriety in this. So great is their faith in the power of leadership that they do believe that, say, Boris Johnson or Dominic Raab could do a better job in Brussels than May, and - by sheer force of charisma and personality - whip the EU into line. This is the deep, collective delusion of a tribe that depends unhealthily upon the magical powers of its chieftain. It is no way to run a party, let alone a country. Just when we need both parties to be rigorously focused, they have wandered off into the woods of distraction. For the voters there is no such handy exit hatch from the present crisis, no panic room to hide in. The Conservatives and Labour have gone awol. Is it any wonder that Nigel Farage looks so happy?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/12/labour-tories-brexit-jeremy-corbyn-theresa-may>

The Observer view on the European elections and Nigel Farage's malign message

The hostile environment, designed to make Britain a sufficiently cruel place that it drives out illegal immigrants, has ensnared people who have legally lived and paid taxes in Britain for decades, who have been denied NHS treatment and wrongfully deported. May has made it far harder for young

people who have grown up in Britain to secure their permanent status: they face extortionate fees of thousand of pounds. The irony is May is an outlier: the public is far more pragmatic on immigration than the Conservative party; the proportion of the public whose hostility to immigration is driven by opposition to ethnicities and religions other than their own has fallen dramatically in the last few years.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/12/the-observer-view-on-european-elections-nigel-farage>

Nigel Farage: Breaking point poster 'transformed politics'

The Brexit Party wouldn't put up UKIP's controversial "breaking point" anti-EU poster showing a long queue of migrants, MEP Nigel Farage has said. A number of politicians attacked the 2016 poster, featuring a photo taken in Slovenia, with George Osborne saying it had "echoes" of 1930s' literature. Speaking on the Andrew Marr programme, Mr Farage said the Brexit party wouldn't use it as "immigration isn't the burning issue of the time" but he defended using it in 2016.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-48244663/nigel-farage-breaking-point-poster-transformed-politics>

Lib Dems and Change UK must stop bickering and unite for the Euro vote

Both the Lib Dems and Change UK like to commend the virtues of political traditions working with each other. They should act that way. They have their divergences of history, emphasis and approach and that may matter for the future. But these are irrelevant to a Euro election that revolves around one single, stark and enormous issue about which they are entirely agreed. Every minute wasted trying to cannibalise each other's support is a minute not spent striving to maximise the overall anti-Brexit vote. It is too late for the Remain parties to field a common slate of candidates for the Euro elections; it is not too late to behave as friendly allies engaged in a common struggle.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/12/lib-dems-and-change-uk-must-stop-bickering-and-unite-for-the-euro-vote>

Brexit: Gavin Williamson attacks Theresa May's talks with Labour

Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit talks with the Labour Party are a "grave mistake", according to former defence secretary Gavin Williamson. Mrs May is hoping to reach a cross-party consensus on her withdrawal agreement after failing to get it through Parliament three times. But Mr Williamson - sacked over the Huawei leak - told the Mail on Sunday the talks were "destined to fail". He added Jeremy Corbyn's only real interest was a general election. BBC political correspondent Jonathan Blake said a Downing Street source had indicated Mr Williamson had been "supportive of the process while he was in the cabinet" and that he had "not been involved in the talks himself". The Conservative MP for South Staffordshire said doing a deal with Labour on Brexit "sounds so simple and so reasonable" - but would not work.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48241606>

Brexit news: Jeremy Corbyn faces ultimatum from backbench Labour MPs to pull plug on talks with Theresa May

Former shadow cabinet member Mary Creagh told the Evening Standard: "Our members and voters are furious with these talks, which have done nothing except keep the Prime Minister in office and depress Labour's vote at the local and European elections. "The Government are playing us for fools. If we stand in the middle of the road on Brexit, we'll get run over from both directions." Former Europe minister Chris Bryant warned Labour could not negotiate with a "phantom PM who will be gone in weeks" and who could not bind her successor into any agreement she makes. "We should stop faffing about, pull out of the talks and put our distinctive position to the people with an option to Remain," he added.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-news-jeremy-corbyn-faces-ultimatum-from-backbench-labour-mps-to-pull-plug-on-talks-with-may-a4139081.html>

Is Boris Johnson going to fail at the last moment to become prime minister - again?

If they finally want to test the proposition that no one could be a worse prime minister than Theresa May, Johnson stands ready to offer a live experiment. And that, as Johnson broods over his plan for government, is his dilemma. The one thing worse for him than having the cup of victory dashed from his lips again would be to win. He would then become prime minister with Brexit unresolved and the EU waiting to hear what his plan would be by 31 October. So far as can be deduced from his weekly column in The Daily Telegraph urging the nation to buck up and look on the bright side, his plan is to renegotiate the withdrawal agreement and, when the EU says no, to leave anyway.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/boris-johnson-tory-leadership-campaign-theresa-may-graham-brady-a8909421.html>

Raab infuriating the EU with demands May 'never dared' make shows why he should be PM, allies say

A documentary showing the EU's Brexit negotiator criticising Dominic Raab over demands that Theresa May "never dared" to make is being used to support the former Brexit Secretary's burgeoning leadership campaign. Supporters of Mr Raab said the fury in Brussels at his approach to the talks showed that he would "stand up" for the UK. A clip showing Michael Barnier, the EU's chief Brexit negotiator, and Guy Verhofstadt, the European Parliament's Brexit coordinator, criticising Mr Raab's combative approach has been shared on Twitter and Facebook after being uploaded by supporters.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/11/raab-infuriating-eu-demands-may-never-dared-make-shows-should/>

Former Cabinet minister Dominic Grieve faces deselection vote next month from Tory activists furious over Brexit

Arch-Remainer Dominic Grieve is fighting for his political career after local Tory activists collected enough signatures to make him to face a deselection vote next month. The news comes after Beaconsfield Conservatives passed a vote of no confidence vote in Mr Grieve in March by 182 to 131 votes. Mr Grieve, the chairman of Parliament's intelligence watchdog, has been heavily criticised locally for his efforts in the House of Commons to frustrate attempts to take the UK out of the European Union. Now 66 local activists – more than the 50 required under the party's rules – have submitted a formal notice calling for a deselection vote at a special general meeting.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/10/former-cabinet-minister-dominic-grieve-faces-deselection-vote/>

Brexit Party beats Tories in general election poll and would win 49 seats in Commons

The Brexit Party has overtaken the Conservatives in national polling for the first time, with Nigel Farage predicted to win 49 seats in a general election, a bombshell poll reveals. A ComRes survey found that if a general election campaign led by Theresa May took place now, it would put the Tories on course for their worst result in history – apparently confirming the fears of Conservative MPs and activists in uproar over the Prime Minister's handling of Brexit. Labour would become the largest party by a margin of 137 seats, allowing Jeremy Corbyn to lead a minority government as the Tories fell to third place in terms of vote share.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/11/brexit-party-beats-tories-general-election-poll-would-win-49/>

UKIP candidates urge followers to switch to far-right social network Gab

Leading figures on the far right, including Ukip candidates in the upcoming European elections, are encouraging their followers to join a new hate-filled social media platform. The network, called Gab, has no restrictions on antisemitic, misogynist or racist content, and has been used to promote terrorism. Gab, launched in 2017 by tech entrepreneur Andrew Torba, describes itself as a vehicle for "free speech" and is similar to Twitter in that it allows users to send messages of up to 3,000 characters, called "gabs". However, unlike Twitter, its user base mainly consists of people on the far right, many of whom joined after being banned from mainstream networks such as Facebook and Twitter.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/11/ukip-european-election-candidates-join-gab-social-media-far-right>

Haringey: Expelled councillor hits back at 'hard left, Corbynista' dominated Labour Party

An unsigned letter from the national Labour Party's governance and legal unit, dated 10 May, informed Blake that her membership had been automatically ended and included images of five tweets from March and one from April which Blake had re-tweeted as "evidence provided" to justify the decision. But Blake strongly disputes these grounds, telling On London that, "At no time have I ever expressed support for Change UK or encouraged anyone to vote for them" and saying it is "the grip the hard Left has on the party both nationally and locally which has led to my expulsion". Most of the tweets in question reflected Blake's support for a further referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union and what she describes as her "increasing frustration with Jeremy's Corbyn's prevarication over Europe".

<https://www.onlondon.co.uk/haringey-expelled-councillor-hits-back-at-hard-leftcorbynista-dominated-labour-party/>

UKIP battle bus slapped with parking ticket and attacked with milkshake in Plymouth

A UKIP battle bus was hit with a parking ticket and had milkshake thrown over it during a party rally in Plymouth. It was left unattended on a yellow line next to Plymouth's Messenger statue as controversial candidate Carl Benjamin staged a rally in the city centre. The purple vehicle was hit with a parking ticket before having a light-coloured drink thrown over its side. Would-be MEP Mr Benjamin was speaking to about 150 supporters in Armada Way this afternoon.

<https://www.plymouthherald.co.uk/news/plymouth-news/ukip-battle-bus-slapped-parking-2857687>

Reporting on Brexit from Europe: 'I'll be mighty glad when it's over'

Throughout the entire process, it appears from here, the Brits have been negotiating essentially with themselves, rather than with the EU27. And when they have tried they have proved inconsistent, incoherent, entitled and wholly incapable of compromise either with themselves or their neighbours. Above all, Britain has been unrealistic, and startlingly ignorant of the workings of an organisation it has belonged to for nearly 50 years. So much of what has been proposed from the UK side has simply been impossible - but because it continues to view Europe through that uniquely British prism, it proposed it all the same.

<https://www.theguardian.com/membership/2019/may/11/reporting-brexit-europe-france>

Brexit Party beats Tories in general election poll and would win 49 seats in Commons

The Brexit Party has overtaken the Conservatives in national polling for the first time, with Nigel Farage predicted to win 49 seats in a general election, a bombshell poll reveals. A ComRes survey found that if a general election campaign led by Theresa May took place now, it would put the Tories on course for their worst result in history - apparently confirming the fears of Conservative MPs and activists in uproar over the Prime Minister's handling of Brexit. Labour would become the largest party by a margin of 137 seats, allowing Jeremy Corbyn to lead a minority government as the Tories fell to third place in terms of vote share.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/11/brexit-party-beats-tories-general-election-poll-would-win-49/>

Farage, Rees-Mogg, Claire Fox... Britain is seduced by politicians who are 'characters'

Then there's the undeniable fact that privileged journalists, like their political counterparts, subconsciously know they don't have skin in the game and will not suffer the fate of farmers, car workers and aviation engineers. Standing above all these, however, has been a refusal to reveal the menace behind the masks of the right's character actors. Nigel Farage plays the old English hearty full of cakes and ale. Boris Johnson is Billy Bunter with a smattering of Latin. Jacob Rees-Mogg poses as an Edwardian lawyer calmly laying out the facts. In short, Brexit is being pushed towards its miserable conclusion by men who raided the fancy-dress box for traditional robes. What else should you call him? Farage is not a patriotic conservative who opposes Britain's enemies, as his support for Vladimir Putin shows. Johnson in turn is not a traditional conservative who promotes enterprise,

as his cry of “fuck business” proves. Indeed, Johnson and Michael Gove’s Vote Leave campaign began with a pre-emptive attack on the CBI, to discredit its warnings about dangers of Brexit to the economy. They aren’t conservatives, they are far-rightists. Why is it so hard to admit that we are no different from any other country caught in nationalist backlash?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/11/farage-rees-mogg-claire-fox-britain-is-seduced-by-politicians-who-are-characters>

Sajid Javid says he is attacked daily online by Asians and the 'far Left' because he is not 'brown enough'

Sajid Javid has said he is attacked daily on social media by Asians and the “far Left” because he is “not brown enough”, as he gives a big hint he will stand to succeed Theresa May as party leader. The Home Secretary said in an interview that he is receiving racist abuse on social media on a daily basis and that “they don’t like me because of my colour”. Mr Javid is one of the frontrunners to succeed Mrs May who is under pressure from her backbenchers to set a clear “roadmap” for her exit. So far she has only said she will stand down once the Brexit deal has been agreed.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/10/sajid-javid-says-attacked-daily-online-asians-far-left-not-brown/>

Andrew Neil warns of 'imminent extinction' in brutal Brexit analysis - 'May still here'

As Prime Minister Theresa May and Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn battle to break the Brexit deadlock in cross-party talks, Mr Neil poked fun at the political situation in Britain and warned of an “imminent extinction” of the main political parties. Hosting BBC This Week, Mr Neil said: “The Maybot is still Prime Minister. Tory MPs are still in search of a spine. Jezza the red is still Labour leader. The Labour Party still searching for a Brexit policy that could survive a minute of scrutiny.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1125280/Brexit-news-BBC-Andrew-Neil-Theresa-May-today-live-Nigel-Farage-Brexit-Party-latest>

Question Time: Nigel Farage can't give audience answer to simple Brexit question

Nigel Farage failed to provide a straight answer when an audience member grilled him over Brexit on BBC Question Time in Northampton. Name me one country within the WTO rules that doesn't have a trade agreement with another country, he asked. In response, the former commodities trader said: “No I don't the answer to the question, because actually there isn't one.” The questioner then told the politician that this was the scheme he was proposing to the public, resulting in applause from other members of the audience.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/question-time-nigel-farage-cant-15023826>

Tommy Robinson's offer of MEP salary rejected by charities

Tommy Robinson’s pledge to donate his hypothetical European parliament salary to child victims of sexual grooming has been criticised as “an insult to survivors of abuse” by women’s groups who said he was “no ally for the children he claims to stand up for”. The coalition of women’s groups said Robinson exploited the pain suffered by victims in a self-serving attempt to fuel racial hatred. “We, as organisations and individuals fighting tirelessly against the abuse of women and girls, as survivors of abuse and their families, and as people who care about our communities, do not want your money, Tommy,” the letter read.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/may/10/tommy-robinsons-offer-of-mep-salary-rejected-by-charities>

“Super callous fragile racist sexist UKIP a*hole”: Carl Benjamin visits Truro**

The unidentified protestor, who was masked and dressed in black, was tackled to the ground after attempting to pour a milkshake over the prospective MEP, mimicking a similar assault on UKIP advisor Tommy Robinson earlier this month. In a statement concerning the incident, the police said that the assault had been investigated but no formal complaint had been made as the alleged victim did not identify himself to officers at the scene.

<http://www.falmouth-anchor.co.uk/2019/05/10/super-callous-fragile-racist-sexist-ukip-ahole-carl-benjamin-visits-truro/>

Ann Widdecombe compares no deal Brexit to the suffering of World War II

Brexit Party candidate Ann Widdecombe suggested that any disruption brought on by a no-deal Brexit is justified as it will not compare with the suffering during the Second World War. The former Tory minister retired from politics in 2010 and has made a comeback as a candidate for Nigel Farage's Brexit Party for the European elections on 23 May. Journalists from the BBC's Radio 4 Today Programme captured the moment she evoked the Second World War while on the campaign trail, in something which is proving a common theme for Brexiteers.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/brexit-party-candidate-ann-widdecombe-no-deal-sacrifice-world-war-two/>

Labour's Brexit Position is so unambiguous, no one can decide how ambiguous it is, or isn't

Since the words came out, there has been much debate over whether Labour's Brexit policy is ambiguous. It is in favour of Brexit. There's nothing ambiguous about that. If there is any ambiguity, it might just be because the truth cannot be heard above the clanging cymbals of cognitive dissonance going off in the heads of hundreds of thousands of Labour Party members, and millions of Labour Party supporters, as they try and accept their party is unequivocally pro-Brexit, and thus, anathema to everything it has ever stood for.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/labour-jeremy-corbyn-brexit-european-election-launch-latest-a8906976.html>

Nigel Farage stands by claim that people with HIV should be banned from UK

Challenging the Brexit Party leader on his past views on Sunday, Andrew Marr asked: "Do you still feel that people with HIV shouldn't be allowed into this country?" Farage responded: "Do I think the National Health Service is there for British people? Yes, I absolutely do." The Brexit Party leader, who has not released a manifesto ahead of the European Elections was also pressed over his past statements that the UK should move to an insurance-based healthcare system and allow people to own handguns. Brexit Party candidate Alka Sehgal Cuthbert is a critic of LGBT+ inclusive education programmes. In a 2017 column for right-wing website Spiked, Cuthbert, a part-time English teacher and educational consultant, slammed education watchdog Ofsted for "forcing a religious school to include homosexuality in the curriculum."

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2019/05/12/nigel-farage-hiv-banned-uk/>

Trade Deals/Negotiations

Brexit talks will tie up Whitehall for years, top UK diplomat warns

The next stage of the Brexit negotiations are going to make the current mess look like a simple affair and will tie up the civil service for years, the former national security adviser and head of Britain's diplomatic service has warned. Peter Ricketts' remarks will alarm those who believe the Brexit cloud hanging over the country will evaporate if only Theresa May can get the EU withdrawal agreement passed in parliament. A gathering of experts on Brexit and trade negotiations concluded that the bumpiest ride is yet to come, with Britain's negotiating hand already weakened and EU unity to be tested in trade talks as member states jostle for position. Ricketts predicted negotiations are likely to go on for years and "encompass pretty much the entire of Whitehall", with detailed negotiations expected in everything from trade and financial services to data transfer, transport, fisheries and nuclear and gas supply.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/12/brexit-talks-will-tie-up-whitehall-for-years-top-uk-diplomat-warns>

'There are only CASUALTIES' - Liam Fox warns US-China standoff could damage UK

The International Trade Secretary claimed there "are only casualties" during trade wars, as the two nations remain locked in crucial discussion. US President Donald Trump has ordered US officials to begin preparations to impose \$300bn (£230bn) tariffs on Chinese imports. He vowed to impose the mammoth tariffs on all remaining imports from China after a major fallout between the two countries.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1125684/BBC-Newsnight-latest-us-china-news-liam-fox-trade-tariffs-uk-economy-updates>

@BBCR4 A no-deal Brexit will mean checks somewhere on goods travelling across the Irish border and a change of UK leadership won't change things

Irish deputy PM @simoncoveney: A no-deal Brexit will mean checks somewhere on goods travelling across the Irish border and a change of UK leadership won't change things. "Realities do not change. This is not a personality based issue" #r4Today <https://bbc.in/2VxPtlu>

<https://twitter.com/BBCr4today/status/1126748563248074752>