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There is a debate raging amongst pro EU factions about whether it is too soon to come out publicly in favour of rejoining the EU. After all, the transition period has only just finished and, according to the Government at least, we are only suffering teething problems before the new normal emerges. A new normal built on the free trade deal the Government hailed in at the end of 2020, brought to us by the party that swept to victory on the promise that they would 'Get Brexit Done'.

Firstly, let us review where Brexit has got to. The transition period is over. However, rather than being used to allow business to adjust to the post Brexit world, it was instead exhausted by negotiations, which only ended on Christmas Eve. Business is now finding out in real time that the promised frictionless trade was just a pipe dream. The deal was wafer thin, removing tariffs but leaving the UK having to deal with two new borders, one at Dover and the other in the Irish Sea. And far from getting Brexit done, the deal brought us a host of new forums, committees and organisations which will continue to monitor and develop the relationship. Meanwhile, the services sector, the largest and most successful part of the economy, has been completely ignored. Even the fishing industry, the poster girl of the Brexiteers, is so unhappy with the deal that they have been protesting in Westminster. There is more; performing arts losing their right to tour; parcels arriving from Europe with unexpected bills; shelves in Northern Ireland empty; importers and exporters withdrawing products or simply choosing to give up on international trade; the British Government encouraging businesses to set up in the EU. The list seems endless.

There is of course another side. At an individual level, most people will hardly notice the impact of Brexit in the middle of a pandemic. The supermarkets have stockpiled effectively and are being prioritised at the border. Shelves remain generally well stocked and the pandemic means fewer people are visiting shops to see any physical embodiment of shortages. The comparative success of the UK's vaccine programme and the EU's rapid about turn on Irish border restrictions is one of the few areas that both sides agree do not reflect well on the EU. But was the UK's comparative success because of Brexit or despite it? People choose their own narrative. Brexiteers see the Nissan announcements as confirmation that the UK can still attract business, whilst rejoiners argue that the lack of bad news has simply been bought with government subsidies. Even when Brexiteers accept that the sunny uplands are stormier than they had hoped they transfer blame to those that warned of the problems. But for many people Brexit was not about economics or a free trade deal. It was about funding of the NHS, protesting about their lot in life, reducing immigration, sovereignty, fishing. The weight people put on each of these now is no doubt changing and opinion

polls consistently show increasing regret amongst voters that we have left the EU. So how have the main political parties reacted?

The Conservative Party appears to have suffered a reverse takeover by the Brexit Party. It has not sought to bring the country together or to find a compromise solution on Europe that takes account of the 48 per cent that voted to remain. Instead it has chosen virtually the hardest of hard Brexits. The current Government has become ever more populist and nationalistic. It continues to blame the EU and immigrants, but is having to introduce new enemies to maintain its culture war. The woke and remaners are first in line. Prime Minister's Questions shows that any challenge to the Government is labelled as putting the country down.

The Labour Party has decided its best policy is to focus on competence rather than policy differences with the Conservatives. They blame their Brexit stance for their electoral defeat and would rather not have to develop a new position for fear of getting it wrong. Even the Liberal Democrats fail to give their wholehearted support to rejoining the EU. Only the SNP have a clear rejoin agenda, but that is wrapped up in Scottish Independence. There is no natural home for pro EU voters. Yet the polls indicate that an increasing percentage of the population are pro EU.

Factionalism has led to a huge majority in parliament for a Brexit policy that is supported by only a minority of the population. Yet most of the opposition parties fail to see the opportunity to advocate closer EU integration. That is where the Rejoin EU Party sees a role for itself.

The Rejoin EU Party was set up immediately after the last General Election. It has only two policies. Firstly, it advocates rejoining the EU, including any moves that align any or all of the UK more closely with the EU. Secondly, it does not accept bigotry of any kind. The Party does not anticipate winning many elections in the near future, but it wants to provide a clear platform for anyone who is pro EU to register their support. Much like the Green Party or even UKIP, it believes it can change the political agenda by standing on a single issue.

The Rejoin EU Party will stand in every by-election from now until the next election. It also plans to stand in marginal seats at the next General Election. It will be launching its campaign at the London Mayoral Elections. This will be the party's first test of public opinion and the perfect launch opportunity for the party, London being a part of the country that didn't vote for Brexit, but will certainly pay for it. Rejoining as an issue is not going to go away, however much leading politicians might wish that to happen.