

Britain's 5 Brexit Stages: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression... and Diet Pills

By Scott Lucas

It is a curious but significant signpost of Brexit Britain.

More than nine months after resigning as Prime Minister because of personal and political scandals, Boris Johnson — the man who shouted Get Brexit Done for the UK's "Golden Age" — was publishing his first column in the Daily Mail tabloid.

Would he use his well-remunerated column to ponder the departure from the European Union and its consequences? Would he explain his role in "Partygate", the flaunting of Coronavirus measures as more than 200,000 of his constituents died? Would he once more praise himself as a defender of Ukraine against Russia's invasion?

No. No. And No. Instead [he wrote these momentous words](#)

The wonder drug I hoped would stop my 11.30 p.m. fridge raids for cheddar and chorizo didn't work for me. But I still believe it could change the lives of millions.

That's right. Johnson's priority was "a certain member of the Cabinet [who] had miraculously changed his appearance" with a new jawline, a neck which emerged without effort from his collar, and the loss of "stones and stones of belly and dewlap".

Then I noticed another colleague whose silhouette was shrinking visibly; and another. By this time my spider senses were jangling.

Was Johnson supporting himself and his large number of children, declared and undeclared, with a payoff from the diet industry? Was he taking a brown envelope from the industry's opponents: "I started to dread the injections, because they were making me feel ill"? Both? Or was he simply writing any old tosh for a cheque from the Daily Mail?

That mystery may never be solved. Meanwhile, let history record: as Britain declined, Boris opined...about dietary supplements.

Another Shock To The System

As Johnson cashes in, many of his fellow Britons are facing the latest Brexit shock.

Amid supply lines compromised by the departure from the European Union's single market, UK inflation remained at 8.7% in May despite a fall in energy prices. With the cost of food up 16.5%, the "core inflation" rate reached 6.5% — its highest point since 1991.

On June 22, six days after Johnson's dietary intervention, the Bank of England raised the base interest rate by a half point to 5%, returning to the level of 2008. That in turn spiked the average two-year fixed mortgage rate to 6.23%, the highest since November and the economic meltdown of the short-lived Truss Government.

Even before that increase, UK homeowners were paying hundreds to thousands of pounds more per year than Europeans for new mortgages. For those with existing mortgages, the prospect is that they can no longer afford to pay an increase of hundreds of pounds per month.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, with a family worth more than £500 million, claimed sympathy for homeowners but said the Government's focus was to "remain steadfast in its course" to curb inflation.

Scribbling Rather Than Acting

The proportion of Britons wanting to rejoin the EU is [now 58.2%](#), compared to 47% in early 2021. Just over half think it is unlikely that the UK will return to the bloc, but that figure is down from 62% two years ago. And for the first time, those who were optimistic about the EU's prospects (41%) exceeded those who were pessimistic (36%).

But "Get Brexit Done" is as stubborn as it is damaging. While [only 18% of Leave voters](#) from 2016 believe the suicide dive has been a success, 61% think all will be well in the end.

Only 29% accept that departure from the EU has had a negative economic impact. And 70% of that minority console themselves that the experiment could have worked, with 48% blaming politicians for not trying.

So the safest political course, if far from the economically wise one, is to choose the stagnation and erosion of Brexit limbo. Indeed, with 72% of 2016 Leavers saying they want to stop discussing their not-so-Golden Age, why say anything at all?

Instead, be like Boris. Knock out a self-important paragraph and collect your reward, offsetting any rise in the mortgage that you and Carrie may — or may not — have to pay.

**"Let me have men about me that are fat," said Julius Caesar, shortly before his assassination.
"Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look."**