

UK Parliament Rejects No-Brexit/Brexit Deal for Second Time

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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On January 15, Theresa May's no-deal/deal was overwhelmingly defeated by a 432 - 202 margin - the greatest rejection of a UK leader's legislative aim in modern times.

As expected on March 12, parliamentarians again rejected her no-Brexit/Brexit deal by a 391 - 242 margin against it.

The vote followed May and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker's announced last-minute tweaking of the deal rejected in January. The Irish Times explained it as follows, saying:

"Theresa May on Monday night accepted from the EU a package of assurances, including enhanced legal commitments on the (Irish border) backstop (assuring no hard border between Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland), that she said would allow her to put the Brexit withdrawal agreement to MPs on Tuesday."

They'll be "no further changes," Juncker warned. It's "this deal or" no deal. Plan A and B were largely identical, last minute changes too insignificant to matter.

Irish backstop concessions offered are temporary, not a permanent guarantee against a hard border if Britain leaves the EU, what's looking increasingly unlikely.

May agreed on a deal critics called capitulation to Brussels, economic powerhouse Germany having most say on its terms. They involve Britain remaining more in than withdrawn from the EU if Brexit occurs.

The deal calls for the UK remaining in the EU customs union, Brussels and Berlin retaining control. A number of May's ministers resigned over her deal, refusing to support capitulation to EU authorities.

A March 29 deadline approaches - when negotiating a withdrawal agreement is supposed to end unless an extension is agreed on, what seems likely as time is running out.

Two additional votes are scheduled this week. On Wednesday MPs will vote up or down on whether to leave the EU without a deal - a so-called hard Brexit, virtually certain to be rejected.

On Thursday, a second vote will be held on extending the March 29 deadline for additional weeks (likely no later than completion of European Parliament elections on May 26) -

subject to unanimous approval by EU member states.

What UK/EU negotiations failed to accomplish after most Brits voted to leave the bloc on June 23, 2016 isn't likely to change in the coming weeks or months.

May is highly unlikely to seek a third vote on her twice-rejected no-Brexit/Brexit scheme. Ahead of Tuesday's vote, UK Attorney General Geoffrey Cox called May's Plan B virtually "unchanged" from Plan A, assuring its defeat by a wide margin.

Opposition Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn slammed May's Plan B, saying

"(a)fter three months of running down the clock, the prime minister has, despite very extensive delays, achieved not a single change to the withdrawal agreement."

How things play out in ahead remain uncertain. Despite expressing support for Brexit as prime minister, May opposed it as home secretary.

As things now stand, her no-Brexit/Brexit deal is the only option, twice rejected by parliament.

When the dust fully settles in the weeks and months ahead, the UK may remain an EU member - my best guess on what's coming.

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Award-winning author Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. He is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG)

His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

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About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

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