

Newslinks for Wednesday 29th March 2017

Brexit Day 1) May signed the letter yesterday. Today we begin to leave



“Shortly after 4.30pm yesterday, Mrs May signed a letter notifying the European Council of Britain’s intention to leave the EU. Once the letter is handed over today, two years of talks will begin on the terms of withdrawal allowed under Article 50 of the Lisbon treaty. Mrs May sat in the cabinet room at Downing Street beneath a portrait of Sir Robert Walpole, the first prime minister, as she signed...The prime minister will address the cabinet at 8am today before travelling to the Commons to outline her negotiating strategy. Last night she began a diplomatic charm offensive to lay the ground for what allies admit will be gruelling and often fractious talks.” – [The Times \(£\)](#)

Editorials:

- A “golden chance” to reform the state – [Daily Telegraph](#)
- This represents more than Britain’s “biggest diplomatic challenge” – [The Times \(£\)](#)
- We are “barking on a fraught and difficult course” – [Guardian](#)
- This is the “most momentous day in modern British history” – [The Sun](#)

Comment:

- Hail, festal day! – Jacob Rees Mogg, [Daily Telegraph](#)
- Happy Article 50! – Quentin Letts, [Daily Mail](#)

- The job is done – Douglas Carswell, [The Sun](#)
- What I imagine the letter said – Tom Peck, [Independent](#)
- Voters should get the last word – Tim Farron, [Guardian](#)
- The time frame is “unrealistic” – Gina Miller, [Independent](#)
- The choice we face – Gordon Brown, [FT](#)
- There’s “nothing to fear” – Ashley Fox, [Daily Express](#)

>Today: ToryDiary: [A truly historic moment. Today we start the process of leaving the EU.](#)

Brexit Day 2) May to talk of “fierce determination” to get best deal

“Theresa May will call on Britons to put their Brexit disagreements behind them and join forces on the “momentous journey” to freedom from the European Union. On the day she formally sets Brexit in motion by triggering Article 50, the Prime Minister will lay out her “fierce determination” to get the right deal for “every single person in this country”. On Tuesday night, with a Union flag by her side and beneath a portrait of Robert Walpole, Britain’s first prime minister, Mrs May sat at the Cabinet table and signed the historic letter to give notice of Britain’s decision to leave the EU. On Wednesday it will be hand-delivered to Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, and when he opens it, the clock will start ticking on two years of negotiations to agree the terms of Britain’s withdrawal.”

>Today: MPs etc: [May’s Article 50 statement: “Now that the decision has been made to leave the EU, it is time to come together.”](#)

Brexit Day 3) On addressing Commons she will “aim to strike a note of reconciliation”



“Theresa May will call on the British people to unite as she triggers article 50, beginning a two-year process that will see the UK leave the European Union and sever a political relationship that has lasted 44 years... May will aim to strike a note of reconciliation when she addresses the Commons, claiming this is the time for Brexiters and remainers to “come together”

after holding an early morning meeting of her cabinet. “When I sit around the negotiating table in the months ahead, I will represent every person in the whole United Kingdom – young and old, rich and poor, city, town, country and all the villages and hamlets in between. And yes, those EU nationals who have made this country their home,” she will say.” – [Guardian](#)

- She says “it’s time to come together” – [The Sun](#)
- Remainers must accept this is it – Raphael Behr, [Guardian](#)

Brexit Day 4) She speaks of commitment to EU nationals

“Theresa May has vowed to represent all sections of the country – including EU nationals – as she triggers Article 50 and begins an arduous two-year negotiation to sever ties to Brussels.... “When I sit around the negotiating table in the months ahead, I will represent every person in the whole United Kingdom – young and old, rich and poor, city, town, country and all the villages and hamlets in between,” she said. “And yes, those EU nationals who have made this country their home.” – [Independent](#)

- Barnier hopes to get agreement on residency rights by end of year – [Guardian](#)

Brexit Day 5) Dominic Raab: We will prepare for all outcomes



“Today, Britain begins negotiations to leave the EU. We start with economic self-confidence and political ambition. But, the first year will be hard going. The EU didn’t want us to leave, and Brussels has other things on its mind. To give ourselves the strongest chance of the best deal, we need to be patient, constructive and big-hearted – without blinking. ... I appreciate some will be anxious during the process. By definition, negotiations involve uncertainty. But, outside the Westminster village, polls show the public strongly support this vision. A recent National Centre for Social Research study found 88 per cent of people support our free trade strategy, while 68 per cent want to end open-door immigration – including 58 per cent of Remain voters.” – [Daily Telegraph](#)

- Heseltine, Mandelson, and Cable call for May to drop “no deal” option – [Independent](#)
- Wales stands to lose out – David Williamson, [Wales Online](#)

Brexit Day 6) Daniel Finkelstein: Here's how to negotiate

"In 1912, with Theodore Roosevelt in the middle of a battle to return as president of the United States, his campaign manager realised that the picture of the candidate that adorned his literature had been reproduced without the permission of the photographer. If the man sought redress, copyright law might allow him as much as \$3 million. Curtains for Teddy. So his manager thought carefully and sent a telegram... What Teddy Roosevelt's campaign manager understood, however, is that it's just as important to get inside the head of the people on the other side in a negotiation as it is to know what you want." – [The Times \(£\)](#)

>Today: Henry Newman in Comment: [Sequencing and money. The first big challenges to the Brexit negotiation.](#)

More Brexit

- Pro-leave MPs refuse to sign "negative" report – [FT](#)
- The process "continues to pitch senior political figures against each other" – [Guardian](#)
- Tory MP says "few dare to question" the Brexit orthodoxy – [Guardian](#)
- Farage says he'll emigrate if Brexit doesn't work out – [Independent](#)
- Remainers vow to fight on – [FT](#)
- We need to make concessions – [FT](#)

>Yesterday: ToryDiary: [The remains of Remain still don't understand Leave voters or Brexit – particularly on immigration](#)

May talks of "ambitious" Gulf trade deal

The Prime Minister made the announcement as she prepares to trigger Article 50 tomorrow which will start two years of negotiations to leave the European Union (EU). She also welcomed a commitment of £5billion of investment from Qatar as a "bold statement of continued confidence" in the British economy. Speaking at the UK-Qatar Business Investment Forum in Birmingham, she said a "global Britain" would be the "most committed and most passionate" advocate for free trade anywhere in the world. – [Daily Express](#)

Sturgeon wins Holyrood vote for independence rerun



"Nicola Sturgeon has won a key Holyrood vote on her plans for a second independence referendum, triggering accusations from UK ministers that her demands are premature. Sturgeon won by a 10-vote majority after the Scottish

Greens backed her proposals to formally request from the UK government the powers to stage a fresh independence vote at around the time Britain leaves the EU, in spring 2019... The vote, which split the Scottish parliament cleanly between pro- and anti-independence parties, deepened the dispute between the two governments over both the need for and the timing of the vote.” – [Guardian](#)

- It passed 69-59 – [Independent](#)
- After a three-hour argument – [Daily Express](#)
- This “sets up a clash” with Downing Street – [FT](#)
- Westminster “digs its heels in” – [Herald](#)

Comment:

- The relationship between May and Sturgeon – Alan Cochrane, [Daily Telegraph](#)
- Is it all about legs? – John Crace, [Guardian](#)
- Yes. But it’s been blown out of proportion – Sarah Vine, [Daily Mail](#)

Accounts Committee to say DfE is “jeopardising” schools with its “lack” of financial awareness

“The Department for Education is suffering a “collective delusion” about the financial pressures facing schools, MPs will suggest today. The department risks jeopardising the education of a generation of children and “does not seem to understand the pressures that schools are already under”, according to a report by the public accounts committee. Officials are poorly placed to act swiftly if cuts threaten quality, it adds. Schools will have to find efficiency and procurement savings of £3 billion by 2019-20 and the report, which is being published today, concludes that staffing levels will suffer.” – [The Times \(£\)](#)

- DfE launches own property company – [FT](#)
- GCSE reforms criticised – [The Sun](#)

More Westminster

- Standards Committee calls for MPs to be treated as criminals if they don’t declare interests – [Daily Telegraph](#)
- Philip May: business-speak translator... – [Daily Telegraph](#)
- ...and Europhile? [FT](#)
- Feldman criticised for taking paid strategy role – [The Times \(£\)](#)
- Brokenshire says NI direct rule “still an option” – [Guardian](#)
- Committee criticises DfID for ending aid programmes – [Guardian](#)
- Emergency debate granted over disability cuts – [Independent](#)

>Today: Rebecca Lowe Coulson’s column: [Why government should focus on reducing poverty – not increasing equality](#)

Trump claiming presidential immunity in sexual contact case





“President Donald Trump’s lawyers will argue that he has presidential immunity from a defamation case brought by a former contestant on his reality TV show The Apprentice who accused him of unwanted sexual contact. The lawyers said in a state Supreme Court filing on Monday that they will formally ask for a dismissal or a suspension of the January claims by Summer Zervos, until he leaves office. They said the constitution provides immunity for Mr Trump from being sued in state court while he is president. The lawyers said their position is supported by a long line of US Supreme Court cases requiring courts to show deference to the president and his schedule.” – [Daily Telegraph](#)

- Krushner’s having a “crisis” too – David Usborne, [Independent](#)

News in Brief