

The UK can easily calculate the exit bill – it's nothing

We hear that Mr Barnier wants the UK to set out its calculation of the exit bill. That's easy. The bill is zero. Nothing. Zilch.

I read that Mr Barnier thinks we owe them £66bn. So he needs to present his draft bill, and the UK can explain why it's a load of nonsense. There is no Treaty article requiring a departing member state to pay extra for the period after it has left. The UK did not receive a present or rebate on joining to take account of the liabilities existing members had entered into before we were sitting round the table, so why would there be one in reverse when we leave? The EU has had plenty of notice of our departure so they can adjust their 2020 budgets accordingly.

Many of us who just want to leave thought about recommending that the UK simply legislate in the UK Parliament to leave and go. That would be well within our constitutional rights and in accordance with our wish to take back control. We agreed to make a big gesture to the EU to go along with the Treaty over the matter of leaving, knowing that left us exposed to having to pay additional regular contributions to the EU up until the date of departure. The EU wants more. We have already been very generous. Doubtless the EU will want to spin the talks out for the maximum permitted two years to pocket more of our money.

I read that Labour now wants to undermine the UK's position by arguing to pay the EU more money for longer. It's always good to see the Opposition sign up to very unpopular policies. Parliament will not I trust vote for that act of self abuse, when we need the money to spend on domestic priorities.