

Then there were five



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The elimination of only one contender drags out the contest a bit longer. The contest anyway has become a race for second place, to see who would be best to go up against Boris in the lengthier phase of the contest appealing to the members in the country. I think a Johnson/Hunt contest would be best.

It was unfortunate that Rory Stewart wishes to turn the contest into a re run of the referendum, in denial of the clear stance for Brexit all Conservatives put to the electorate in order to become MPs in 2017. He studiously avoided even contacting many Conservative MPs he knew to be committed to our 2017 promises, preferring to attract the support and good wishes of the media, especially the BBC, and sections of the general public wanting a second referendum. He then claims he could get the completely unacceptable Withdrawal Treaty through the Commons after its three big defeats.

The contest has had an unreal air for another reason. Several of the candidates claimed they could renegotiate the Withdrawal Agreement in time for our exit on 31 October. There has never been any glimmer of reason to suppose the EU would enter deep and serious talks about rewriting the Agreement, or that such work could be completed between the end of July and the end of September allowing time to ratify the Agreement by both sides.

The BBC debate was dreadful. It was set up and chaired badly so we learned little. There was no wish to allow or require a serious discussion of the major issues facing the country. Boris was constantly interrupted by the presenter and the BBC pursued its agenda to make sure the candidates could not discuss the great opportunities that follow if we just get on and leave.