

UK Parliament Advances Johnson's No-Brexit/Brexit Deal, Rejects His Timetable

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On Tuesday, Johnson won one Brexit vote, lost another, Britain's status of leaving the EU uncertain.

By a 329 – 299 majority, MPs approved legislation, supporting Brexit in principle, short of final approval.

Its status is “paused (in) limbo” because MPs rejected Johnson’s fast-track demand for adopting the measure by a 322 – 308 margin.

On Tuesday, he and Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn met, his spokesman saying:

“Jeremy Corbyn reiterated Labor’s offer to the prime minister to agree (on) a reasonable timetable to debate, scrutinize, and amend the withdrawal agreement bill, and restated that Labor will support a general election when the threat of a no-deal crash-out is off the table.”

Johnson said if Brussels agrees to a three-month delay, requested in a letter he sent the bloc unsigned late Saturday as mandated, he’ll ask MPs to support a snap election.

Brussels is currently deciding on whether to grant Britain another extension until January 31.

European Council President Donald Tusk said he’ll recommend it. Brexit Party leader Nigel Farage said the UK won’t leave the EU on October 31, Johnson’s demand.

Since majority Brits voted by national referendum to leave the EU in June 2016, majority MPs approved any Brexit legislation Tuesday for the first time.

Johnson’s loss of control over the timetable gives opposition MPs time to pick apart what he and Brussels agreed on, perhaps changing it enough for a later vote to defeat it.

It’s status remains very much uncertain. Corbyn called Johnson the “author of his own misfortune,” adding:

“Tonight the House (of Commons) refused to be bounced into debating a hugely significant bill with barely any notice.”

“Work with us to agree a reasonable timetable, and I suspect this House will vote to debate this bill. That would be the sensible way forward.”

Johnson “express(ed) disappointment that the House has voted for delay rather than a timetable that would have guaranteed the UK could leave on 31 October with a deal,” adding:

“The EU must now make up their mind over how to answer parliament’s request for a delay...Until they have reached a decision, we will pause this legislation. Let me be clear, our policy remains that we should not delay.”

The so-called “Withdrawal Agreement Bill (WAB)” is around 115 pages, MPs needing time to examine, debate, and change what’s disagreed with by majority vote.

Northern Irish Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) MP Sammy Wilson said his party rejects Johnson’s (no-deal) deal as it proposed “a border in the Irish Sea,” adding:

“The prime minister has lost my respect. Instead of owning his decision to capitulate on Northern Ireland to get his deal through in a hurry, he is implying that none of us can read the detail.”

An EU extension is uncertain, French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, saying “we consider that there is no justification for a new extension.” It requires approval by all other 27 EU member-states.

While Johnson’s no-Brexit/Brexit deal is alive, its fate remains uncertain following Tuesday’s parliamentary votes.

As things now stand, it’s highly unlikely that Britain will leave the EU in one form or other on October 31 as Johnson demanded.

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