

‘Don’t leave us with the French!’ Theresa May inspires German demand to quit the EU

THERESA May has inspired a German exit from the European Union after a former industry leader and influential politician came out in support for the British Prime Minister’s Conservative conference speech.



Brexit news: German MEP calls for Berlin to quit EU to avoid France (Image: GETTY•PA)

Hans-Olaf Henkel, a former chief executive of IBM and president of the Federation of German Industries, revealed his country would be foolish to remain inside the Brussels bloc with France after the Prime Minister’s keynote address.

The German MEP, a long-time fan of British “pragmatism”, praised Mrs May’s appearance in front of Tory activists in Birmingham, insisting he was left “very much impressed” by her performance.

The Prime Minister declared Britain is “open for business” under her

Conservative Government while taking aim at rebellious backbenchers' presenting their own Brexit plans.

She said the UK will have a "Brexit that might make Britain stronger fifty years from now is no good to you if it makes your life harder today".

Her vision won the backing of Mr Henkel to proclaim Germany may be better suited out of the EU away from France.

He told Express.co.uk: "If the British go, we Germans should think that over, too.

"I do not want to be left alone with the French."

The German MEP has been a solo driving force behind an EU bid to offer Britain a new deal in the hope of reversing Brexit.

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As a lone voice in Tuesday's anti-Brexit EU Parliament debate in Strasbourg, he said the "EU should offer Britain a completely new deal".

"If Britain leaves the EU, it is as if the 19 smallest states are leaving at the same time," he added.

“Brussels should now use all its power to keep the UK in the EU. Particularly as a German and a Democrat, I am glad that the Battle of Britain was lost in 1940, but we face a new ‘Battle for Britain’ and if we were to fail to keep the UK in the EU it would be devastating for Germany, for Britain and for Europe.”

With the October European Council summit fast approach, Mrs May’s Birmingham speech once again demanded Brussels show Britain respect while trying to hammer out a withdrawal deal.

She said: “We will not betray the result of the referendum, and we will never break up our country.

“I have treated the EU with nothing but respect. The UK expects the same.

“In a negotiation, if you can’t accept what the other side proposes, you present an alternative. This is what we have done.

“Our proposal is for a free trade deal that provides for frictionless trade in goods.”

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