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Brexit at bay

By [Richard L. Benkin](#)

The expressed will of the voters in the United Kingdom has been put on hold. On June 23, 2016, the British people stunned experts and the political establishment when they voted to leave the European Union, an act popularly dubbed Brexit. At the time, then-candidate Donald Trump praised it and said the British people “[took their country back](#).” Many [commentators](#), in fact, have seen the same popular revolution in both the Trump and Brexit victories.

On January 24, 2017, however, the British Supreme Court told the people, in effect, “Not so fast!” Before the prime minister can “trigger Article 50” of the Treaty on European Union that would start the “Brexit” process and take the United Kingdom out of the European Union, it said, the raucous and divided Parliament must vote to let it happen. Evidently, in Britain, the will of the people is not enough. As David Davis, the Brexit minister, reminded Parliament after the ruling, that very body voted to put it in the hands of the people by a vote of six to one.

More evidence? Gina Miller, the investment manager who was the lead claimant in the case, [said](#), “Only Parliament can grant rights to the British people and only parliament can take them away”.

The sentiment that the government “gives” the people rights is alien to American thinking, and the thought that government can take rights away from the people is just plain frightening. Evidently, even our very special friend does not believe that the will of the people is supreme – something we need to remember and make sure we do not blithely accept for ourselves.

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