

# **‘UK will suffer SEVERE LOSS’ Merkel chief of staff says Brexit will make Britain impotent**

ANGELA Merkel’s right-hand-man has said Brexit will be a disaster for Britain with the country’s best hopes being to “manage” it.

Peter Altmaier, her chief of staff who has been described as the most powerful man in Berlin, warned of the “severe loss” to the UK in its decision to retreat from the bloc. But he admitted that the EU too will be a loser.

He said: “When we see the preparations for the Brexit talks in Brussels and we see how difficult it is for our friends in the UK to establish their national interest and their national negotiation papers then we can see this will mean a severe loss, not only for the UK but also for the EU.”

Self-confessed Anglophile Mr Altmaier said some British ministers had falsely been promoting Brexit as a win-win situation for both the UK and Europe.

He told a gathering of Nobel laureates in Lindau: “When one of my colleagues from the British government went to Berlin in January and told me ‘Peter, let’s try to make a win-win situation out of this mess’ I said ‘yes, but can you imagine when you have a couple, man and wife, and two children, the house, the boat, the car, they are married for 30 years, and then they are going to divorce?’

“Can you imagine how to make a win-win situation out of that mess?”

“It will be a win-win situation for the lawyers of course, but certainly not for the family concerned.”

He said the challenge for Brexit was damage limitation, adding: “Exit was damage limitation”.

He said: “We have to ensure good co-operation after Brexit in order to limit the negative impact as good as we can.”

He warned London that Britain was likely to end up as an impotent player outside

the EU if it wanted to enjoy the benefits of the single market.

Mr Altmaier said: "Of course there is life outside the European Union, look at Switzerland. But in Switzerland for many decades already they are transposing every economically important directive and regulation from Brussels into Swiss legislation in order to be...part of the single market...without any influence on the content of what is adopted in Brussels."

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Source: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/845302/brexit-angela-merkel-leaving-eu-uk-impotent>

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