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A ridiculous unnecessary and badly executed election leaves the country in an even more uncertain state than the ridiculous unnecessary and badly executed referendum did last year. We are poorly served by the political classes. Half the country and all who have moved and made their homes here or somewhere in Europe are being used as negotiating pawns by unrepresentative ideologues in the Conservative Party. The worry that all business-men will have is that there is no clarity in policy other than a narrow desire to retain political power; unhappily the United Kingdom is rapidly becoming an international joke. Our French cousins across the Channel are demonstrating what can be done with good will and determination. If the politicians in Britain had over the years spent less time rubbishing Europe and more time and enthusiasm improving the murky workings of Brussels everyone would have benefited enormously. France, for example, has immigration issues similar to ours but instead of playing the blame game they have voted into power a non-partisan President who is addressing these issues on the domestic front and at a European level. It is simply no good to shrug our political shoulders and mutter about how difficult it is to get agreement in Brussels: the demonstrable reality is that it can be got; you simply have to apply yourself. A recent article in the weekend FT suggested that one reason for our political ineptitude on the European stage is that we were, in a sense, unfortunate enough to win the last War and have never faced the humility of defeat. It helps explain the ideologue hard core which is the tail that wags the Conservative dog.

Although the housing market appears to have withstood the political shocks with some regions even reporting increased property valuations the market for M&A is moribund. There appears to be little appetite to close deals no matter the age of the owners. Selling a business with which one has been intimately involved over many years is already a difficult step to take; selling in an uncertain climate merely adds to the complexity. The statistics are not good; the disarray in Government as it tries to piece together a coherent policy based on a flawed referendum simply does not help.

Owners of business must reconcile themselves to the unpalatable fact that values are softening and will soften. The choice is stark: sell the business and ensure its future while cashing in a fair but not an extraordinary sum or hang on while time cruelly grinds on leaving what may have become a weaker business owing to the Brexit situation and almost certainly cashing in a smaller amount of foreign currency. We have always been ready and happy to wait while owners decide the timing and circumstances of the sale of their business; now we are somewhat eager to encourage owners to catch "the tide in the affairs of men" as Shakespeare put it.

Last month we mentioned that one of our clients is finding not only that import prices have gone up as sterling sinks but that overseas delivery times have lengthened. This unhappy situation is getting to be more and more critical as reserves thin out. He could have sold two or three years ago; we now fear he may have missed the boat. A pity as some 50 jobs depend on this 40 year old firm.

Time and Tide wait for no man; people will reach a time in life where a sale of their business must be contemplated. Whereas 50 years ago 60 seemed to be a sensible time in life to consider a sale now 70 seems to be the threshold and how marvellous is that? Nonetheless when a sale is considered it is sensible to speak to an experienced and knowledgeable broker; companies are not sold on a push-button basis, talk to Chesham because you only sell your business once!