

## Stronger Out of Europe

In June 2016, the electorate of the United Kingdom will vote on whether or not to remain part of the European Union. There are four main areas of discussion in the debate, which are: the economy; security; influence and immigration. Each of these is dealt with in the following short essays.

### The Economy

A recent circular from the 'keep Britain in' side states that three million jobs depend on Britain's membership of the EU. The amount has varied from 2.4 million to nearer four but generally the 3m figure is probably about right. This being the case then there are six million jobs in Europe which depend on trade with Britain as we have a massive trade deficit with the EU. So the question should be – "who will suffer most if trade barriers are erected between us?"

The answer is obvious – those who rely most on exports to the UK and the names are clear – Mercedes, Volkswagen, Audi, BMW, Renault, Peugeot, Volvo and even Seat. But who would be the biggest loser of all? Ford is the biggest importer of manufactured goods into the UK despite all of the stories that membership results in inward investment. Ford closed their last UK assembly plant last year and now only makes motor components here. If you buy a Vauxhall Insignia it's actually an Opel made by General Motors near Frankfurt. Italian white goods makers would be similarly affected.

Who would be the gainers, in the unlikely event that there was trade agreement between us? The most obvious candidates would be those who have invested in the manufacturing industries and the Orientals would be at the fore – Nissan, Honda, Toyota and Tata spring to mind. If the import of European motors was taxed, their share of the market would increase significantly.

The point here is not that we will cease to trade with Europe but on what terms? The example of Norway has been quoted as a model which we would have to follow but an examination of the details reveals that their situation is quite different. Norway has a very substantial trade surplus with the EU (unlike our deficit) due to the export of primaries and energy. They are happy to go along with anything that Brussels demands so long as they continue, as they do, to make a very substantial profit.

The UK's coal industry finally collapsed last year – what did Europe do – nothing! Now, in 2016, the British steel industry is going the same way – what will Europe do – it will prevent us from supporting it by subsidies until the corner is turned. Another manufacturing industry bites the dust.

The EU cannot afford not to have a full blown trade agreement with the UK as they would be the losers not Britain. Thus the main plank of the 'keep Britain in' side – "jobs depend on membership" - collapses. On the other side – leaving would enable the British Government to support its industries wherever it deems it necessary as do many other countries who are in control of their own economic affairs. We would not have to import trains from Germany, trams from Spain and HGVs from Sweden.

Jobs do not depend on EU membership – they depend on trade – and leaving Europe will enable to UK to negotiate trade agreements with other countries without interference from Brussels.

Leaving the EU would enable Britain to control its territorial waters and hence bring about a recovery in its beleaguered fishing industry.

It is argued that Britain benefits from the common standards which apply across the Union to manufactured goods. Actually many international standards are derived from British Standards as we lead the world in their production. But why would Britain choose to ignore the EU standards if we left? There is no sense to this argument as we can choose to comply with EU standards wherever it is beneficial just as we do in the case of exports to non-EU countries.

## **Security**

There are two aspects to the security issue: internal (law and order) and external (defence).

It is argued that, if we leave Europe then we will no longer be part of the system of arrest which applies across the community. There is no reason why this system should not continue and all of Europe, with the possible exception of Spain, will wish it to continue. It will not be lost. Extradition will remain unaltered if we leave.

Britain's need to refer to the European Court has brought the whole system into disrepute due the overturning of our own judgments by the 'higher' court. We must scrap this system at the same time that we leave Europe and reinstate the supremacy of own courts.

Internal security could be strengthened by the reintroduction of identity cards; an issue completely independent of EU membership.

It is argued that our defence will be weakened if we leave. It will not. Europe has been a great success in preventing Germany and France from going to war with each other but that is something that does not depend on our membership. In recent interventions, Europe has been shown to be toothless and where Britain has been involved it has been as part of alliances which have been completely independent of the EU. In fact the EU could be seen as counterproductive when considering the defence of the UK. Would you want to rely on Italian or Dutch troops for the defence of the realm? Our defence relies on having effective forces of our own and the alliances, such as NATO, which have proved themselves. These will be unaffected by Brexit.

It has been argued that leaving the EU will adversely affect the sharing of intelligence. Obviously this is not true as it is clear, from recent events, that EU countries hardly share intelligence now. GCHQ is a world leader and the main sharing of information is between the 'five I's, that is The UK, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Europe has no such agreement or organization.

Europol is the EU organization which coordinates the fight against crime across its member nations. It already has associate membership with Australia, Norway. Europol needs the UK more than we need them. Britain's membership will continue.

## **World Influence**

The United States wants Britain to remain in Europe - but why? Due to the 'special relationship' the US sees Britain as the voice of sanity amongst, effectively a Tower of Babel. As the only major European power which speaks English, and one which is generally allied with its objectives, the US sees Britain as a mouthpiece.

Britain, however, does have its own special place in the world. The US may have been responsible for the adoption of English as the world's lingua franca but we remain its guardian through art, theatre, literature, films, television and even sport. This influence, which came to its peak in the rise of The Beatles, is only diminished by Britain's membership of an organisation which largely tries to ignore the English language.

When the UK joined the Common Market its influence in the Commonwealth was severely diminished; especially in the dominions. Australia felt betrayed and turned its attention to the Pacific Rim states. What had been the spiritual home of the Land Rover became Toyota Land. Canada turned to the United States. Of course the Commonwealth has survived – in spite of our membership of the EU but, if we leave, it could be the start of a new golden age for it.

Do we have more influence on world affairs as a member of Europe? No. We have, and would retain permanent membership of UN Security Council on leaving the EU. The special relationship with the US would be unaltered if not strengthened. Leadership of the Commonwealth would be clearer without the need to check decisions with Germany and France. Membership of NATO would be unaltered.

### **Immigration**

There is, currently, a complete reluctance to match the strain on the UK's services with uncontrolled immigration. Schools are short of places and some, in so called 'ghetto' areas are struggling to come to terms with teaching simple British values. The NHS is bearing the brunt of this overloading which is also, in part, due the ageing population. The rise in house prices results from a shortage in the market place and the annual rise in population is largely due to immigration and the higher birth rate in immigrant communities. Whilst there have been moves to stop the false student route of circumventing regulations much remains to be done. Many areas of the country now resemble Pakistan or Poland rather than 'this sceptre isle'.

Brexit would enable the UK to control its own borders and keep immigration in check. Leaving 'Europe' (actually a physical impossibility) does not mean an end to immigration much of which can be seen as beneficial. It means an end to uncontrolled immigration. The UK has skills shortages in many areas – a result of the cutting back on apprenticeships in the Thatcher era – and needs to import those with the requisite skills that are required to meet the shortfall. Adoption of an Australian style points system can be implemented which would reflect the needs of the country and restrict numbers to manageable levels.

Britain has always provided a haven for asylum seekers but in order to do this effectively they have to be separated from economic migrants who seek a better life. The conventions, which require the seeking of asylum in the first state of refuge, can only be applied with rigour if we leave.

### **Conclusion**

Many reasons are put forward to justify voting to remain within the European Community. All of them have simple counter arguments whereas the reinstatement of Britain as an independent sovereign state has sound justification. The most common reason for staying in relates to the large number of jobs associated with EU trade. It is not membership of the EU that supports these jobs – it

is trade with the EU and no-one is suggesting that we give this up. Europe needs a free trade agreement with Britain more than we need one with them.

Peter Styles March 2016

### **Where do we go from here?**

The exit campaigns have been criticized for not saying what would happen in the event of a leave vote. I have attempted, here, to explore some of the options and likely outcomes in the short term, leading up to a long term relationships with the EU, the Commonwealth and the World.

### **Organization**

The Government, itself, is not threatened by a vote to leave and should remain in power and the Prime Minister has indicated that he would continue in that role. This will be respected as the election of a government is a matter which follows a general election not a referendum.

Immediately following a vote to leave, a government led committee will be set up to oversee negotiations with the EU and others on the arrangements to be adopted in the interim and after the UK has finally left the Union. This will contain a wide selection of members and include leading members of the leave campaign. The main committee will be supported by sub-committees whose members will have specialist interests in the subject areas.

### **Trade**

The most important short-term arrangement is to have an interim trade agreement with the EU pending the negotiation of a new one which should be finalized within two years. The interim agreement will be on the same terms as we have now i.e. there will be no tariffs on trade between the UK and EU members. Negotiations will concentrate on getting the best deal for all concerned which will be based on free trade. It is highly unlikely that the German and French car manufacturers will allow any imposition of tariffs as they would be the main losers. In the unlikely event that the EU cannot agree this collectively then Britain will be free to approach individual members with proposals. Foremost in this will be consideration of the arrangements with Ireland.

The UK will approach members of the Commonwealth with proposals for the relaxation of tariffs based on the history with those nations and their current position in World trade. Better terms than those advocated by the WTO will be offered. The United States and China will be targeted for new trade arrangement.

A new government agency will be set up to look at import substitution and industry support. It will look for new avenues to directly support British industry especially in manufacturing. Examples would include investment in primaries such as the steel industry and the making of HGVs, trains and trams. The criteria for investment would be the total impact on the British economy rather than compliance with European regulations which forbid or discourage such interference with market forces.

## **Payments to the EU**

Britain's payments into EU funds will be immediately halved pending the outcome of trade negotiations. The Government will immediately set up an investment fund using the saved money and take over the support of on-going EU funded projects. The Investment Fund will be organized on similar lines to the Norwegian model in order to provide soft loans (rather than grants) for infrastructure projects. This will be prioritized towards deprived areas in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

When the final outcome on payments is determined, funds which have been saved will be shared between the investment fund, the NHS and overseas development; all on the basis of soft loans rather than grants.

## **Fisheries**

The UK will immediately take back control of its territorial waters and hence the control of fisheries. Subject to coordination, this will be devolved to the constituent parliaments of the UK.

## **Immigration**

The right of EU citizens to work in the UK will be ended within the first year. It will be replaced with an Australian style points system which will ensure that the UK continues to benefit from imported skills in areas of need.

Those already working in the UK will be assessed and given priority in the issue of work permits. Where numbers exceed the requirement, an interim allowance will be made in order to ensure a smooth transition. Seasonal agricultural workers will be given short-term permits based on the needs of employers who will vouch for them.

Asylum seekers will continue to be treated according to United Nations guidelines.

Negotiations will be undertaken concerning ex-patriots resident in the EU but this is not expected to present problems as, generally, they have a beneficial effect on local economies.

## **Sovereignty**

The UK will take immediate control of its own affairs where these do not create conflict. One of the specialist sub-committees will identify areas whereby interim measures are required but the Supreme Court will have the ability to make its own decisions without the right by plaintiffs to refer matters to European Courts.

All enacted legislation, based on the requirements of the EU, will remain in force until they have been re-examined. The priority here will be to ensure that environmental and employment improvements are kept.

## **Defence**

Membership of the UN Security Council, NATO and the Five 'I's are all unaffected as will be the 'special relationship' with the United States. Relationships with the Commonwealth will be strengthened over a period of years. Britain will continue to use the European Arrest Warrant and will seek to strengthen the bi-partisan arrangements on the exchange of security information which already exist. It will remain in Europol.

Those entering the UK from all countries and territories, including British citizens, will require a British Passport or visa. The system recording their entry to, and exit from, the UK will be strengthened.

## **Influence**

Our influence in the World will continue to be based on our language, mores and culture.

Peter Styles April 2016