

The EU UK Agreement

Now we are all able to read a text I am inviting you to comment on what you think of the document.

On the crucial issue of sovereignty it appears to reinforce Clause 38 of the Withdrawal Act which I supported. That rightly asserted that the UK can legislate as it wishes for the UK, notwithstanding any agreements with the EU.

This proposed Agreement clearly rules out any future jurisdiction or control by the European Court of Justice over the UK under this Agreement. It states "For greater certainty an interpretation of this Agreement...given by the courts of either party shall not be binding on the other party"

It also seeks to limit litigious activities under the Agreement by stating that "nothing in this Agreement ...shall be confirmed as conferring rights or imposing obligations on persons other than those created between the parties under public international law, nor as permitting this Agreement...to be directly invoked in the domestic legal system of the parties"

As it is important to protect our sovereignty from any future attempted infringements by the EU acting under this Agreement, it is also crucial that there is an easy exit clause. This was something I lobbied for strongly. Financial Provision 8 headed "Termination" gives a simple clean exit in the form of this statement:

"Either party may terminate the Agreement by written notification through diplomatic channels. This Agreement and any supplementing Agreement shall cease to be in force on the first day of the twelfth month following the date of notification."

These clauses appear to allow any UK government with political will to legislate as UK voters wish and to govern the UK as an independent country. I am awaiting the legal judgement of the ERG lawyers Committee who are studying this in detail . It also needs clarification for the situation in Northern Ireland, where I still have not seen the text of the Agreement sketched to us by Michael Gove in early December. Presumably the issues are less severe now there is a tariff and quota free Agreement.

I will come to a judgement following further study and after hearing from others their thoughts.

A faster growing UK

Our first year as an independent nation out of the single market and customs union should see us record one of our fastest ever growth rates. The Remain establishment forecasts put it as a likely 6-7% assuming a trade deal. They exaggerated the importance of the trade talks to growth but for once I agree with their ballpark estimates. No Deal would also have delivered good growth next year.

It is true a lot of the growth will come from recovery from the severe lockdowns of 2020. A far important assumption than a trade deal is that restrictions on the UK economy will be progressively relaxed as the vaccines are rolled out and as the pandemic subsides.

What we need now is strong government action using the freedoms we gain on 1 January to boost this growth rate further. The government should take VAT off a range of items often mentioned here before, once we have the freedom to do so. It should rejig the proposed agricultural subsidy policies, to give more of a boost to home produced food in substitution for the flood of imports from the continent. It should remove all tariffs from Mediterranean and tropical produce we cannot grow for ourselves, to let UK consumers buy tariff free from non EU destinations.

It should build on its current High Street plans to foster conversion of unwanted retail and office space into housing, service and leisure uses. It should put in the Freeports and Enterprise Zones more quickly than current plans. It should redouble technology education and training., It should drop IR 35 and improve the tax and regulatory package for small and start up businesses. It should use government procurement more intelligently to back UK small business where they are competitive or innovative.

On public spending they should start to rein in excessive or wasteful spending. As we get people and business back to work – the sooner the better – the large financial support schemes can be wound down. Private healthcare should be returned to the private sector. There should be a new railway timetable geared to sustainable passenger volumes post pandemic.

Using our new freedoms

The government should now turn its attention to the many opportunities our departure from the bureaucratic and restrictive single market and customs union will bring.

Today I invite you to send in your ideas of laws and rules which could be improved, amended or repealed as we take back control.

Let me begin with a few ideas for a better maritime strategy. The U.K. is a global trading nation with a proud history of maritime success. The EU Ports Regulations have cramped the expansion of our harbours and docks. The Common Fishing Policy led to a big decline in our fishing fleet and fish processing. A combination of EU and U.K. rules led to a big decline in international marine owners using our flag for their merchant ships. During the EEC/EU years we witnessed a major decline in shipbuilding.

We could now set about rebuilding:

1 Repeal Ports Directive. Offer planning permissions and other support for dock and harbour expansion.

2 Offer Freeport status to many coastal towns, with simplified planning and tax breaks for new investment in those areas. Allow non payment of VAT on items for re export.

3. Add an Enterprise Zone to such ports, with additional tax breaks from Business rates and from Corporation Tax on investment

4. Government to offer grants and cheap loans to U.K. citizens and businesses wishing to but a new trawler made in a U.K. yard, to expand fishing capacity.

5. U.K. to order all public sector vessels from U.K. yards assuming there were at least 2 compliant U.K. tenders for the work. UK to strengthen Customs and naval fleets of coastal patrol vessels.

6. U.K. to review rules over sailing under our flag, to encourage more to use our flag and related marine service, without lax employee standards. We should also look at requiring ships trading in our waters to comply with high standards for employees and safety.

7. Government to assist coastal towns and cities wanting growth to attract more fish processing, meal preparation and frozen and chilled foods business. Good quality new housing investment to go alongside new industrial and marine activities.

8 Private sector will bring ship repair, chandlery and support services as these policies are implemented.

[Video of Christmas story](#)

Youtube version

Looking forward to freedom

Recent years have seen a gripping battle between voters and ruling elites. This has reflected disillusion with the relatively poor economic results of all advanced countries since the banking crash. It has also reflected a feeling of many that the elites are acting to restrain free thought, by insisting on fashionable nostras about race, religion, identity to the point where many do not think they can express their views or feelings for fear of abuse or even prosecution.

This site allows dissenting voices, but has discouraged a minority who wish to push the boundaries and make inaccurate generalisations about named individuals or whole groups or races of people. It is never an easy balance to strike. I want to offer somewhere where people can discuss legitimate worries about the conventional wisdom or the cultural dirigisme. I do not wish to provide a home for group abuse or vendettas against individuals.

Recently Kemi Badenoch made an important speech explaining how you can uphold hatred of racism without having to adopt Marxist views or support BLM. The whole Conservative party has made clear its wish to condemn violence against statues or people with views you do not like. We do not want to see elements of our past torn down because past centuries had views on race, colonialism, the role of women and many other issues with which we now disagree. Liz Truss has made a good speech saying that uniting to fight poverty and to open up opportunity is a better way forward than enforcing an ever more politically correct language on us.

I wish to live in a tolerant society where what you think, what you can contribute and how you wish to develop yourself matters, not where you came from or how you are categorised by social scientists and governments. You can ask too many details about a person's sex, age, background, and ethnicity, and go on to make false assumptions about them based on what you find. The only background that should matter is our shared UK heritage as citizens born or welcomed here. The main challenge for policy makers is not to atone for past errors of history but to provide the best possible opportunities for all of us from every background for our futures.

The Christian message at Christmas is love your neighbour as yourself, and show goodwill towards all. This can spread well beyond the confines of Church congregations to the wider community, to people of all religions and of none.