

Taking back control requires the restoration of sovereignty to the British people

Let me go back to the Brexit discussions we were having before Covid 19 monopolised the agenda. Sir William Cash spoke to the Brexit conference about the clauses he helped the government produce to reassert UK sovereignty in the Withdrawal Agreement. They were essential, given some of the rest of the text.

The legislation makes clear that nothing in the Withdrawal Agreement “shall derogate from the sovereignty of the UK”. The Act allows Parliament to debate and vote against any measure the EU proposes during the so called Implementation period up to the end of December, when we finally leave all aspects of EU control. This is important to prevent the EU attempting to tie us into unacceptable and damaging measures before we are free.

The Act includes a method for the UK to reject unwanted legislation during the Implementation period should the EU try to damage us. The European Scrutiny Committee of the Commons can refer an EU proposal for a debate and vote to determine whether it should become part of UK law or not.

I was pleased to see recently the Treasury is at last going to propose getting rid of the tampon tax, but only effective from next year. I want them to add getting rid of VAT on green products and domestic fuel at the same time. We need to show we have taken back control of our taxes by altering VAT, an EU tax and removing it from things we do not wish to tax.

It is also important that we become an independent coastal state with full control over our own fishing grounds this summer. We should ensure much more of the fish is landed in the UK, and where we need time to build up our fishing industry capacity we should allow a period of recuperation of fish stocks after the bruising impact of continental industrial trawlers.

The Current UK negotiating position is strong and needs to be kept up. We do not want any delay beyond December and wish any Agreement to be based around a Free Trade Agreement. We do not wish to perpetuate EU controls over our economy.