BETRAYAL: How Jeremy Corbyn betrayed himself and the Labour Party over the EU Referendum

We would like to thank Fred Harding for this piece. It originally appeared on his website http://www.brexituk.com/ and is used with permission.

In his EU speech on the 14th April 2016, the Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, laid out his case why he recommended Labour to remain in the EU. He admitted that over the years he had been critical of many decisions taken by the EU, and that he remained critical of its shortcomings; from its lack of democratic accountability to the institutional pressure to deregulate or privatise public services.

During the 1993 debate on the EU's Maastricht treaty, Corbyn said it "takes away from national parliaments the power to set economic policy and hands it over to an unelected set of bankers who will impose the economic policies of price stability, deflation and high unemployment throughout the European Community". Corbyn has also said that he voted against the EU's predecessor, the Common Market, in 1975. (Socialist Worker, 14 April 2016)

Corbyn's opposition to the EU is clearly seen from his activities against the degree of the UK's integration with the European Union. Here are just a few examples.

27 Feb 2008: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on Lisbon Treaty — Enshrine the Lisbon Treaty into UK law

3 Mar 2008: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on Lisbon Treaty — Increase of powers of European Parliament

4 Mar 2008: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on Lisbon Treaty — Clause on 'parliamentary control of decisions' to remain in the Bill

14 Dec 2010: Jeremy Corbyn voted against working closely with the European Commission to deliver a strong, principles-based framework for financial sector corporate governance.

25 Jan 2011: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on European Union Bill — Clause 6 — Referendum on Emergency Financial Assistance for EU Member States

23 Mar 2011: Jeremy Corbyn voted against the creation of the European Stability Mechanism to give financial assistance to Eurozone countries in need.

23 Nov 2011: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on Deferred Division — Schengen Governance

24 Apr 2012: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on European Union — Data Protection in the Areas of Police and Criminal Justice (EU Directive)

31 Oct 2012: Jeremy Corbyn voted to call on the UK Government to seek a real terms cut in the European Union budget

6 Nov 2012: Jeremy Corbyn voted against the UK's involvement in a European Supervisory Authority, the European Banking Authority.

15 Jul 2013: Jeremy Corbyn voted against opting out of all EU police and criminal justice measures adopted before December 2009

4 Dec 2013: Jeremy Corbyn voted against an EU trade agreement with Colombia and Peru

7 Jan 2014: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on Benefit Entitlement (Restriction) Bill

22 Jan 2014: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on European Commission Work Programme 2014 and Support for Completion of the EU Single Market

27 Jan 2014: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on European Union (Approvals) Bill — Third Reading — European Archives and Europe for Citizens Programme

10 Nov 2014: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on Transposing European Union Criminal Justice and Data Protection Measures into UK Law

14 Dec 2015: Jeremy Corbyn was absent for a vote on European Union Documents — Relocation of Migrants in need of International Protection

14 Mar 2016: Jeremy Corbyn voted not to take account of carbon dioxide emissions traded via the European Union to Emissions Trading Scheme when calculating the state of the UK carbon account for periods from 2028 onwards

So one has to ask why has Jeremy Corbyn changed his tune and recommends that his party remains in Europe? The BBC News headline on his EU speech "**Jeremy Corbyn warns of workers' rights 'bonfire' if UK leaves**" strongly hints at why Mr Corbyn has taken the stance that he has. His reasons has nothing to do with the EU but everything to do with the his own personal "project fear" which is founded on his outdated views of past conflicts with the Conservative leadership. It is this fear that is driving him into the arms of the EU against his better judgement and his former opposition to the Community.

It is clear that Jeremy Corbyn is prepared to allow his personal fears towards his Tory enemies to override his former aversion to the European Community and to drag his unsuspecting colleagues within the Labour Party down with him. His explanation for his decision to remain in the EU begins with the following words:

"And, of course, it is EU regulations that that underpin many rights at work, like holiday entitlement, maternity leave, rights to take breaks and limits to how many hours we can work, and that have helped to improve protection for agency workers."

In this, Mr Corbyn was referring to the EU regulations of the European Social Charter. This is a Council of Europe treaty which was established to support the European Convention on Human Rights which is principally for civil and political rights, and to broaden the scope of protected fundamental rights to include social and economic rights. The Charter also guaranteed positive rights and freedoms which concern all individuals in their daily existence. The basic rights set out in the Charter are as follows: housing,health, education, labour rights, full employment, reduction of working hours equal pay for equal work, parental leave, social security, social and legal protection from poverty and social exclusion, free movement of persons and non-discrimination, also the rights of migrant workers and that of the persons with disabilities.

The Conservative government of John Major, when negotiating the Maastricht Treaty, secured opt-outs which included the Social Charter and membership of the single currency in 1992. John Major gave his reason for not doing joining the Social Chapter as follows:

> "It could not, for example, agree to Community decisions in such broad areas as working conditions by qualified majority voting. In particular, the Government was concerned that this transfer of powers could have led to the imposition on employers and employees in the UK of unnecessary and damaging legislation which could have increased employers' costs, undermined the competitiveness of British firms and industry, and harmed employment and employment prospects." ("The Social Chapter: Research Paper 97/102", Business & Transport Section House of Commons Library, 2 September 1997)

The Labour government at the time wanted to join the Social Charter, but had been thwarted by John Major. So Mr Corbyn voted against the Maastricht Treaty. However, the Labour Government led by Europhile Tony Blair signed up to the Social Chapter in the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997. Now listen to the Labour leader's expression of fear directed at the Conservatives.

"Just imagine what the Tories would do to workers' rights here in Britain if we voted to leave the EU in June. They'd dump rights on equal pay, working time, annual leave, for agency workers, and on maternity pay as fast as they could get away with it. It would be a bonfire of rights that Labour governments secured within the EU. Not only that, it wouldn't be a Labour government negotiating a better settlement for working people with the EU. It would be a Tory government, quite possibly led by Boris Johnson and backed by Nigel Farage, that would negotiate the worst of all worlds: a free market free-for-all shorn of rights and protections."

So the issue is this. Jeremy Corbyn believes that unless Britain stays in the EU a Brexit Conservative government would dump "rights on equal pay, working time, annual leave, for agency workers, and on maternity pay as fast as they could get away with it". In other words, the Brexit Conservative government, he claims, would pull out of the Social Chapter during their renegotiations with the EU and therefore threaten all the rights that the EU has been instrumental in making.

Jeremy Corbyn has deluded himself and all those he represents. Did he not know what David Cameron said in 2007? Mr Cameron promised that a future Conservative government would pull out of the EU Social Chapter as a "top priority". His pledge was published in numerous newspapers such as the Guardian (6 March 2007) in which he said that he did not believe that it was appropriate for social and employment legislation to be dealt with at the European level. This is the same argument that John Major made in 1993 which I quoted above. David Cameron

made that pledge not on the condition of being outside of Europe but for remaining a member of the EU, and he said this withdrawal from the Social Chapter would be a top priority.

We can now clearly see that Mr Corbyn's decision to remain in the EU on behalf of the Labour party is based entirely upon a false premise and fear of what a Brexit Conservative Government might do. Whether we remain in the EU or not, David Cameron has pledged that a Conservative Government will withdraw from the Social Chapter regardless at some time in the future.

Unfortunately, Mr Corbyn is still stuck in the past and simply does not trust the Conservatives to do the right thing, yet he is prepared to support the very man that will take Britain out of the Social Chapter evidently not knowing what David Cameron plans to do. Even so, I cannot imagine for one minute that any government, Conservative or Labour post Brexit would not take the best of what we have got from the EU so far, including the Social chapter and adapt it for British needs? Goodness! We have paid a great deal of money for the those rights — £350 million per week (2014 figures) — and all this just to bin them?

Jeremy Corbyn has betrayed himself and the Labour Party because of his distrust of the Conservative leadership. Now that you know that you have been misled, don't you think you should join your colleagues in the Labour Leave organisation and vote Brexit? The European Union has become an anti-democratic and anti-socialist institution, it is completely at odds with the policies of the Labour Party and is standing in the way of the ambitions of the leadership of the Labour Party.