

Brexit means....?

We now have less than three months to wait until Mrs May will invoke Article 50 and we formally begin the process of leaving the EU. This means we will finally see her “Brexit means Brexit ” statement fleshed out, although it is doubtful if we will know all the detail by the end of March, especially as there are likely to be a good few twists and turns between the invocation of Article 50 and Independence Day.

During 2017 the Campaign for an Independent Britain will continue to fight for the best possible Brexit deal, working alongside other like-minded individuals and organisations. We will let you more as our plans develop, but here are a few guidelines which we believe will help ensure Brexit is successful.

Firstly, Brexit **DOES NOT** mean a trade-off between single market access and free movement of people from the EU. If the Government is considering remaining in the European Economic Area (EEA) – possibly by re-joining EFTA, the European Free Trade Area – as an interim position, the “four freedoms” of the Single Market are not indivisible for a non-EU country, in spite of claims to the contrary by the likes of Guy Verhofstadt, the former Belgian Prime Minister.

Iceland suspended free movement of capital following its banking crisis and, as has been pointed out on this website and elsewhere, Liechtenstein imposed restrictions on free movement of people over 20 years ago. Readers may remember that David Cameron’s “deal” included a so-called “emergency brake” – an agreement with the other 27 member states that if we voted to remain in the EU, we could restrict the in-work benefits paid to migrants for four years.

All Mr Cameron was doing was asking permission to apply Article 112 of the EEA agreement. Outside the EU, if we took

the EFTA route, we wouldn't have to ask the 27 member states and could impose far tougher restrictions than merely restricting benefits. Like Liechtenstein, we could drastically limit the numbers too. Liechtenstein has done nothing more than making use of an article in an existing agreement. We could do the same if the government chooses to go down the EFTA route.

Of course, we do not know if this is Mrs May's plan, but it is inconceivable, given the number of on-line articles and research papers which have addressed this subject, that she and her advisers are not aware of Article 112 and Liechtenstein's use of it. It is high time that the canard of the indivisibility of the "four freedoms" was laid to rest once and for all.

So what else does Brexit mean?

Firstly, freedom from the **European Court of Justice**. UK law and its courts must be the final arbiter of British justice.

We should pull out of participation in the European Arrest Warrant, which has resulted in UK residents being sent for trial abroad on hearsay evidence. Furthermore, Brexit must lead to the return of trial by jury and other features of our historic legal system which have gradually been eroded by our membership of the EU.

Next, Freedom from any involvement with the **European Defence Agency** and an **independent foreign policy**. We should obviously work together with the EU where it is mutually beneficial so to do, but we should not be involved with the EU's empire building in the Balkans or former soviet republics such as the Ukraine.

Brexit must mean an end to the **Common Fisheries Policy** (CFP). As John Ashworth has argued, the concept of "Community waters", the quota system, and the ridiculous amount of fish caught by boats from other EU member states in what are our

national waters by right is a disgrace that has cost thousands of jobs in the fishing industry. The opportunity to revive our coastal communities through a well-designed fishing policy on similar lines to the Faroese scheme must not be passed over.

A replacement to the **Common Agricultural Policy** (CAP) must also be designed. Unlike the CFP, which hardly benefits any UK fishermen at all (apart from those who have bought quota and then re-sell for profit), the CAP's single farm payment is a lifeline for many in the agricultural sector. As an interim measure, a single payment system managed in Westminster rather than Brussels may be the answer, but looking further ahead, something more imaginative is essential as the CAP, initially designed to support small French farmers, has never been a good way to manage farming in the UK.

Finally, Brexit means not only taking the UK out of the EU but **taking the EU out of the hearts of UK citizens**. Schoolchildren and students have suffered years of indoctrination through pro-EU propaganda. They will be the biggest beneficiaries of Brexit, but as anyone who has taken part in debates on the EU in schools and universities has discovered, most of them don't realise it at the moment.

So there will be much to keep us in the Campaign for an Independent Britain busy as 2017 approaches. On that note, may we wish all our members and supporters a Happy New Year.