

# Come back one day? Not on your nelly!

Sigmar Gabriel, the German economy minister, gave an interesting speech in Berlin yesterday. He began with the oft-repeated statement that access to the Single Market must be tied to acceptance of the four freedoms, including freedom of movement of people. This, as any reader of this blog will know by now, is not true. Availing itself of Article 112 of the EEA agreement, Liechtenstein has restricted freedom of movement from the EU for over 20 years but has virtually full access to the Single Market.

Obviously, it is not in the EU's interest to acknowledge that a tiny state bordering the EU's most powerful member offers us a way (if Mrs May so desires) to square the circle between single market access and restricting migration from the EU, but he then hinted that he would like the "awkward partner" to come back, which was rather a surprise. Our vote on 23rd June was a shock to many across the water, but everyone who counts within the EU has accepted the result. Furthermore, once we've gone, they can at least try to forge ahead with the EU army, the EU foreign service and all those other projects which us pesky Brits have been holding back. Good riddance to us.

Well, that is what you might think, but Herr Gabriel went on to say that "We must try to formulate offers in a way so that the Britons remain close to us, also to have the chance that they return some day."

Some hope! At the moment, lack of detailed information from the Government about the Brexit strategy has caused the pound to wobble and some investors to hold back, but even with these uncertainties, business confidence has recovered to pre-Brexit levels and some of the prophets of doom have admitted they

were too pessimistic. With Theresa May talking enthusiastically of using her determination to seize “a once-in-a-generation chance to change the direction of our nation for good,” the tide is turning very strongly against the hard-core remainiacs who would wish to drag us back into the EU.

Of course, the sickening spectacle of young people painting their faces in the colour of the EU flag and waving placards in support of EU membership is a reminder that we leave campaigners still have a job to do. De-programming our young people, who have been fed a diet of pro-EU propaganda at school, will take quite a few years, but a successful Brexit will unquestionably aid the process. Successful non-EU nations of Western Europe such as Norway and Switzerland command strong majorities opposed to EU membership. Once the benefits of Brexit become apparent, there is every reason to believe that public sentiment here will likewise become overwhelmingly thankful that we have escaped from an organisation which is likely to continue lurching from crisis to crisis until finally it implodes. Herr Gabriel, in other words, is living in fantasy land.

Photo by QuinnDombrowski

