

Will they ever go away?

Like death and taxes, it seems, EU Remainers will always be with us.

Welcome to their latest political reincarnation, the *True and Fair Party*, founded by that iconic and media-savvy Remainer Gina Miller whose key campaign-pledge is, as you will have guessed, for Britain to rejoin the European Union at the earliest opportunity. Yes really. After all that has happened over the past seven years.

Along with eight other hopefuls she will be standing as a prospective candidate at the next General Election.

As if our political institutions were not already sufficiently contaminated, the idea that a handful of Remainiacs should try to hijack a democratically held referendum result under the banner 'True and Fair' because they disagreed with its outcome is a joke that will be lost on no-one.

I suspect like us, our readers were unaware of this new political party, so we are grateful to contributing author Brian Morris for alerting us to the latest danger lurking beneath the political waters.

The background to these latest developments together with an analysis of what the party stands for (or not as the case may be) is covered in the following article which we publish in full below.

Gina Miller: Can she really talk us into rejoining the EU?

by Brian Morris

Gina Miller became a star of the Remain campaign with her successful legal challenges to the Boris Johnson government. Now she campaigns for the UK to rejoin the EU. But the hurdles she faces illustrate how difficult it will be to rejoin an organisation we voted to leave only seven years ago.

Remember when John Major said of one of the Maastricht Treaty Conservative rebels that every time, he heard his name 'I hear the sound of white coats flapping'? Remember how these Tory MPs were dubbed a gang of swivel-eyed obsessives who would stop at nothing in opposing our integration with Europe, including, on one occasion, smuggling a sick colleague from hospital into the Commons to win a vote?

Welcome to their counterparts from the Remain camp. Those who, like Gina Miller, are now working to reverse the referendum result and take us back into the EU.

We were reminded of Gina Miller when she popped up recently in an interview with Melissa Kite in the Spectator, headlined 'We need to start the road to rejoin.'

Ms Miller found fame when she successfully took legal action against the Conservative government, first to ensure Parliament voted on a withdrawal agreement and secondly preventing Boris Johnson's prorogation of Parliament curtailing the debate.

Whatever we may think of her motives, she was right in saying she was ensuring what Brexiteers wanted, namely the sovereignty of parliament. Veteran Eurosceptic Tory MP Bill Cash gave her 'three cheers' on a BBC radio programme.

All Brexiteers should join in the applause. The beautiful irony of politics means Gina Millers legal wins made her one of the foremost enablers of Boris Johnson's 2019 election

success. As Melissa Kite points out, the supreme court decision on referring the referendum decision to a Remainer-dominated parliament, plunged Brexit into 'years of legal and parliamentary wrangling'.

Small wonder that when the 2019 general election arrived people were sick of interminable parliamentary shenanigans and getting Brexit Done was an offer most of us could not refuse.

Ms Miller has started her road trip to the bountiful land of Rejoin by launching the True and Fair Party and will stand as a candidate with eight others at the general election. But her ambition is far greater than just rejoining the EU. Her website promises that 'True & Fair is the only political party prepared to bring in radical reforms to fix our politics, stop the rot, and ensure the politicians we elect and pay for work for us.'

She condemns the UK as having 'poor quality politicians' and 'a culture of corruption', accusations that have been made against the European parliament. Only last December four people were arrested, including a vice president of the parliament, on charges of corruption, money laundering and participation in a criminal investigation.

The Guardian said the parliament had been 'rocked by the biggest scandal in its history.' And Michiel van Hulten, Director of Transparency International EU, commented that over many decades 'the parliament has allowed a culture of impunity to develop.' Perhaps Gina Miller should extend her campaign against political corruption to include the organisation she wants us to rejoin.

Ms Miller's career has been in marketing and does not appear to have included politics before she became a hero of the Remain campaign. The brand name she has chosen with which to market the True and Fair Party is, unsurprisingly, Gina Miller. Her photos are all over the website, plus an article

she wrote, clips from TV and a personal message.

Her message describes the manifesto as 'fizzing with ideas.' The Spectator's Melissa Kite did a quick taster test on some of them.

Gina Miller was asked about the policy of raising taxes on farmers. It turns out that this will not be included in the fuller manifesto 'now we have consulted with the sector'. The policy had been adopted after advice from people who saw farmers as 'rich'. What's more, we learned, she'd also dropped the policy of fast-tracking overseas doctors into the NHS 'having now spoken to people in the NHS'.

It appears the True and Fair Party adopts policies first and then consults those who have experience and expertise in the field later. So much for fizz.

With all these ideas popping and fizzing like a Downing Street party all over the website, it's easy to overlook one notable omission: any mention of foreign policy.

Ms Miller could point out that True and Fair is a new party offering a range of radical policies on parliamentary, local government and electoral reform and unlikely to have a voice in government. But rejoining the EU would profoundly affect our relations with countries, particularly those outside the EU, so one might have expected a few words.

After all, the idea of global Britain was much mocked following the EU referendum. We were told we would become an insignificant island off the coast of Europe without the clout we exercised within the EU.

Yet under its much-reviled prime minister Boris Johnson the UK has played a leadership role in supporting Ukraine. Figures from the House of Commons library published in August show the UK has supplied more arms to the troops fighting Russian aggression than any other European country. It's not difficult

to imagine that, with a different, more cautious prime minister, if we'd still been a member of the EU, by now Russian troops in their ceremonial uniforms would have marched through the streets in the centre of Kyiv.

Johnson may be right that we should do more to help Ukraine win. But we have done more than most countries. The Baltic countries and Poland have learned we are more reliable friends than Germany and France. Outside the EU, we are still good Europeans.

Perhaps it's wasting words to swat a party with a silly name no one has heard of and which, even with Gina Miller's marketing skills and photogenic appeal, is more likely to lose deposits than win seats. But there's comfort for Brexiteers in watching her campaign flounder and from perceiving the difficulties for rejoiners in mapping a route ahead.

The journey to get to the rejoin decision, Miller says, would end with party manifestos rather than 'a second damaging and divisive referendum.' Does the True and Fair Party really think it 'fair' for the UK to apply for membership after a general election vote when we held a referendum on leaving? Such a decision would be equally damaging and divisive.

General elections can never be just about a single-issue choice. The British government has rejected the SNP argument that a general election majority is a good enough case for their referendum demand.

Gina Miller also rules out slipping back into the EU bit by bit. She says that joining the single market and customs union would mean the UK 'doffing our cap' and accepting rules and regulation without any vote or voice.

Sir Keir Starmer had ruled out any commitment to rejoining the EU, the customs union or the single market. But recently he's been talking about 'closer alignment' with the EU if Labour enters government.

The EU won't give him much. With Euroscepticism strong in the block, the EU won't want to encourage nations to believe you can have significant benefits without being a member. And if Starmer's search for closer alignment means accepting EU regulations over which we have no voice, he will be rightly accused of giving up some of the very freedoms that Brexit achieved.

If Labour wins the next general election, Gina's best hope is not a step by step expansion of 'closer alignment' but for manifesto pledges from Labour and other pro-rejoining parties in about five years' time from now.

The world is changing fast however, and UK politics have in recent years defied predictions. But it's difficult to think that a Labour government seeking a second term, would give the Tories such a tempting target.

If Labour wins the election and starts to negotiate membership with the EU, they would have to go through the same process as a country joining for the first time. Because our laws and political institutions already meet EU's entry criteria and if our regulations had not diverged significantly, then Gina Miller thinks we could become a member again in three years after the election. The EU itself says that 'Due to the huge volume of EU rules and regulations... the negotiations take time to complete'.

Would a new government want to spend parliamentary time over 3 years repealing post Brexit legislation and negotiating, a process that Brexiteer opponents would call distracting and humiliating?

Ms Miller warns the process of rejoining would face obstacles and may not mean returning to our former EU agreement. "We may have to accept that the budget rebate and special justice and home affairs arrangements may be more problematic'. Indeed.

What's certain, as Boris Johnson pointed out in his Daily Mail column headlined 'Britain will Never, repeat Never, rejoin the EU', is that rejoining would mean 'paying even more to Brussels than we were before and signing up to the goal of a federal Europe.' He's right too, when he says membership of the low-growth EU would not be the answer to any of the problems we presently face.

Miller correctly perceives the main hurdles to rejoining the EU 'are mainly political and not legal'. But there's nothing to suggest she has grasped how steep those political mountains are.

A few days after the Spectator interview, The BBC showed Laura Kuenssberg's documentary State of Chaos, on the events following the EU referendum vote that divided the Conservative Party and brought down the May government. We learned that Remainer civil servants sobbed over the result, Conservatives called their colleagues traitors, and a top mandarin told his staff he had voted remain (presumably to show he shared their pain).

No politician in the House of Commons in those tumultuous times, whatever way they voted in the interminable votes, would risk repeating this unsavoury spectacle.

The second political mountain is one so immense that perhaps only a blinkered Remainer could miss it. Rejoining the EU would be a national humiliation. It would say to our enemies and rivals that Britain is a country that cannot survive on its own, making its own laws and regulations, like other sovereign nations, but must again seek sanctuary under the EU petticoat.

Rule Britannia would stick in the throat after that.

By Brian Morris

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About the author: Brian Morris is a former TV producer and now runs his own media and communications training company.

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