

# Last night's vote:- a step towards freedom

We will leave it to others to provide a blow-by-blow account of the progress of the second reading of the European Union (Withdrawal) bill through Parliament. Yesterday saw the start of eight days' scrutiny of the Bill by the House of Commons. The vote to repeal the 1972 European Communities Act was comfortably passed by 318 votes to 68. Calls for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to have a veto over the process were rejected by 318 votes to 52.

Mrs May's plan to enshrine in law 29th March 2019 as the date on which we leave the EU was debated but was not voted on. This could prove a bit more of a challenge when the vote takes place next week, particularly with some 15 Tories indicating they were likely to vote against this amendment. The *Daily Telegraph* created something of a storm by referring to these 15 as "mutineers."

Tory MPs on both side of the Brexit divide have sought to distance themselves from the *Telegraph's* rather strong language while some of the group of 15 have accused the *Telegraph* of bullying.

As always, when feelings run high, it is vital to differentiate between genuinely obstructive remoaners and MPs who are not seeking to block Brexit but are uncomfortable with the way the Government is going about it. We would not wish to make any comment beyond repeating that whatever side Tory MPs took in the referendum campaign, the number of hard-core remainiacs is actually quite small. Most Tories know that delivering a successful Brexit will determine their future and they must sink or swim together.

Meanwhile, each successful vote takes us one small tiny nearer

to freedom. In the present chaotic climate, we must be thankful for these small mercies.