

Peter Troy RIP

We regret to announce the death of Peter Troy, a member of CIB, a long serving campaigner for British independence from the EU and a talented publicist. Peter suffered a severe heart attack from which there appeared to be some hope of recovery. In spite of the very best ministrations of the hospital, the hope proved vain. He died surrounded by his family and loved ones, to whom we extend our sympathy. Members who attended our AGM on 11 April will recall his spirited motion in favour of urgent preparations to fight the then expected referendum on EU membership. The motion was passed unanimously.

Recently he was perhaps best known for his film "The Norway Option". He explained his thinking behind it in the article which follows. Lord Tebbit praised it highly because it gave a clear pointer to an amicable and orderly way out of the EU and "it doesn't shout".

"I was so annoyed at David Cameron's misrepresentation of The Norway Option that I made a film to set the record straight" says Publicist and anti EU campaigner Peter Troy.

"I think it is worth understanding what leaving the European Union would involve", said David Cameron back in January 2013. "You can be like Norway", he said, "and you can have full access to the single market but you have absolutely no say over the rules of that market".

Mr Cameron was speaking at a lunch organised by the Parliamentary Press Gallery in Westminster saying he was in favour of staying in the EU because of its single market. But, also he said, if the UK pulled out of the EU but wanted to keep the advantages of the single market it would be reduced to the standing of Norway, which has to abide by faxed orders from Brussels' bureaucrats.

"In Norway", the Prime Minister said "they sometimes call it

'Government by fax' because you are simply taking the instructions about every rule in the single market from Brussels without any say on what those rules are".

On watching the presentation live on early morning TV I despaired, it was utter tosh – I was amazed that this tired and inaccurate old canard which has been running for years, first raised by Europhile Norwegian politicians who were trying to get their sceptical people to agree to joining the EU was being repeated by our Prime Minister. It didn't work with the canny Norwegian's, but that was not stopping Mr Cameron trying it on in the UK and of course the media – particularly the BBC – were reporting Mr Cameron's words with zero criticism or understanding of the bigger implications.

Recalling that political scientist Dr Richard North who co-authored the definitive history of the EU with journalist Christopher Booker had written several times about 'The Norway Option' back in 2008 on his high profile EU Referendum blog site, I called him to discuss David Cameron's curious statement. The typically long and detailed conversation with the anti EU campaigner concluded in my being told that the good Doctor was embarking on a fresh paper on behalf of The Bruges Group on the very subject of The Norway Option.

The paper was published early in 2013. The author, as was to be expected, boldly set out the case for a desirable exit settlement should the UK decide to leave the EU. One of those options is for the UK government to apply to join the European Free Trade Area (EFTA). This is known as the "Norway Option" because Norway is the largest nation within the EFTA/EEA group which also includes Iceland and Liechtenstein.

As Dr North expands in the Bruges Group publication, staying within the EEA is an attractive proposition as it protects the UK's position in the Single Market and thus renders an exit economically neutral. Such an option accords with often repeated Government objectives of maintaining access to the

single market.

Crucially, the essence of this is that most of the single market rules are negotiated at global and regional level; EEA/EFTA experts and representatives participate in over 500 committees and expert groups involved in what is known as "decision shaping" at this level.

The 48 page Bruges Group publication is a fine work though the subject I decided required a much wider audience than those who would read the booklet. What was needed I soon concluded was a film in documentary style. This was to be a film that clearly the BBC would not make nor was it likely that other broadcasters would either – it was not a question of politically correct balance but of hard solid facts of what exactly is The Norway Option. Within a month of reading Richard North's draft paper I had assembled a professional film making team comprising of BBC freelance journalist Tony Baker and experienced award winning film cameraman and editor Ken Slater – both of whom operate from the North-East of England.

After first assessing in detail, on film, whether the UK outside the EU would be a disaster I, together with Richard North and film crew with support staff, travelled to Oslo to shoot the film of the book written by Richard North – The Norway Option. On location in Oslo we discovered a prosperous happy country at ease with itself and an economy that is quite capable of thriving at arms-length from the EU, yet very much a part of the Single European Market.

In a documentary style 'voyage of discovery' presentation we met and interviewed many people including an independent farmer, an academic, as well as political campaigner Helle Hagenau from the 'No to the EU' campaign who told us how much better off Norway is outside the EU. A sentiment that is echoed by Anne Tvinnereim, who at the time of filming was State Secretary for the Ministry of Local Government and

Development. Anne ,as well as a recognised up and coming star in Norway's Centre Party ,is a recognised expert on EU affairs.The party was instrumental in winning the 'no' campaign in the 1994 referendum.

Two decades on, Anne disputes David Cameron's claim that Norway is without influence in the EU, even though her country is not able to vote on EEA – Single Market legislation – to which her country is bound. As Anne explains in an interview with Richard and myself in the ministry's Oslo offices: "Most of the politics is done long before new regulation gets to the voting stage. Anne further explains that the UK would be very welcome in EFTA, an organisation Norway had joined in order to be a part of the Single Market. Whilst this arrangement had brought many economic advantages Anne and her colleagues agreed there were concerns about the democratic deficit in the relationship with the EU.

Speaking to a senior Norwegian Official the production team also learnt that Norway is fully engaged at the global level where an increasing number of trade rules are agreed either under the aegis of the WTO or the United Nations. We heard that when it comes to rule-making for International trade the 'top tables' are progressively moving out of Brussels. Where her economic interests are concerned, Norway – unlike the UK – has her own seat at those tables.

As well as examining in detail how self-government has allowed Norway to prosper we also travelled to the site of the Jeronimos Monastery in Lisbon where the Treaty of Lisbon was signed by the heads of the EU member states. Against this splendid Portuguese backdrop Richard and I discussed how Article 50 of the Treaty defines the 'exit route' for member states; an often misunderstood opportunity.

The Norway Option DVD documentary story line is intermixed with the theme of a news presenter Jan Leeming reading the future news from a radio studio. The scene is set from the

breaking news of the announcement of an in/out referendum to the result of the out vote and the Prime Minister's announcement to Parliament of the commencement of withdrawal from the EU by means of Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty.

The DVD production distributed marketed in conjunction with The Bruges Group was launched at a meeting of the group at the Royal Overseas League last November. As Robert Oulds, Bruges Group Director said:" We admire Norway's democratic model and their economic success. If being like Norway would be a disaster as some predict then we in the UK cannot have to much of it".

The film *The Norway Option* which is introduced by Lord Tebbit is available in DVD format CIB has copies of the DVD available for showing to meetings of independence campaigners.