

FUTURUS

# BRIEFING

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A SERIES OF POST-REFERENDUM BRIEFINGS

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## WHY WE NEEDED TO VOTE TO LEAVE THE EU, AND WHAT WILL NOW HAPPEN

### **The Root Problem – ‘who governs?’**

The first issue we must face is that the EU is an unusual organisation and the only one of its type in the world. It has a supranational uniqueness which is often not understood, with the participating states reduced to subordinate and limited influence.

The EU is not an inter-governmental organisation such as the Commonwealth, NATO or EFTA.

On the continent, it has always been well understood, and openly proclaimed, that the purpose of the EU was political integration and economic links were simply a means to that end. British politicians and vice-chancellors find that hard to understand.

The unique supranational character of the EU means that it is incompatible with a self-governing national democracy. A free democracy means that the people have the last word on government through their elected representatives. In the EU, Britain's elected representatives are subordinate to the European Court, the European Commission and have little role in the European Council.

So, the referendum was about ‘who governs’, and not about business or sectional interests.

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## **The Changing World**

The main supporters of the EU are politicians, big business, big banks and the bureaucratic class together with the lobbying groups in Brussels, all of whom are interested in a big organisation and a big money pot. And, as they keep telling us, they want to be able to sit at 'top tables' and 'stay on the centre of the stage where we belong' [Edward Heath, Yes Leaflet, 1975 Referendum].

However, the nature of international regulation has changed. Much international co-ordination and regulation now is activated by the G20 or at the UN level where specialist bodies, such as WHO, ILO or UNECE or outside experts such as the International Accounting Board, Bank of International Settlements and a host of others, then utilise the EU as a regional instrument.

The EU is no longer a 'top-table', if it ever was such.

## **Jacques Delors was right**

This leads to another reason why Britain must leave now. Things are going to get worse.

Politicians and pollsters suggested to the electorate that the choice was between carrying on with the status quo of Britain's position in the EU or, alternatively, leaping into an uncertain future.

But the status quo is simply not on offer. The correct choice was put by Jacques Delors in 2012:

*"If the British cannot support the trend to more integration in Europe, we can nevertheless remain friends, but on a different basis. I could imagine a form such as a European economic area or a free trade agreement."*

## **What is our aim?**

Our aim, at Futurus and the Campaign for an Independent Britain, was for the UK to **leave** the political, judicial and monetary structure of the European Union (EU) as well as the Customs Union and other Common Policies, but the UK would stay in the Single Market.

## **What would happen?**

It must be emphasised that EU membership and Single Market membership are two different matters.

In our plan, entitled FLEXCIT - the work of eureferendum.com and The Bruges Group - the UK would stay in the Single Market by retaining its European Economic Area [EEA] membership and joining EFTA. In due course, it would then make further policy changes as any normal country. Ultimately, the long-term aim would be to change the UK's relationship to the EU to 'joint membership of a European free trade area' with the UK no longer constrained by supranational government but as a free democracy entering intergovernmental agreements in the same way as it is a member of NATO and the Commonwealth.

In the short term the UK would be in the position of Norway or Iceland.

This is not a perfect strategy, nor is it the end of a process - which will go on for many years - but it is a proven platform which will secure an amicable and stable exit.

Of course, it may be decided that certain functions should be 'bought in' from the EU and also that the UK may decide to participate in some EU programmes, such as Horizon 2020 and the Erasmus programme which have participants outside the EU, including the EFTA/EEA states, on a voluntary intergovernmental basis.

### **Edmund Burke**

Of course, no sector, such as universities, should fail to press their interests but to quote Edmund Burke the decision by the people is made by "a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole, where not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good."

Our plan, taking up approximately the position of Norway, is available off-the-peg and is a proven and existing solution while long-term trading arrangements are debated and implemented over many years. We believe that the current government will adopt a variant of this.

The turnout on 23<sup>rd</sup> June was that of a deliberative assembly of one nation and both impressive and humbling in its serious decision.