

A lack of ambition for Brexit

Listening to government Ministers presenting plans to ensure a smooth exit without signing the Withdrawal Agreement, I am struck by the lack of ambition and enthusiasm for Brexit. It is all presented in terms of damage limitation. Their wish is to ensure continuity. They exaggerate the worries and see none of the opportunities.

I am all in favour of Day One continuity of law, and voted for that in the EU Withdrawal Act. That should now all be behind us. There is no need for Parliament to make heavy weather of the Statutory Instrument changes, which are technical and not designed to change any policy or remove any legal protection. By now we should be debating the opportunities that running our own government and choosing our own laws can bring.

Lets take the case of medicines. The UK has a strong position in the global pharmaceutical sector. It accepted a European regulatory system whilst we were in the EU, but has quite enough critical mass in medicines to be able to run our own well respected system as we used to. If we became a prime global regulator other countries would wish to use our system, and we could drive world standards forward. There is money to be earned out of being a centre of excellence for regulation and for research and production.

Lets look at the opportunity to rebuild our fishing industry, as long as we become an independent coastal state this year before more damage is done to our fishing grounds by a common policy which allows too many industrial trawlers from abroad to take fish from our seas.

Lets propose changes to tariffs and agricultural support that nurtures a larger home industry in temperate food, as we used to have before we joined the Common Agricultural Policy. There are too many food miles from the continent for products we could more easily grow for ourselves.

Lets look at how we could improve the data rules and regulations to foster more tec based new businesses in a variety of sectors.

Above all, lets spend some time debating how we wish to spend all the money we will save once we have left. This economy needs a boost from lower tax rates and from more being spent on some core public services. Brexit gives us the chance to do just that.