

Letter to constituents worried by a “No Deal” Brexit

I have received a dozen or so emails from constituents wanting me to oppose a “No Deal” Brexit. I have answered them individually, but as some have used a standard lobby email I thought I would offer my response more widely in case others are thinking of sending the standard one.

Dear Constituent

Thank you for your email. The government has said it would prefer a deal and is seeking one. It is however quite possible no good deal will be on offer, so we would then leave with no Withdrawal Agreement. We will of course leave with many other smaller agreements, covering issues like aviation, customs and haulage so we will carry on trading, under the umbrella of WTO rules. We know this works fine as it is how we currently conduct the majority of our trade which is with non EU countries.

I see Brexit as offering the opportunity of boosting our economy and providing more opportunity and prosperity to my constituents. I have proposed a Brexit budget with better funding for our important public services . It should also boost the general economy through tax cuts on working and enterprise. Our economy is being slowed by a needless fiscal squeeze and by the marked slowdown in the Eurozone currently underway. The first part of my wishes will come true with the government’s Spending statement offering substantial increases for Wokingham and West Berkshire schools, Thames Valley Police, FE Colleges and the NHS.

I have investigated thoroughly the scare stories being put out that we will be short of food and drugs owing to difficulties importing from the EU. I am pleased to assure you that the government has confirmed no major EU suppliers have announced cancellation of their contracts to supply us. The UK authorities have confirmed that they will ensure smooth passage of imports through all our ports of entry and will not need to check every consignment at the port as some seem to think. Calais is as keen as Dover to keep their business and see their port operating smoothly after our exit, whilst Antwerp and other Dutch and Belgian ports would dearly love more business if Calais did stumble. As today most trucks will pass through the borders based on their advance filing of a manifest, with any necessary Excise, VAT, tariff and other adjustments usually taking place electronically through the accounts of the principals or the logistics companies involved. Most Just in time supply chains currently handle both EU and non EU components. It is the duty of the supplier to send the items in good time to arrive on time. Just in time chains have regularly had to handle French strikes, bad road congestion and accidents on both sides of the Channel and train and ferry cancellations. The UK government is exempting components for use in UK factories from tariffs. This not only means no new tariff barrier on EU components but takes off the current tariff barrier on non EU components, helping the assemblers and offering them the prospect of some cheaper

supplies from non EU sources.

The UK may well sign Free Trade deals with non EU countries after we have left. There is no need to do any damage to the NHS or to our food standards in order to do so, and there will be a vigilant Parliament that would not allow any UK government to do such damage.

If there are other worries you have about our exit from the EU please let me know and I will do my best to reassure you or to get action to deal with the problem.

Yours sincerely

John Redwood