

My Interventions during the Second Reading of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): I strongly support the Bill and congratulate the Minister on his presentation. I hope that the Government will urgently reform the energy directives and regulations that have made us cruelly import-dependent such that we now have to buy excessively expensive energy on the world market when we should drive for self-sufficiency.

Dean Russell, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: I thank my right hon. Friend for his intervention. It is ultimately about ensuring that we are doing the right thing by people across the country. The truth is that the Bill is a framework, and this is not the time to debate the minutiae and the details as there will be plenty of opportunities for that in Committee, the future stages and statutory instruments. We should welcome the Bill's framework, which is about taking back control for the country.

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Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): I thank my right hon. Friend for all the great work that has been done on the draft legislation. Does he not find it an odd paradox, or contradiction, that many Opposition Members come to this place apparently to form laws but do not believe we can ever make a law that is good, and we need to rely on EU law in so many areas where I think we can actually do better?

Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP: I am grateful to my right hon. Friend, who is wise, as always. But it is even odder than that, because there is this very strange view that laws that came in without any scrutiny at all—regulations of the EU that became our law automatically—cannot be removed without primary legislation. That is just bizarre.

The laws with which we are dealing came in under section 2(2) of the European Communities Act. Either they came in with minimum scrutiny but could not be amended or changed, or they came in with no scrutiny at all. I know that my hon. Friend Sir William Cash disagrees with me on this, but we are not using this procedure to repeal Acts of Parliament. Even though these measures have the effect of introducing EU law, an Act of Parliament has had full scrutiny in the House, and to be repealed it deserves full scrutiny to be taken away. That is the correct constitutional procedure.