

The good things we can do as soon as we leave the EU – lets cut green taxes and much more

One of the extraordinary things about the main Opposition parties in the Commons and much of the UK establishment is their failure to engage in working out all the good things we will be able to do as soon as we can make our own laws, set our own taxes and spend our own money.

One of the areas I identified and pursued before the referendum was the question of tax cuts that are illegal under EU law. There seemed to be near universal support for the abolition of VAT on sanitary products, so I trust that repeal will go through the Commons easily as soon as we are free. There was no opposition to the idea that we should abolish VAT on green products. Currently we have to charge VAT on controls for boilers and heating systems, on draught excluders, insulators and much else that can cut fuel bills. I hope a Conservative Chancellor will propose an early removal of these charges which impede reducing needless fuel use and keep more people on low incomes struggling to pay the fuel bills. I am disappointed that the Green party does not make a bigger noise against these taxes on fuel saving.

A more expensive item is VAT on domestic heating fuel itself. We are not allowed to remove this all the time we remain in the EU. Given the political sensitivity about fuel bills and the general view in the country that they are too high, removing this tax charge would make a welcome inroad into this difficulty.

Then there is the question of spending levels. Both sides agreed there would be substantial savings of contributions when we left, though there was a long and largely pointless debate over whether you should look mainly at the gross or the net figure. I would like us to leave and cease all payments by the end of March 2019, and would like to see some of the savings announced as extra spending on health and social care in the March 2018 budget ahead of departure.

We can reform our fishing policy to reclaim and improve our fishing grounds. We can design a farming policy that promotes more home grown food. There are so many opportunities. It is high time we had a proper debate about the upside to becoming a self governing country.