

The White Paper is even worse than the Chequers Statement

The White Paper proposes the UK staying in much of the current EU. White is the colour of the flag of surrender. Much of this White Paper sacrifices the bold idea we voted for, that we wish to be a free and independent country again. It wants us to stick with the European Chemicals Agency, European Aviation Safety Agency and the European Medicines Agency, with Europol and Eurojust, with a joint customs area, continued co-operation on energy and transport, minimum EU regulatory standards in many areas, joint military development and an EU data regime. We offer to pay for all these things!

No, we voted to leave. Leave means leave. It means doing these things for ourselves, not paying the EU to do them and accepting EU rules and controls. The legal format of forcing us into an Association Agreement which binds us to all this through a Treaty is the worst of all possible worlds. We voted to be free, not to be bound in some new way. The government says we would be able to diverge if we wished, and there would be independent arbitration. If we sign a Treaty we will be told that the people and Parliament are bound by it, and our freedoms will be circumscribed or lost again. We did not vote to come out of one Treaty only to sign up to a watered down version of it instead.

Lets take the case of medicines. The UK has a strong position in the pharma industry, leading research universities in the field, and many experts. We should re establish our own Medicines Agency, and sell its services to third countries who would value our skills and knowledge, and would wish to be associated with our high standards. Our own Agency could be a focus of further work to expand and improve our industry, and the money spent on it will be spent in the UK, not sent to Brussels.

Or lets take the case of Aviation Safety. The UK has very high standards which we wish to preserve and a high proportion of EU air travel, given the dominance of London as an aviation hub. Again our global reach and ambition requires us to establish our own Agency and to work at a global level on high and rising standards.

The language of the government that they will end "vast annual contributions to the EU budget" is not good enough. We voted to stop paying any money to the EU, not just to the EU budget. Offering lots of smaller sums to a range of policies and Agencies, recreates our subservience to the EU and continues the strain on our balance of payments. Where there is regulatory work to be done, lets do it at home with UK experts and administrators.

Why do large parts of the UK establishment so despise us that they do not want us to lead or to adventure for ourselves? Why do they so dislike freedom? Do they really believe the best we can do is to be rule takers, meekly paying the continent danegeld?