

The ugly duckling

The tiny duckling was born in to a London farm community of ducks and farm animals in 2016. Known as Leave, he did not seem to be like the other baby ducklings. They were all proudly Remain ducklings, as they delighted in telling him. They told him to be like them he had to change his name and agree with everything they said. He was too proud to do that, and did not see what all the fuss was about. His parents had told him his name was special and had been endorsed by millions of people.

The other ducklings snorted and looked down their bills at him. They told him he could never survive on his own. They made him feel very uncomfortable trying to live alongside them. They told him they were superior, could swim faster and fly further. They doubted his ability to find enough food, and took delight in hiding the food from him or eating it before he could get it. They explained that unless he became a proper Remain duck there was no chance of him having a happy life, and perhaps no chance of his surviving.

When he pushed back and told them being called Leave was just fine, and there was food he could find, and he could be happy on his own they all ganged up on him and tried to starve him out. The ducklings got support from their parents, who used their superior weight and muscle to beat Leave to the food, or to keep him out of the best parts of the pond. The European geese were particular keen to make his life difficult.

Things got so bad for Leave that he decided to live up to his name and simply leave the farmyard and its pond and all those disagreeable ducklings behind him. After wandering a long way he stumbled in to a new home called Parliament, where some people, a cat and a hen held court. They put up with him but when they found out he was called Leave they turned on him just like the ducks had done.

They told him Leave was bad. They told him it would mean he could not get access to enough food., They told him if he ever needed medicines the people helping him would not be able to afford them. They shoved him around, and worked out ways to make his life more miserable. Just like the ducks they said he had to change his name to Remain if he wanted peace and quiet. The cat who curled up in a big chair at one end of the Parliament room played with him mercilessly, shouting at him and telling him all the things he could not do. The hen said she was the opposition and planned to see him off.

Lonely and downhearted, Leave picked up his dignity and moved on. He found a big empty lake and lived a lonely life there, until one day a large number of fine swans arrived. He was afraid they would set on him, so he kept in the reeds on the edge and hoped they would not see.

The swans came straight over to him and told him not to be afraid. He apologised for being an ugly Leave duckling as an act of self preservation. They told him to look at the mirror of the water, for he would then see he was no ugly duckling but a magnificent swan. They told him they were all

Leave swans. Leave meant being free. It meant the right to go anywhere you wished. It gave you access to all the best food . As swans are so much more powerful than Remain ducklings, there was no need to be afraid ever again.

So the ugly duckling looked at himself in the mirror, and looked again. Finally he pronounced "I am a swan. "

He soon discovered how much better it was being a swan than a duck. He was respected and admired wherever he went. He was free to go as he chose, and accepted rules which only he could make. Gone was all the hassle of the farmyard and the intrusion of all that squawking of all those unhappy ducklings in Parliament.

[The Bank of England tightens again](#)

The employment figures last month were good again showing many more full time jobs still being created. The economy however has been slowed by the monetary and fiscal squeeze. Vacancies fell and wage growth reduced as the slowdown starts to reach the jobs market.

The Bank of England has cut itself off from the trends amongst all the main Central banks in the world, who are fighting slowdown and recession by loosening policy. They are cutting rates, pumping liquidity into markets or buying bonds to give things a boost.

The Bank of England instead announces all UK banks meet their stress tests and would survive a deep recession, yet it goes on to demand they increase their capital buffers. This means less lending, less promotion of growth, less support for new investment or for consumers to buy homes and cars.

It's the opposite of what we need, more money taken out of productive use when our banks are fine anyway. The 1% lift in the countercyclical capital buffers may freeze as much money out of the economy as the budget proposals in the Manifesto might put in.

[Letter to the Chancellor about the proposed changes to IR35](#)

I have today sent this letter to the Chancellor about the proposed changes to IR35 – a matter of great concern to many of my constituents. I have urged him to start the review immediately before the changes come into effect and

potentially become a dampener on enterprise and undermine the self-employed.



THE RT HON SIR JOHN REDWOOD MP, D.Phil, FCSI

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid
Chancellor of the Exchequer
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17 December 2019

Dear Sajid

Both before and during the Election campaign many of my constituents expressed concerns about the implementation of changes to IR35 in April.

They were understandably concerned about the impact it would have on them as genuinely self-employed contractors, consultants and specialists. One of my constituents reported that several major companies have already terminated arrangements with independent contractors due to the complexity of IR35 rules and the inordinate administrative burden it imposes.

The freedom, flexibility and autonomy of contract work is an attractive proposition for the independent contractors but there is also a downside in terms of no holiday and sick pay as well as company benefits. For this reason, it is important that they are taxed fairly.

There is also the real danger of losing business to overseas outsourcers at the expense of self-employed people in the UK. I have been told of cases of this now happening.

While I welcome the Government's commitment to hold a review this would need to commence immediately before the new off-payroll working rules come into effect and potentially become a dampener on enterprise and undermine the self-employed. The self-employed are crucial to our prosperity and we should do all we can to support them.

I would be grateful to know the date of the review and if the proposed changes to IR35 will be suspended pending the outcome.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'John Redwood'.

Christmas message

I love Christmas. I like the turkey and the pudding, the tinsel and the trees, the carols and the stories, the pleasure of giving and receiving. Best of all is the way many people feel they should be kinder at Christmas, thinking more of others, reaching out to the lonely and trying to bring argumentative families together.

Today there is a great need for the spirit of Christmas in our politics and in the social media exchanges. Things became very heated in the recent election, with lies and nastiness the stock in trade of too much discourse. I always seek to see good in people, and to ignore the everyday petty jibes from those who disagree with me. If I push back, complain or seek a remedy it shows just how far the nastiness has gone. Some of my supporters think me naïve in not running negative campaigns about named critics, and in not calling out every dirty trick or lie. I would like to suggest that going forward more of us recognise that there are many valid points of view. Often the best way to make your case is to say what is good about it, not to seek to run down those who do not yet agree.

The opportunity at Christmas could be to get on with family members we do not like, or to bury the quarrel with the neighbour. It is better to have more friends and fewer enemies. That is the true spirit of Christmas. It is often possible to find ways of working with people that do not think they like you, by showing them what we have in common rather than playing up the disagreements. I want the greater happiness and prosperity of my constituents. I understand the minorities who do not agree with my points of view on some subjects and I will work to represent them to government when they have legitimate worries or complaints. I would just like them to understand I wish them well and do what I do because I think it is in the best interests of our country and community.

I want to wish you all a very happy Christmas, as I seek your help in improving the tone of our democratic disagreements. I am looking forward to the joys of a traditional Christmas whilst I also think about how we can spread a bit more Christmas cheer to those in need.

No delay to full exit at end of 2020

It is welcome and necessary for the government to rule out any further delay to our exit from the EU. The EU agreed to a Free Trade Agreement in principle. It is quite possible to produce one in time. If the EU thinks we

will delay again they have an incentive not to agree anything.