

What kind of Brexit?

To Brexiteers there is just one kind of Brexit – taking back control of our money, our borders, our laws and our trade policy. It is about independence. The Conservative Manifesto confirms all of that. That was why I did not need to add to it or amend during the election, as I was happy with the clear statement that we will indeed be taking back control.

Staying in the Customs Union, legislating to ensure our rules and laws stay in line with whatever the EU wants, being an external member of the single market and having to accept all their Directives are not Brexit. The EU has been masterful in extending its reach ostensibly in the name of trade into a dazzling array of other governmental and legal areas. We end up with freedom of movement, large tax impositions and detailed laws on everything in the name of the single market.

We wish to trade with the single market, as many other countries from around the world do everyday. They do so without accepting freedom of movement, or all the laws of the EU or without making budget contributions. They do so under WTO rules, which are superior even to EU laws, and are designed to facilitate trade between fellow members.

I do not like the Implementation period. I wanted us to leave in March 2019, and again in October 2019. Instead the Remain Parliament and Mrs May prevented us doing so. We have ended up with an unsatisfactory period when we still have to obey EU laws and pay large sums of money. The new Parliament which will vote through our exit by December 2020 will not vote for our immediate exit this coming January. We will have to accept the costly legacy of the last Parliament was expensive delay to our exit.

The government is being urged to make sure all legal requirements and financial obligations end when we leave next December. They have also been persuaded to put in a Sovereignty clause to protect us against abuse of EU power during the Implementation period. The Committee stage of the Bill will give the government opportunity to strengthen the position, and in so doing strengthen its bargaining hand for the Free Trade Agreement they seek in the discussions ahead with the EU. There is no need or desire to make further concessions on things like fish to secure a FTA.