



BREXIT: WHY BRITAIN LEFT THE EUROPEAN UNION

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If one big government is bad, imagine how much worse two big governments would be. But that's what people living in Europe have had to deal with: their own nation's bloated government and the super-national government of Europe, now known as the European Union. Bureaucracy times two! How's that for a horror show?

Well, actually, you've no idea. It's worse than you think. Believe me—I know, because for seventeen years, I've represented South East England as a member of the European Parliament, the EU's legislative body. I was also leader of the UK Independence Party, or UKIP, where I lead Britain's efforts to leave the European Union. To their everlasting credit, that's just what happened on June the 23rd, 2016: The United Kingdom left the European Union. The world knows it as “Brexit.”

Brexit is a statement of national sovereignty. Don't misunderstand me: I like nations. I like borders. I like the people that live within those borders making their own laws. But I don't like it when faceless bureaucrats make laws for nations they don't even live in.

But that's what they do in the European Union.

Imagine a Belgian telling a Brit how much he can charge his customers—or the reverse. The EU bureaucrats do this in a myriad of different ways, all day, every day. It is a conspiracy of the elites.

Who are those elites? Well, they're a bunch of self-important, overpaid, social engineers with useless college degrees who have never done a proper day's work in their lives and have no connection with ordinary, decent people. I'll take the good sense of an Italian farmer or a French baker over the arid intellectualism of an EU bureaucrat any day.

And I say these things not as an anti-European; I love Europe! It's a fantastic, exciting, great continent: different peoples, languages, and cultures. But these peoples, with their languages and cultures, have effectively been hijacked by a giant, ever-expanding bureaucracy: the European Union.

People will say, “but isn't there a parliament, a European parliament, that represents the people of Europe?” Well, yes, but this body has got no real power; it can't make its own laws. Rather, the power resides with the European Commission. They're unelected and they can't be removed, and that's how absurd the whole thing is.

The European Parliament meets in Brussels. At least, that's what I thought when I was elected

there. But once a month, do you know what happens? They load the contents of our offices and papers into big, plastic trunks, and they put those trunks on lorries, and they drive them nearly 400 miles down Europe's motorways to a French city called Strasbourg where, for four days, the contents of our offices, and our papers, are put into a new office, and the parliament then sits there. Twelve times a year this back-and-forth happens, and this from an organization who say they want to reduce their level of carbon footprint! This, from an organization whose accounts have not been given a clean bill of health by the auditors for the last twenty years!

This...a parliament? It's more like a traveling circus.

Now, all of Europe knows that it's costing nearly €300 million every year to move this back and forth from Brussels to Strasbourg, so why isn't it reformed? Well, the way the EU has been structured, to change that would require changing the treaties, and to change the treaties would need all 28 member governments to agree not to go to Strasbourg twelve times a year. And do you know something? The French are never going to agree to that, 'cause it's in their economic interests for the traveling circus to go to Strasbourg. And it shows you that a system of law-making has been devised where not only can the voters not change anything, but the institutions themselves are pretty much incapable of reform.

Unfortunately, this is no laughing matter. Let me give you an example my countrymen know only too well.

The United Kingdom is an island; it's surrounded by the sea, and yet, as members of the European Union, we were only allowed to catch 20% of the fish swimming in territorial British waters. What that meant was tens of thousands of jobs were lost in Britain's coastal communities as we effectively gave away the ability to look after one of our greatest resources to a bureaucracy based in Brussels. No wonder we left the EU.

Again, I have nothing against Europe; quite the opposite. I want good relations between all the European nations. I want prosperous, free, and fair trade between those nations. But I'll be damned if I'm going to give up my rights as a British citizen so that some Eurocrat can tell me how to live.

I won't do it, and I'm certain that across the continent, ultimately, the French and the Italians won't put up with it either.

I'm Nigel Farage for Prager University.