A Referendum Stitch-Up?

How the EU and British elites are plotting to fix the result
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Nigel Farage

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Europe of Freedom and Democracy
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In the same way, the “Common Market” - always an unofficial name - was very simply a step towards a far larger and, to me, more sinister goal: European economic and political union, the creation of a United States of Europe.

The British people were not getting - and have never got - what we were led to believe we were voting for.

I already have evidence that the political class, covertly backed by its EU counterparts, are trying to mislead us again.

There are calls that a straight ‘in or out’ / ‘yes or no’ question should be replaced by a complex question which appears to offer a third way: continuing as part of the Single Market without full political union.

In short, a recycled version of what we thought we were getting in 1975.

But just like then, there is no third way. This booklet explains why it - and any apparent renegotiation of terms whilst we are still a member - is, and can only be, a mirage, designed to mislead.

It tells you how and why the way the European Union is constructed literally makes such an arrangement impossible.

It explains how the British establishment are taking the steps to try to cheat you once again.

I believe that you the public - the people who really matter - are entitled to be told the truth.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Farage

A Referendum Stitch-Up?

Dear Reader

I have produced this booklet to try to ensure that the British people and Northern Irish people do not - yet again - have the wool pulled over their eyes by the British establishment.

All the evidence - including regular opinion polls - suggests that over half of us want to leave the European Union.

Even more of us want a referendum to give us the chance to have our say.

But the British and EU elites do not share that view.

As co-president of a political group in the European Parliament, Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD), I know how they operate. They only want referenda which produce the ‘right’ result - the outcome that suits them.

So, faced with what for them is a real dilemma, I believe they are going to try to pull off an old trick.

In 1975, the British people were led to believe that they were voting to stay part of a “Common Market” or free trade area.

They were not. They were voting to remain in a customs union - what the Germans call a ‘zollverein’. In the nineteenth century the establishment of the Zollverein was the first step to German unification which in turn led to two world wars.
1975 and all that

Nobody under 50 will remember the convolutions surrounding British entry to the European Union. Even fewer will know the true story of what was going on behind the scenes.

The UK first applied in 1961 but two vetoes by France’s former wartime leader and later President, Charles de Gaulle, kept us out for over a decade.

Entry was finally pushed through, without a referendum, in 1972 by Edward Heath’s Conservative government. But the issue was always controversial particularly in the Labour party then led by Harold Wilson.

Wilson had famously shown his attitude to the truth when in 1967 he devalued the pound but claimed that this did not mean that ‘the pound in your pocket’ had been devalued! For a former Oxford University economics lecturer, it was both literally and figuratively an unbelievable position to take. It is now regularly used to illustrate a politician trying to argue that black is white!

This approach characterised what happened over Britain’s European Community membership.

The British establishment knew perfectly well that the long-term implications for British democracy and self-government were profound and damaging.

Papers not then publicly available tell us that the government’s own expert legal advisers were clear about what would be given away.

An internal government memorandum reads:

“I enclose a draft on sovereignty ...We are rather worried about the impact on Parliamentary opinion ... the fact of the primacy of community legislation cannot be disguised. But I feel that there is a case for omitting it altogether.”

A British Foreign Office paper is quite explicit:

“Community law is required to take precedence over domestic law: i.e. if a Community law conflicts with a statute, it is the statute which has to give way... the community system requires that such Community Law as applies directly as law in this country should by virtue of its own legal force as law in this country prevail over conflicting national legislation.”

(FCO 30/1048, National Archives)

Thus when, in the October 1974 General Election, Harold Wilson’s Labour Party manifesto included a pledge to renegotiate terms for Britain’s membership and then hold a referendum, the loss of sovereignty was an issue about which not merely the entire ‘yes’ campaign wanted to keep quiet but also the Government itself.

As well as ‘yes’ and ‘no’ pamphlets from the respective campaign teams - the ‘yes’ campaign had 10 times the resources of the ‘no’ - the referendum saw Wilson’s government issue to every household a taxpayer-funded pamphlet encouraging people to vote.
Neutral it was not!

It referred in its opening line to ‘the European Community (Common Market)’ - and, thereafter, referred to the European Economic Community (as it then was) as the Common Market.

Words matter. The way you describe anything helps define your thinking. The term ‘Common Market’ was an informal, largely Anglo-Saxon shorthand which described the institution as the British wished it to be. In reality, it was no such thing, even then. The original 1957 Treaty of Rome explicitly commits signatories to ‘ever closer union’.

But this was a line carefully excluded from the British Government’s pro-EC membership propaganda. Instead they tried to pretend that sovereignty was being enhanced rather than abrogated:

”... we are asking you to vote in favour of remaining in the Community. ...

No important new policy can be decided in Brussels or anywhere else without the consent of a British Minister answerable to a British Government and British Parliament. ....

... the prime minister declares that through membership of the Market we are better able to advance and protect our national interests. This is the essence of sovereignty.”

It is very simple.

Please contrast the statements in the internal FCO paper and the British government pamphlet for public consumption. The British establishment knew it was giving away its decision-making powers. It would not admit this in public and it was prepared to be highly duplicitous in covering it up.

Party backing: Margaret Thatcher put the full weight of the Conservatives behind the ‘Yes’ campaign in a launch speech at St Ermin’s, Westminster on April 16th 1975.

Where were you in 1975?

While the country was campaigning the pros and cons of European Community membership in April, May and June 1975, what else was going on?

In April the Vietnam War ground to a close; on April 30th the last US helicopter left their embassy grounds as Saigon surrendered.

At home, the average house price was just under £12,000, a gallon of petrol cost 72p and the inflation rate reached 24%.

Manchester United got back in the First Division after their relegation the previous year, while West Ham beat Fulham 2-0 in the Cup final on May 5th - in their team were Frank Lampard (the father of today’s Frank Lampard) and Trevor Brooking.

‘Monty Python and the Holy Grail’ was launched on April 3rd, while ‘Jaws’ came out on June 20th.

On TV, ‘The Good Life’ first appeared on April 4th and ‘Jim’ll Fix It’ was launched on May 31st.

On May 19th, the Eagles released their LP ‘One of Those Nights’ while in the UK the Bee-Gees released ‘Jive Talkin’ on May 31st. Meanwhile, Van McCoy launched a track from his album ‘Disco Baby’ as a single - ‘The Hustle’ - which became the disco hit of the summer.

Who was born that spring? Footballers Robbie Fowler (April 2nd) and David Beckham (May 3rd) and actress Christina Hendricks the following day. TV chef Jamie Oliver was born on May 27th and Spice Girl Mel B two days later.

On June 4th, just the day before the Referendum vote, saw the births of both Russell Brand and Angelina Jolie.

Perhaps the most significant birth took place on April 4th - Bill Gates and Paul Allen from Seattle launched Microsoft.

And the weather? There was snow in early April and more in early June, which stopped the cricket and fell as far south as London. Otherwise June saw the start of a warm dry period that continued through the summer and led to the famous 1976 drought.

Party backing: Margaret Thatcher put the full weight of the Conservatives behind the ‘Yes’ campaign in a launch speech at St Ermin’s, Westminster on April 16th 1975.

‘No essential loss of sovereignty’ - Edward Heath’s oft-repeated mantra from the early 1970’s.
I believe most British people would say the British establishment lied.
I believe most British people would be right.

The campaigning also had another characteristic used time after time by those who support Britain’s EU membership. They ‘play the man not the ball’ and they play dirty.

Thus, to quote the Treasurer of the ‘Yes’ campaign Alastair McAlpine:

“The whole thrust of our campaign was to depict the anti-Marketeers as unreliable people – dangerous people who would lead you down the wrong path ... It wasn’t so much that it was sensible to stay in, but that anybody who proposed that we came out was off their rocker or virtually Marxist”.

In short, the advocates of EU membership were so short of confidence in the logic of their arguments that they had to denigrate their opponents in the most irrational and personal of terms.

With the sole exception of the Spectator, the entire media, including the BBC played the same game.

A referendum was duly held on 5 June 1975.
I was 11 at the time and could not vote.

The proposition to continue membership was passed with a substantial majority.
I believe it was a majority obtained by fraud.

There is a joke amongst economists that a real free trade agreement can be illustrated by holding up a blank piece of paper. That is because if trade is genuinely free, there are no regulations to follow or tariffs to pay but business people and traders can get on without hindrance or interference in doing business and creating wealth.

Thus, in principle, to create a single market or free trade area is incredibly easy if you know what you are doing and think it through. It merely requires an absence of restriction - most easily achieved by the progressive - or instant - dismantling and removal of all existing barriers and tariffs.

Actually, the then EC was handed a golden opportunity to take exactly this road and do it more or less at a single stroke in the form of the Cassis de Dijon judgement.

It arose in 1979 from the attempt to import the French liqueur, Cassis - used in Kir - into West Germany, as it then was. The Germans refused it entry on the grounds that it did not match the categories and requirements for the legal sale of alcoholic drinks in their country. The resultant refusal ended up at the European Court of Justice which ruled that the Germans had to allow the product to enter Germany and be sold there.

This judgement has, potentially, massive implications. It prevents governments from blocking trade. It effectively establishes that a legitimate product in one country is legal in any country. All you
have to do is apply the principle when any dispute arises - and then extend it to services. You end up with a genuine free trade area - and you do not need ever more regulation.

It may be termed the mutual recognition approach but in this case the recognition is enforced legally through the courts under existing agreements. It therefore requires remarkably little regulation and avoids both bureaucracy and the imposition of uniformity.

The EEC turned down what you might call this legal ‘get-out-of-jail-free’ card which potentially offered an easily achieved, minimal cost route to a genuine free trade area - or real ‘single market’.

Instead, they chose ‘harmonisation’.

This incredibly time and resource-consuming, ponderous and long-winded approach requires the definition of all products and services - to be followed by harmonising all the regulations and requirements relating to them. And, of course, this cannot be done without a vast army of officials.

Another way of describing harmonisation is the imposition of uniformity - a uniformity which extends not merely to the product or service itself but to everything associated with its manufacture or provision.

That is the thinking which means that there is no such thing as ‘just the single market’. Everything has to be harmonised i.e. made uniform - and that is what the European Union has now been busily doing for decades.

It results in unending new laws and regulations which eventually form a unified legal code enforced without distinction across the entire population of over 500 million people.

It gives rise to:

• pan-European environmental regulation
• continental-style social legislation
• common employment law
• uniform company & corporate law
• economic governance
• unrestricted immigration,
• resultant welfare costs ...

the list is endless.

And all this to be part of a Union:

• with which we run a trade deficit when we run a surplus with the rest of the world. The UK’s trade deficit with the rest of the EU is circa £50 billion,

• which grows relatively poorer as each new member joins (just wait for Turkey: the Con/Lib coalition and Labour all want it in), and

• which is ever less important in terms of world trade as economic growth switches to such countries as Brazil, China and India.

May I also add that, for the privilege of having to implement all these regulations, the United Kingdom has to pay the European Union a gross contribution of more than £50 million per day?

I do not believe many people would consider all this value for money.

The linkage between the single market and other broader objectives is perfectly illustrated by what happened to Margaret Thatcher’s single market programme.

The one-time Secretary of State for Trade, Lord Cockfield, proposed in a British ministerial white paper a series of trade-related measures designed to complete the Single Market.
Many of these were indeed put into effect by the Single European Act but the change of name is highly informative. It was no longer about markets. It was about a ‘single Europe’.

Jacques Delors, the then Commission President, took the opportunity to add significant institutional reform and a massive extension of powers to the originally trade-focussed British agenda.

The Single European Act (1986) came as a package: not merely regulating trade but adding chapters on the environment, research, regional aid (officially called cohesion) and health and safety. It amounted to a fundamental constitutional change, transferring further sovereignty, and underpinned by a substantial extension of majority voting and a resultant reduction in the British power of veto.

It also added a commitment to ‘progressive realisation of economic and monetary union’.

Realising the vast implications of these seven additional words, Margaret Thatcher considered a veto. She was advised by the Foreign Office that the statement had no legal significance.

Once again, what had begun, at least in British eyes as trade or, at most, economic measures had been swept up into an institutional and political programme adding to the powers of Europe’s largely unelected elite at the expense of the elected politicians in Westminster.

The British had still not learnt that, with the EU, it cannot and never will be just about trade or markets alone: it is always about the centralisation of power and control in Brussels.

Part of that power is the EU’s Common Commercial Policy. No EU member state can negotiate its own trade deals or represent itself at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). All EU member states have no choice but to conduct all their trade negotiation exclusively through the institutions of the European Union: another major loss of sovereignty.
worth remembering what happened - and what was being said at the time by the British Establishment.

As the 1980s turned into the 1990s, it was difficult to find anyone regarding themselves as a ‘serious’ public or political figure, who was opposed to Britain’s membership of the Exchange Rate Mechanism.

The few of us who worked in the City and suspected what would happen were regarded as mavericks and mischief-makers.

ERM entry was backed by the Conservative, Labour and Liberal-Democrat parties. Gordon Brown was an enthusiastic backer despite his later claims to have saved us from the Euro. It was backed by the financial and broadsheet press.

Just as it had been implied that you were probably “unreliable ... dangerous ... off their rocker or virtually Marxist” if you opposed Britain’s original EC membership in the referendum, so now everyone with any brains knew that EMU was the way ahead.

Except that the arrangement made little economic sense, opening as it did the opportunity for the markets to demonstrate that political will could not control economic reality. On Wednesday 16 September 1992, Chancellor Norman Lamont briefly raised interest rates to 15%, realised this was quite unsustainable and would not work - and Britain exited the ERM.

Despite the day now generally being known as ‘Black Wednesday’, it was in many ways very fortunate, at least for Britain, though not for John Major’s Conservative government which never recovered from this body-blow to its economic credibility. Without ERM exit we would almost certainly have joined the Euro - with Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties all informing us that no intelligent person could believe in doing anything else.

When the euro came into existence - without the United Kingdom - I began asserting that the Euro as currently structured was an economic nonsense containing within it the seeds of its own destruction: its own systemic contradictions which would - in time - tear it apart.

I spoke of bond yields - to the bemusement of almost the entire European Parliament which did not know what a bond yield was, let alone its importance to a common currency functioning across 17 disparate national economies. (It determines the cost of money to governments.)

I was jeered when I told them that Greek bonds trading 233 basis points higher than German bonds meant that the markets were onto them whether they liked it or not.

I, and colleagues, pointed out that the ‘books had been cooked’ to allow Greek entry.

We suggested that regarding the risks associated with government debt in Germany as identical to those in Greece or Spain was more than a little optimistic.

We were derided by the EU elite. We were dismissed by a British Conservative Party leader as a bunch of ‘gadflies and cranks’.

The same pattern continues: do not risk intellectual debate with your opponents, you run the risk after all that they might be right.

Instead denigrate and dismiss them as ‘off their rockers’.

In the longer term, out of all this came not merely the currency but a draft EU constitution. Rejected in referenda by the French and Dutch electorates, it was promptly slightly re-drafted, declared not to be a constitution at all but simply another treaty and became the Lisbon Treaty.
Let me identify some of the key points of the Lisbon text:

- all future accession states have to agree to join the Euro: this means it is simply not envisaged as being possible in the long term to be within the EU but not in the Euro.

Similarly,

- as the Greeks have belatedly realised, there is simply no provision for exit from the Euro. ‘You can check in any time you like but you can never leave’ (with apologies to the Eagles).

Interestingly,

- there is for the first time reference to leaving the European Union as a whole - by invoking Article 50, any member state can renegotiate its terms of membership with a deadline of 2 years for this process.

These arrangements demonstrate just how EU membership is ‘all or nothing’, ‘in or out’. There is no provision for or reference to secondary or looser membership, an outer tier. There is no halfway house or ‘single market only’ programme on offer.

In his Report to the Council of 26 June 2012, Herman Van Rompuy makes crystal clear where they are going:

“Vision

The report proposes a vision … based on four essential building blocks:

- An integrated financial framework … Such a framework elevates responsibility for supervision to the European level, and provides for common mechanisms to resolve banks and guarantee customer deposits.
- An integrated budgetary framework … fiscal policy making at the national and European levels, encompassing coordination, joint decision-making, greater enforcement and commensurate steps towards common debt issuance. This framework could include also different forms of fiscal solidarity.
- An integrated economic policy framework which has sufficient mechanisms to ensure that national and European policies are in place that … are compatible with the smooth functioning of EMU.
- Ensuring …. the joint exercise of sovereignty for common policies and solidarity.

These four building blocks offer a coherent and complete architecture that will have to be put in place over the next decade. All four elements … require a lot of further work, including possible changes to the EU treaties at some point in time.”

(our emphasis)

In all fairness to the EU elite, I have to admit one thing about them. They have not and have never tried to hide it: ‘ever closer union’ was in from the beginning and has been constantly repeated ever since - in endless variations.

But the same cannot be said of the British establishment: ever since the membership and referendum debate of the early 1970s right up to the present day it has sought to conceal this fundamental and irrevocable commitment.

We do not believe this particular leopard is about to change its spots!

Just as you cannot be ‘just a bit pregnant’ or ‘slightly pregnant’, (though you can be in the early stages of pregnancy - and know what inevitably follows), so you cannot be a little bit a … nothing proposition going in only one direction - and the only fair question in any referendum MUST reflect that reality.

Is that what we are going to be offered or will they try a fudge?
Referendum or plebiscite?

What is the difference between a referendum and a plebiscite?

Many dictionaries would see them as nothing more than synonyms.

But the connotations of the word ‘plebiscite’ for many British people, at least, are of dodgy dealings to fix results.

This is based around a whole series of 19th and 20th century plebiscites used by rulers to appear to legitimise what they have already decided they want.

France’s Napoleon III did it in 1851 to legalise his coup d’état; in 1852 to make himself an emperor; and, most shockingly perhaps, in 1860 to acquire the Piedmontese territories of Nice and Savoy from Count Cavour - in return for kick-starting the process of creating the Italian state. (There is little evidence to suggest the then people of Nice or Savoy wished to become French - and a lot to suggest that they didn’t.)

In the 1930s, the Germans conducted a number of plebiscites to give a veneer of legitimacy and popular approval to the criminal machinations of the Nazi regime.

So the answer - in a couple of sentences - is that:

- a referendum is effectively the asking of a straight question which can be answered ‘yes’ or ‘no’ after a period of open and transparent campaigning. The answer is not known in advance and all those involved will live with the free and fair choice the public has made.

- A plebiscite is intended to appear to the public as if it is a referendum but in fact, it has all pretty much been fixed. It usually involves what the judge in a court of law would call a leading question - or questions, as asking more than one can give leeway in getting the ‘right’ answer - and this question suddenly appears as if out of nowhere when up to that point, what might be asked has all appeared pretty straight-forward.

I believe that the EU elite have a tradition of effectively running plebiscites.

When the Irish voted the ‘wrong’ way they had to vote again until they got it right.

When the French and the Dutch turned down a new EU constitution, the EU powers-that-be made minor alterations to the documents, claimed that these meant it was not a constitution and therefore needed no further popular approval. That is the origin of the Lisbon Treaty, a treaty which in reality represented a massive further transfer of power from the member States to the EU institutions.

It also created the so-called ‘co-decision procedure’ which in reality turns the Parliament and Council into a legislature but with law-making initiated not by either of these but by the unelected European Commission - making it the most undemocratic legislature in the developed world.

The British establishment has consistently maintained a consensus in favour of EU membership - a consensus built across the leaderships of all of the Conservative, Labour, Liberal-Democrat and Scottish Nationalist parties, (though there are honourable exceptions among backbench MPs in at least three of these parties).

Referendum or Plebiscite?

What you see is what you get? In 1975, we all thought we were voting to remain in the ‘Common Market’. What we got was the ‘Zollverein’ - customs union - just like that which paved the way for Bismark’s Germany.
It has learned from this process. It is trying to turn the referendum into a plebiscite.

Already we are beginning to hear ‘weasel words’.

They are talking about ‘renegotiation’, ‘grabbing back powers’ and ‘clinching a new deal’ - which will be put to the people in a referendum - ‘to give the British voters their say’.

Does this remind you of anything - or anyone?

Are we witnessing the beginning of Wilson and 1974-5 all over again?

Mr Wilson made a commitment to renegotiation, admitted that he had not necessarily “got everything we wanted” but claimed, despite this to have won “big and significant improvements” and then asked “you to vote in favour of remaining in the Community.”

What a heart-warming, cosy image of being part of a Community. Like ‘motherhood and apple pie’ it is surely almost impossible to say ‘no’.

Yet membership of that community costs us £50 million a day to lose the right to make our own laws and to have to get the permission of the EU elite to run our own country. It sounds to me more like a ‘boot camp’ than a community - and, I would suggest, at least some of the Greeks and now even the Spanish increasingly share that view as austerity measures and rule by unelected EU officials are imposed upon them.

At this point you may well be asking: “but surely the president of the Commission Mr Barroso will not help the British out, will not co-operate with David Cameron in this way?”

But actually, just as they want to keep Greece in the Euro because they fear that once one has gone, others will soon follow, so Britain’s exit would begin a potential unravelling of the entire European project. They fear it becoming just dust in their hands.

Thus the political classes of both the EU and of the United Kingdom may collude in a charade, all too reminiscent of the trick pulled off by Wilson and the EEC in 1974-5 with Cameron claiming to have not got everything he wanted but nonetheless enough to justify our staying in.

An honest referendum must offer a clear choice.

It is between remaining in the European Union and leaving it by repealing the 1972 European Communities Act (and all subsequent amendments).

This means one straight-forward question about being ‘in’ or ‘out’, a ‘member’ or no longer a ‘member’.

What I am afraid of - as I feel we are increasingly winning the argument about how the UK’s membership inflicts damage rather than offering benefits - is that, like the manipulations of ... question and / or add a third option which gives them lots of ‘wriggle-room’ and win a referendum by fraud all over again.

This is despite the fact that, as I have conclusively demonstrated in this narrative so far, there is no third option. There cannot be.

Being just part of a single market or customs union is not possible because the whole of the EU’s interpretation of what the Single Market is and how you create it offers no possibility other than ever closer Union - full political and economic integration built on uniform rules and regulations, a single economics and finance ministry with a single tax code and centralised sovereign institutions.

In short, it is the creation of a United States of Europe.
“Won’t get fooled again?”

Famously, the question “have you stopped beating your wife?” is impossible to answer without admitting that you do or at least did beat her. In short it is loaded and deliberately designed both to mislead and to put the person to whom it is posed in an impossible position.

That is exactly the stunt which I suspect the British establishment, endorsed and funded by the EU elite, is going to try to pull.

Full political and economic union is both an explicit goal of the EU and built into its whole approach.

The central motivating idea is that ever closer and stronger integration will lead to the creation of a single European state with uniform regulations covering all major aspects of commerce and life. Sovereignty is lost. The United States of Europe is born.

There is no middle way, third way, extra alternative, ‘just a single-market’ or ‘only a customs-union’, (it is certainly not a free-trade area).

There simply cannot be a valid three-part question.

And unless and until there is a major change of approach backed by fundamental re-writing of the treaties, these are delusory fantasies presented by people who - for their own selfish reasons - want you to be tricked again.

They are also people who for want of confidence in their own position will do anything but argue fairly, resorting to common abuse and name-calling as if these are proper, rational public debate.

I hope that you will join me in stopping them getting away with what amounts to a flagrant confidence-trick - at your expense and to you and your children’s detriment.

As the Who put it: we “Won’t get fooled again” - I hope.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

Have a look at the EFD website
Europe of Freedom and Democracy
http://www.efdgroup.eu

Have a look at UKIP’s website
United Kingdom Independence Party
http://www.ukip.org/

“Won’t get fooled again?”
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A Referendum Stitch-Up?

How the EU and British elites are plotting to fix the result

In this damning assessment of the machinations and falsehoods that have accompanied Britain’s membership of the European Union, Nigel Farage, Co-President of Europe of Freedom and Democracy, and leader of the United Kingdom Independence Party, examines the role of the EU and British establishment in pulling the wool over the eyes of the British electorate. His particular focus is on the course of the 1975 Referendum on membership of what was then called (misleadingly) the ‘Common Market’ and whether, if there is another referendum, we will all be fooled or mesmerised again?