

Brexit and Power

A note by Emina Arella Haddlesey

I went to a dinner party and Brexit came up in conversation.

A prominent American businessman, whom I will not name, stated something along the lines of: “The EU was Britain’s BIGGEST trading partner! Brexit would mean Britain was on the wrong side of its biggest trading partner! Britain knew Brexit was going to hurt its economy! It did not make any sense!”

I thought: “*That’s because you think like an American.*”

The American mantra is that if it doesn’t make money, it doesn’t make sense. The foundations of cultural pattern recognition can be observed through policy, psychology and technology. ChatGPT, for example, is American and *thinks* like an American. So far, even advanced AI models reveal that the cultures in which they are born are embedded into their programming, and, subsequently, their reasoning. This is more apparent in Chinese models. However, to understand the philosophy of Brexit, one must *think* like an Englishman.

England does not care about money. It cares about power. Long-lasting, sovereign, watertight power. And, as Westminster is sovereign, England’s ambition speaks for the rest of the United Kingdom. When the United Kingdom was part of the EU, Westminster was not sovereign. Under the European Union, British law was subordinate to EU law. EU regulations had direct effect in the UK, and the European Court of Justice held interpretive authority, often overruling domestic courts.

Brexit reversed this structure. By exiting the EU, Parliament fully reclaimed its legislative sovereignty. The UK Supreme Court is once again the highest legal authority, and laws passed in Westminster are no longer subject to override or reinterpretation by the European Court of Justice. This legal independence restored one of the fundamental principles of English constitutional tradition: the supremacy of Westminster.

One might argue that money buys influence, and influence is power. Under that reasoning, any compromise of money is a compromise of power. But that kind of power is subjective: *As long as your financial status is X and your position is Y, you are powerful*. Further, the extent of a person's or nation's power will correlate directly with the extent of their financial status and position. The easiest modern example of this is Donald Trump. When Trump was an alleged billionaire and held the position of the President of the United States, he was *powerful*; when Trump lost his financial status and no longer occupied a powerful political seat, he was *powerless*. England understands that true power is not a matter of circumstance; it is a matter of fact. True power is strong, independent and seldom moves. It is not an argument of short-to-medium-term economic metrics, it is an argument of forever.

The legal and philosophical re-empowerment and reclamation of control that Brexit achieved is more fundamental to the United Kingdom's long-term power than reactionary trade implications. For many, especially in England, this reaffirmation of legal and political autonomy was not only justifiable - it was necessary.