

Violating our Voice, Our Vote and Our Vision.

Each year is packed with working class anniversaries. Last year the bravery and foresight of the suffragettes. This year the massacre at Peterloo 1819, and perhaps less prominently the Newport Rising 4th November 1839 supporting the Charter.

These were three of many heroic moments in the struggle for the vote that was to culminate in another key anniversary for us this year, the passing of the Representation of the People Act 1969 which reduced the age of enfranchisement from 21 to 18.

The struggle for the universal franchise had taken well over a century, some may argue it in fact stretched back further to The Agreement of the People in 1649 the Levellers' Manifesto.

Either way, too few recall the sacrifice and struggle that led to the right of all citizens over 18, regardless of gender and property, to vote for their representatives.

We were left with the House of Lords and Monarchy, which together, under the shifting conventions of the unwritten constitution actually make up the Parliament.

But nevertheless, the people had a voice, universally and powerfully for the first time and the House of Commons should have been supreme.

Ironically this new voice elected the Heath government in 1970. As we now know, Heath was embroiled in secret talks to put the then embryonic super-state of the EU over and above our Parliament. Our voice was to be hushed before it had spoken.

The vote in 1975 on whether to stay in the Common Market was a con and socialists and trade unions opposed it, led by those like Tony Benn, who rejected the project fear of the time and asserted national independence and democracy above the control of our country by foreign powers.

Our elected representatives in Parliament then began stripping Parliament and the people of our sovereign powers.

First, in October 1979, another, more devastating anniversary this month, Thatcher did the quintessential EU thing and removed constraints on the movement of capital. The genie was out of the bottle and the new breed of financiers and globalisers ran rampant.

'Hark what discord followed' as the real economy was pulled apart, public assets were sold off and public services were put into incompetent, private hands. Super-profits tax evaded to offshore havens, and the happy billionaires emerged. Even the annual Times Rich List needed new storage to account for the egregious wealth at the top.

The Tories signed the Single European Act (1986) consigning public procurement to the lowest bidders overseas, and make market customers of us all.

Stunned by the ferocity of Thatcher's attack on the Unions, in 1988 the TUC thought Jacques Delors sounded nice and started the long process of deluding organised workers that our salvation lay with those we don't elect.

Twenty years later the European Court of Justice made it clear that workers collective rights were inferior to those of business in landmark rulings.

In 1990 Germany, the powerhouse of the EU, recognised Croatia and precipitated the first war in Europe since 1939 to place to break up socialist Yugoslavia. This is conveniently forgotten by those who depict the EU as dove of peace.

The Tories signed the Maastricht Treaty 1992, giving the unelected EU control over our public spending limits.

And so it went on, directive after EU directive, Treaty after Treaty draining away the democratic base of sovereignty in a Parliament only able to legislate if the unelected in Brussels approved.

Unlike France and the Netherlands for example, the British people were not even offered a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty 2007, a rebranded EU constitution, which centralised unaccountable powers.

The EU expanded its borders making nomads of whole populations fleeing chaos and poverty and tragically believing that the grass was greener elsewhere. Many migrant workers met their deaths in slave conditions.

Accession states were told by the EU to break up collective bargaining and tear up their favourable national agreements with unions. A bonfire of agreements took place culminating recently in the struggles in France and Italy against the assault on their labour codes.

Yet we were told by some the EU was the only source of workers' rights.

Even the unique system of negotiated final salary pensions schemes in Britain was kicked into terminal decline by the EU Directive on Pensions.

We went from food mountains of the Common Market to mountains of mass unemployment in a permanently deflationary European Union.

We saw countries which gave us the word and initial attempts at democracy, like Greece, ravaged then taken over by the direct rule of banks and German arms manufacturers.

Britain had argued for a rebate on the huge EU membership bill in 1984 and consistently avoided entry into the Single Currency. Who knows how desperate things would have been if we had succumbed.

Parliament had become so used to not having real power that when the people's voice spoke out in 2016 and demanded we leave the EU some within it thought they could use Parliament itself under the cloak of 'parliamentary sovereignty' to oppose the wicked desire of the majority for national self-determination.

In the process a new authoritarianism was born. Some Parliamentarians took it as their mission to destroy first the Executive, then the Government for seeking to follow the mandate of the referendum.

Brexit became a thing in itself, a football to play in the bubble of parliament for personal and party advantage.

Brexit is a silly word, the issue has been about independence from unelected power over our decisions, national independence, a condition essential for socialism and something which millions have sacrificed their lives for throughout the world.

Legitimate attempts to prevent Parliament from acting against the majority will of the people were stereotyped as 'right wing' and even the Supreme Court was dragooned into service to give a verdict which should send a chill down the spines of all socialists, so lethal could its precedence be when we are in power.

In a painful twist the Fixed Term Parliament Act passed by the coalition government in 2011 in the hope that it would extend the Liberal Democrats moment of glory for ever, did the very illiberal thing it was designed for; it made it impossible for the people to call their MPs to account or even recall them politically and remove the government.

Remainers made the May deal, Remainers opposed the May deal, Remainers opposed no deal, Remainers will oppose Johnson's deal regardless. Remainers oppose a general election because they know they will lose. Remainers want the EU vision of endless austerity to continue and to scupper any chances of a Corbyn government.

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