

PRESS RELEASE, Thursday 19 May 2016 11h00

Speaking under the title 'The Courage of Our Convictions' Lord Owen will today address ten commonly asked questions in his campaign meetings. He will say:

“Vote Leave is the designated group by the Electoral Commission and operates under the collective leadership of Gisela Stuart, Michael Gove and Boris Johnson. All three of them over the years that I have watched them in Parliament have not shown a trace of racism or nationalism in their political careers. Now they have the courage and determination to face the British people with the real risks of remaining within a dysfunctional EU of 28 countries. The risks of leaving over a decade and more, in my judgement, are far less than the risk of remaining.”

Questions:

- 1. What has changed in the EU from the last referendum in 1975?**
- 2. Why should the Centre Left vote to leave?**
- 3. Tell us the truth about the economics of remaining in or leaving the EU?**
- 4. Tell us the truth about immigration**
- 5. Do the IMF and Bank of England Reports matter?**
- 6. How do we leave?**
- 7. What happens if we stay?**
- 8. What are the opportunities outside the EU/Eurozone?**
- 9. What lies behind the idea of a United States of Europe?**
- 10. What are the overall gains for the UK leaving the EU?**

In detailed and trenchant language, summarized below, he will say:

“There is an irresistible pressure towards fiscal union for a smaller number of the EU/Eurozone members which means a core United States of Europe, without which the Eurozone will collapse as will the entire EU project. The UK has now no means of preventing this since Cameron formally gave up our blocking power in February.

In the event of a Leave vote, there must not be an immediate triggering of Article 50. Full consideration by Cabinet and Parliament of options are needed. It is a disgrace the Treasury did not do this in 2013 before the intention to call a referendum and a national scandal that Cameron decided to put this referendum in the Conservative manifesto in 2015 before any proper risk assessment had been undertaken;

In leaving the EU, we should increase defence spending and devote more resources to NATO underpinning our importance to the Alliance as an independent country, and signalling to the British people that we must be robust in defence of our security interests;

Immigration levels at present increase social tensions in the UK and are driving the rise of right wing extremist parties in Europe. Leaving the EU means there can be an annual National Dividend of £10 billion which would otherwise be spent by the EU much as we had a Peace Dividend from reduced defence spending after the collapse of the Soviet Union. A National Dividend should be earmarked to alleviate the social impact of immigration in very specific areas of the UK most impacted by high immigration, the

NHS, education and housing.

Finally, Lord Owen calls on voters to make 23 June our Independence Day.