

Introduction:

Why Not Vote UKIP?

Why vote UKIP? Perhaps the first question we should ask is why would you NOT vote UKIP?

Unless you are already a staunch UKIP supporter, your reply to this question is likely to be either 'because I firmly believe we should stay in Europe' or something along the lines of 'because I could never vote for a sexist/racist/homophobic/isolationist/fruitcake party like UKIP'.

To be honest, if everything written in the press or in other political parties' literature about UKIP was true, then I would not be voting UKIP either, let alone supporting the party and standing for election under the UKIP banner. I am a woman. I have spent most of my life working with, supporting and promoting ethnic minority and multi-faith communities. I travel frequently in Europe as the founder of a national health charity which values and thrives on its links with like-minded organisations across the continent where research and treatments are far more advanced than here in Britain. And oddly enough, I was persuaded to join this 'homophobic' party by a gay friend and colleague.

I did take quite some persuading; it was not a decision I made lightly. At the time I was a disillusioned Conservative councillor in the London Borough of Merton. Under David Cameron's leadership it seemed to me the Conservative Party had abandoned long-held principles of aspiration, fairness and equality of opportunity. The 2010 Tory manifesto was either torn up in places or reinterpreted in ways one might never have expected, while bewildering and unpopular

legislation was being drafted in the face of opposition from party members. It was becoming harder and harder to justify being a Conservative on the doorstep out canvassing and I found myself in the unenviable position of agreeing with most of our detractors. I had also become deeply cynical about local government, seeing spiteful politicking, extravagant waste and a lack of accountability or real democracy within my (Labour-run) council. There was also a distinct lack of talent among some councillors who were making major decisions on constituents' behalf, and I saw a good deal of what I considered to be unethical behaviour. It was not a pretty spectacle.

Is it any wonder disillusionment within politics is rife, I wondered? I could understand why so many people – often the majority in some elections – had stopped voting altogether. My first instinct was to give up myself and be shot of the whole charade. But, being made of stronger stuff and fuelled by my colleague's enthusiasm, I looked into what UKIP really believed, as opposed to what others unconnected to the party claimed it believed, and found I could agree with most of UKIP's core principles. I met or spoke with leading figures in the party – Nigel Farage himself got on the phone – and the rest is my personal history still in the making.

The question now is: can I now convince you?

You will make your own decision. My job in writing this book is to give you the tools to do so, to put the record straight and set out what UKIP *really* stands for, so you *can* make your own, informed choice at the ballot box, and not a choice informed by the prejudice of our detractors. I've lost count of the amount of times a 'UKIP policy' has been announced on the radio, TV or in the papers, on social media or in other parties' campaign literature when UKIP does not have any such policy. 'UKIP wants to privatise the NHS' is probably Labour's favourite, while the Lib Dems prefer to chant the false mantra that 'UKIP's policies will cost us three million jobs in Europe.'

These smears are at the tame end, of course. You would have to have been living the life of a hermit to have missed the hardcore

slurs from what UKIP supporters often refer to in shorthand as the 'LibLabCon', the other main political parties, their spin doctors and their media luvvies in the national press who have traditionally always come down on either the left or the right as opposed to what I now know is UKIP's common-sense centre. While ignoring criminal behaviour in their own ranks (I write this at the beginning of the Westminster child abuse scandal), the old parties' apparatchiks troll through UKIP candidates' Twitter and Facebook accounts to drag up unsavoury remarks often made years previously, or take an off-the-cuff 'joke' a little bit too seriously and find someone to be 'offended' by it. They then phone the national press, which pounces on the 'story' and decides it is of such great national importance it should be run on the front pages or at the top of news bulletins, even though the same script would barely be worth a mention in the local paper if it was a Labour, Tory or Lib Dem party member who was implicated.¹

The classic example of this was the 'gay floods' row, when comments made by a town councillor suggested gay marriage legislation was to blame for recent flooding. Bonkers? Unacceptable? Yes, both, but nothing new for him. He had been saying much the same for years as a Conservative councillor and no one had taken a blind bit of notice. Suddenly, when he joined UKIP, he achieved national fame and seized the headlines for days. Staggeringly, the government even sent ministers – yes, ministers – onto our TV screens to condemn his folly. Clearly there was no real governance to be done that week.

There are few insults that have not been thrown at UKIP. My personal favourite is the at least fairly humorous jibe that UKIP is 'the *Dad's Army* of politics'. Well, as Lance Corporal Jones said, that is only because 'they don't like it up 'em'.

1 In just one week in April 2014, seventeen Labour, Tory or Liberal Democrat councillors were arrested, charged or convicted for crimes including perverting the course of justice, child pornography, firearms and electoral fraud. In the same period, a further thirteen were involved in racism, sexism or homophobic scandals. Only one, in which Lord Hanningfield was jailed for expenses fraud, featured in the national media.

UKIP is twenty-one years old this year. It has come of age. We won the 2014 European elections, taking twenty-four MEP seats, more than any other political party. We have come second in numerous recent parliamentary by-elections, forcing the other parties to throw everything they have into defending what should be safe seats in need of little campaign funds or energy. UKIP now has 284 District, County and Borough councillors across the country, plus numerous Parish councillors taking 'on your doorstep' decisions day in, day out. We have built up solid levels of support in many English constituencies and are set to enter parliament for the first time in 2015 – at the time of writing, it looks as if the former Conservative MP Douglas Carswell may well even get there sooner and become UKIP's first elected MP ahead of the general election. The three old parties' cages are being well and truly rattled by UKIP. They are terrified of losing control of the cosy cartel they have been running for decades and, being tribal politicians, won't stop at much to maintain their hold on power. UKIP's grassroots success has brought out the worst in the political elite who presently run Britain. Instead of listening to the discontent, and taking action, they continue the Punch and Judy show, regularly playing the man and not the ball. They should be ashamed by the lies they tell to smear UKIP and the tactics they use to keep control.

However, voters genuinely concerned about immigration, and for good reason, do not like to be told they are racist by the out-of-touch and the over-privileged, or by the London-centric liberal media. UKIP is taking millions of votes from the old parties and, significantly, getting votes from many who have never voted before, or who have not felt confident enough to vote for a very long time. Why? Because people see in UKIP a political party that at last speaks for them, instead of at them, one that offers a fresh choice for Britain.

Traditional working-class Labour voters are turning to UKIP because they have woken up to the fact that the Labour party sold out on the working man and woman long ago, cutting the 10p tax

rate and throwing open our borders to migrant workers looking for their minimum wage jobs but prepared to work for even less. They also recognise that today's Labour Party has all but completely lost sight of its working class roots. Most Labour MPs are now indistinguishable from those on the Tory benches – millionaire, privately educated Oxbridge graduates whose only jobs have been in politics. Ed Miliband, like David Cameron, worked as a parliamentary researcher and advisor before becoming an MP. In 1979, 40 per cent of Labour MPs had done manual labour or clerical work at some point in their careers. By 2010 that figure had fallen to just 9 per cent and now about half of all Labour candidates selected to fight winnable seats at the general election already have links to Westminster as former special advisors, parliamentary researchers or lobbyists, or they have been employed by the party.²

The political class reproduces itself: is it any wonder we get fed up with career politicians who all look and sound the same? UKIP's Deputy Leader, Paul Nuttall MEP, spoke for many Labour voters when he said in his speech to the UKIP Conference in 2013: 'Labour MPs today wouldn't know what it's like in a working men's club and wouldn't know a council estate if it fell out of the sky and hit them on the head.'

Having forgotten those whom they once pledged to represent, Labour MPs have become indistinguishable from the wealthy metropolitan elite who embrace open-door migration because of the benefits it gives them in terms of access to cheap nannies, housekeepers, chauffeurs and cleaners, while suffering none of the social problems brought by immigration. They, after all, can afford their own private healthcare, private education for their children and don't have to worry about the cost of petrol or the downsides of spiralling house prices. Meanwhile, the real British working classes are suffering; there are now a million fewer low-skilled British workers

2 Research by former Labour Cabinet minister, Peter Hain.

in jobs than there were when the last Labour government came to power in 1997,³ and many low-skilled workers now find it impossible to even get on the social housing waiting list, such is the strain on resources. Labour's attempts to play to their old core vote seem limited to puerile class war insults cast across the debating chamber. No wonder then that former Labour voters are deserting the party in droves, so out of touch with their needs, hopes and dreams are its current representatives.

Meanwhile, the middle classes turn to UKIP because the Conservatives too are out of touch. They might talk about 'strivers' and 'hard-working families' but these are just meaningless soundbites. The Tories have not looked after these people. The cost of living crisis has hit the middle classes hard.

Those on middle incomes have seen take-home pay cut since Chancellor George Osborne lowered the 40 per cent tax threshold and they are pushed into it. VAT (an EU tax) is at its highest rate ever in the UK, making both small luxuries and major purchases unaffordable. Energy bills continue to soar as Cameron pursues a flawed energy policy, bowing down to European Union directives and refusing to cut the 'green taxes' that add hundreds of pounds to our fuel bills every year. Healthcare and education may well still be free, but getting a doctor's appointment can be a mammoth task and the local school can't always be trusted to deliver a good education for all manner of reasons. Work hard, earn good money, and it is still tough getting a foot on the property ladder.

Shockingly, the Conservatives no longer seem to want to give everyone a chance to 'better themselves', to use a rather old-fashioned phrase. Despite the fact 66 per cent of Conservative voters want grammar schools,⁴ the Tories refuse to bring them back to help bright children from poorer backgrounds. Worse, they have

3 Migration Advisory Committee report on the growth of European Union (EU) and non-EU labour in low-skilled jobs and its impact on the UK, published 8 July 2014.

4 YouGov poll of Greater London residents in June 2013.

actively prevented new grammar schools from opening even where current legislation allows it. Even when young adults from average backgrounds do get good qualifications, they either can't find jobs, or their ambitions to move into higher education are stymied. The huge hike in university tuition fees – pushed through when the Lib Dems infamously reneged on their famous manifesto pledge – was, for many Tory voters, the final straw. The children of the wealthy, or those confident they will get highly paid jobs in the future, will no doubt have no hesitation in attending university still, but what of those without such fiscal or occupational confidence? Far from being the party of aspiration and social mobility, it could be argued the Tories today are rapidly winning a reputation as the party of defenestrated life chances.

Then, of course, there is the culture of entitlement that has been bred at Westminster, the symptoms of which have manifested themselves in a succession of parliamentary humiliations, most notably, perhaps, the 2009 expenses scandal, when few MPs were *not* caught fleecing the taxpayer in all manner of senseless and inventive ways. Parliament should be a noble place, where injustice is put right and good deeds done; instead, a shroud of disrespect has been cast over it, as members let themselves and the country down by misbehaviour. We sense that politicians are only 'in it for themselves', a commonplace phrase. We become frustrated at their fearful inability to speak their minds, let alone the truth, and this contrasts with their competence at delivering flat, politically correct platitudes and soundbites.

Take all this into account and it's not difficult to see why UKIP is on the rise, especially with the highly charismatic, expressive and straight-talking Nigel Farage MEP at the helm. Currently the only political party leader who has a positive personal rating in public opinion polls,⁵ Nigel's forthright ability to 'tell it as it is' is a refreshing

5 YouGov survey for the *Sunday Times*, 15–16 May 2014.

antidote to the current bunch of MPs who come across as being increasingly out of touch and less trustworthy. It is hardly surprising that UKIP is now the only practical, mainstream alternative to this deeply unsatisfactory status quo.

Precisely because of this, however, some denounce UKIP votes as 'protest votes'. Actually, this is yet another insult to the electorate from those in the Westminster bubble. In any case, from what I have seen at election time, 'protest votes' get counted in exactly the same way as any others.

But yes, the general idea in British politics is that we should vote *for* a particular party or candidate, and not *against* others. So, as disillusioned with traditional three-party politics and politicians as any one of us may be, any decent party or candidate would hope that we would vote for them because we believe in what they stand for and not only because we are unconvinced by their opponents.

If you believe it should be the MPs we elect who make our laws, not unelected foreign bureaucrats; if you want to be able to trade freely with Europe but not be bound into political union with our European neighbours; and if you want independence from the ever-deepening clutches of undue government interference, your vote should go to UKIP. If you are in favour of fairer taxes and lower fuel bills; agree we *should* be talking about the problems caused by mass uncontrolled immigration; consider the law of the land should apply equally to all; and agree politicians should be the servants of the people and not the other way around, then putting a cross in the box next to the UKIP logo on your 2015 general election ballot paper is the only sensible option.

One of the main reasons I stand with UKIP is because I love my country. I'm no fanatical patriot but I do think it is about time parliament recovered power over our national life, started putting Britain first again and made a fundamental commitment to stand up for Britain and the British people. This is surely the only reason our MPs have been elected, and the only reason we have

a parliament? So why do so many shy away from protecting British values and institutions, and seem almost embarrassed to talk about patriotism?

UKIP isn't embarrassed by patriotism or by being British. We believe our nation can be a force for good and that our country has developed social and civic values over the last thousand years which should be celebrated, preserved and built upon. This is the philosophy at the heart of all UKIP policies and one which underlies all our principles. Many UKIP voters tell me they feel 'our British way of life is under threat' or they say: 'We want our country back.' While we cannot and should not turn back the clock – it certainly isn't UKIP's aim to take the country back to the '50s, as our critics have suggested – we do believe the British way of life is fundamentally good and worth saving. This is why our foremost policy is withdrawal from the European Union.

Perhaps though, you are one of those put off voting UKIP because of this fundamental policy? Again, this is an area that has been much misunderstood. Frequently we hear in the media that UKIP is 'anti-Europe'. This is rubbish, pure and simple. UKIP is certainly not anti-Europe, but is it vehemently opposed to the political federation that is the European Union.

Britain was once a proud, independent, sovereign nation. Since we joined the European Union in 1973, successive Labour and Conservative governments have, step by stealthy step, signed away our sovereignty and independence. Originally we were told – with astonishing duplicity – that we were entering a 'common market', as it was then called. This is all most of us ever wanted. What we have ended up with is a diminishing role in a pan-European super-state that has its own flag, its own national anthem, its own parliament, its own military force, and a small, unelected, undemocratic commission working solely to impose new regulations and directives on us and other member states. Our hands are now tied in so many ways: we are no longer allowed even make our own trade deals, not even

with Commonwealth countries, despite our still strong ties. Now, the EU negotiates international trade deals on our behalf. Joining the European ‘common market’ has prevented us from trading with the rest of the world on our own terms. Once the strongest trading nation on the planet, we now play a greatly reduced role in global commerce.

Have you ever noticed that the two main issues national politicians argue over are the NHS and education? This isn’t just because they are issues that tear at the heartstrings and sway voters, but also because they are two of very few policy areas left to fight over at election time. Control of just about everything else has either, wholly or in part, been relinquished to the EU. The EU controls financial services, fishing, farming, energy and trade. It dictates business and employment legislation as well as immigration rules. It seeks greater control over law and order, foreign affairs and tax. There is momentum behind plans for an EU-wide army and police force. The EU ‘shares’ responsibility with us for many other policy areas too – animal welfare, consumer protection, public health, space programmes, social policy, humanitarian aid and vocational training, to mention but a few. Rarely does the EU fail to poke its nose somewhere in British legislature.

Is this what you really want when you say you want to ‘stay in Europe’? Or do you just want to be able to trade openly and freely with businesses on the Continent?

And what of the EU edict that has had the biggest impact on Britain, the one that is most talked about and resented, the one which insists on the free movement of people across EU member state borders? This, combined with the former Labour government’s deliberate policy to ‘engineer multiculturalism’ by purposely letting immigration spiral out of control – even sending out ‘search parties’ for migrants between 1997 and 2010⁶ – has changed the social

6 Peter Mandelson’s admission in a speech to a rally organised by think tank Progress as reported in the *Daily Mail*, 14 May 2013.

and physical landscape of Britain beyond recognition in some parts of the country. Today, one in seven UK residents was born outside Britain; in London that figure rises to one in three. There are now eight million immigrants living in the UK.⁷ It is a situation that concerns the vast majority of people in Britain, including those from ethnic minority groups.⁸

In 1973, we joined a common market with others of a similar economic status. There was no great desire or need back then for low-skilled workers in these countries to migrate to find work. Now, the EU has expanded to comprise twenty-eight member states in total, including many desperately poor, former communist countries from Southern Europe, with more to come. Quite understandably, many people living in these countries want to come to Britain to find a better way of life. In the last decade, over 2.5 million people have arrived in Britain in total from all EU member states.

The strain this puts on public services such as schools, hospitals and local housing provisions is immense, yet our current politicians lack the desire, the determination and the means to do much about it. As far as jobs are concerned, the trade unions who are supposed to stand up for British working people and protect their jobs are instead reported to be selling cut-price memberships to Romanian and Bulgarian migrants and giving them free advice on how to claim benefits in the UK.⁹

Until we leave the EU and take back control of our borders it remains theoretically possible for almost 500 million residents in other EU member states to take up residence in Britain and take advantage of all the benefits our country has to offer.

Meanwhile, we are unable to deport foreign criminals from anywhere in the world because of our compulsory surrender to the

7 Figures from the Office for National Statistics.

8 'Briefing from the Migration Observatory on UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern' by Dr Scott Blinder, published 3 July 2014.

9 'Romanians and Bulgarians taught how to claim UK benefits in return for joining union', *Daily Mail*, 13 December 2013.

judgements of the European Court of Human Rights. We are forced to dump fish worth £130 million as a result of the Common Fisheries Policy.¹⁰ Our welfare bill soars as the European Court of Human Rights rules we must pay benefits to all EU migrants, irrespective of whether they have ever paid into the system or even intend to work. We are required to build EU-driven vanity projects we can't afford, such as the HS2 rail link. The list goes on and on.

It would be bad enough that we face all these problems; worse still is the fact we pay a fortune for them. To suffer the consequences of uncontrollable mass immigration, to abdicate our sovereignty and to invite a plethora of burdensome interference in our laws, our democracy and our business dealings, we hand over astonishingly high membership fees to the EU of some £55 million *every day*. We get some of that back, but less than half, by anyone's analysis.¹¹ We are currently the EU's second highest net contributor after Germany. According to economist Professor Tim Congdon, the cost of our EU membership, plus the cost of complying with EU regulations, comes to around £150 billion annually, or 11 per cent of GDP.¹² This is without taking into account the £25 billion or so we have paid towards bailing out failing Euro countries such as Ireland and Greece.

The next time you see the words 'funded by the EU' on a smart new public building, publication or charity website, stop and think: whose money has really funded this? The answer is simple: yours.

UKIP's perspective is equally simple: change. We cannot afford to carry on like this, not financially, not practically, not socially. We would be better off out of the EU.

Out of the EU we can make our own trade deals with other

¹⁰ Figure courtesy of the TaxPayers' Alliance.

¹¹ According to the Office for Budget Responsibility and HM Treasury, for instance, in 2012 the UK paid the EU more than £12 billion (excluding the rebate of approximately £3 billion) and received around £4 billion back in EU spending on Britain.

¹² *How Much Does the EU Cost Britain?* by Professor Tim Condon, published by the UK Independence Party, 2013.

nations, as Switzerland and Norway do with great success – they are the fourth and fifth largest non-member state exporters to the EU respectively after China, Russia and the USA; although geographically within Europe, they are free from the shackles of EU membership. Out of the EU we can decide who comes to live here not on the basis of their last country of residence, but what they have to offer Britain. We can choose our new citizens on an equal and non-racist basis from the entire world population, whatever their colour or creed and not because we must give unfettered priority to those from the predominantly white, Christian EU. We can take positive steps to cut UK unemployment by advertising British jobs in Britain instead of advertising them right across Europe as we are obliged to do at the moment. We can take back control of our borders, take back control of our laws and take back control of our heritage and culture. Then, and only then, might we get at least some of our country back.

In a nutshell, UKIP, for me, is a patriotic party with common-sense solutions to Britain's problems. Those who think we are a 'single-issue party' are shamefully out of date. We have fully costed, sound and reasonable solutions to the economic crisis, the employment crisis and our energy crisis. Our forthcoming manifesto will reveal solutions to the problems caused by uncontrolled mass immigration and the rising burden it puts on our social services. We have a fresh vision for education, welfare, healthcare and care for the elderly. We want to transform foreign affairs and foreign aid in a way that protects our own national security. We want to take back responsibility for agriculture and fishing.

Perhaps most importantly of all though, we want to re-engage the British public in politics through direct democracy. We want to see a smaller, less intrusive government that gives the British people a genuine and binding say in the key issues of the day through national and local referenda. UKIP doesn't see a government as ruling over the people of Britain, but as being in partnership with them.

Recent European and local elections have proven that, at last, if you vote UKIP, you get UKIP. We are ready for power. Are you ready to vote for us and take power with us?