



UK INDEPENDENCE PARTY
SOUTH WEST COUNTIES
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CONFIDENTIAL

Dear

Nigel will no doubt be reporting to the NEC meeting that we have a serious disagreement among UKIP MEPs on an issue of principle and policy. I feel the NEC has a right to know the issue that is at stake, to discuss the matter and indeed to express an opinion and this letter is designed to assist that.

A few weeks ago my colleague Derek Clark went to Bucharest where he signed up to a statement of policy which, among other things, accepted the principle of subsidiarity and the Common Agricultural Policy. I do not know whether this was a personal decision or at the suggestion of others.

The full document was then published on the official IndDem Group website, where it remains as the policy of the Group. By bearing Derek's name there is a clear implication that UKIP supports this position. Yet UKIP MEP's did not meet to give sanction to this and there was no consultation whatsoever over the matter.

I, and a number of my colleagues, cannot in all conscience accept something which represents a major departure from what we believed to be UKIP's policy – withdrawal from the EU, a complete rejection of its authority (and subsidiarity) and of the Common Agricultural Policy. To be clear, subsidiarity is an EU doctrine which first assumes EU sovereignty and then allows certain matters to be devolved to member state level. Accepting subsidiarity accepts ultimate EU sovereignty.

We should not temporise on these issues. This is precisely what the Conservative Party does and it is why I left it.

In 2004 I stood on a clear platform of withdrawal, with no equivocation. I believe that is what I was elected to do. I am NOT prepared now to compromise on this principle. This is a conscience matter for me and I believe others.

The UKIP constitution is also very clear on our party's basic position of principle. As guardians of the constitution, I believe the NEC has a responsibility to uphold this and prevent any fudge.

I hope the NEC will insist that this document be removed now from the IndDem website, distant UKIP from it and ensure that no future agreements of this sort are made behind the party's back.

Shortly after the 2004 elections, UKIP MEP's met and agreed a statement of practice – first that we would not go on “junkets” to other countries and secondly that we would not employ our wives. This was to prevent us getting dragged into the comfortable EU world that leads down the path to “going native.”

I am now very worried that this agreement is being ignored and that the attractions of the European Parliament as a career may beckon to some; where the delights of plush new office suites, Brussels titles and internal parliament or IndDem Group politics are more attractive than our original purpose.

We are not going to get our country back by wasting our effort in Brussels or Bucharest or by sucking up to political parties in foreign countries when the battle is here at home.

I joined UKIP, not the IndDem Group. I was elected as a UKIP MEP to fight for withdrawal from Europe, not as an IndDem MEP trying to reform the EU from within.

I hope this matter can be fully resolved from within and, despite my strong feelings, I have carefully refrained from public comment. However I cannot stand quietly and idly by forever if our basic principles are sold down the river.

I look to the NEC to assert its authority and use its best offices to overcome this unfortunate problem which I wish had never arisen.

Yours sincerely

Roger Knapman MEP