

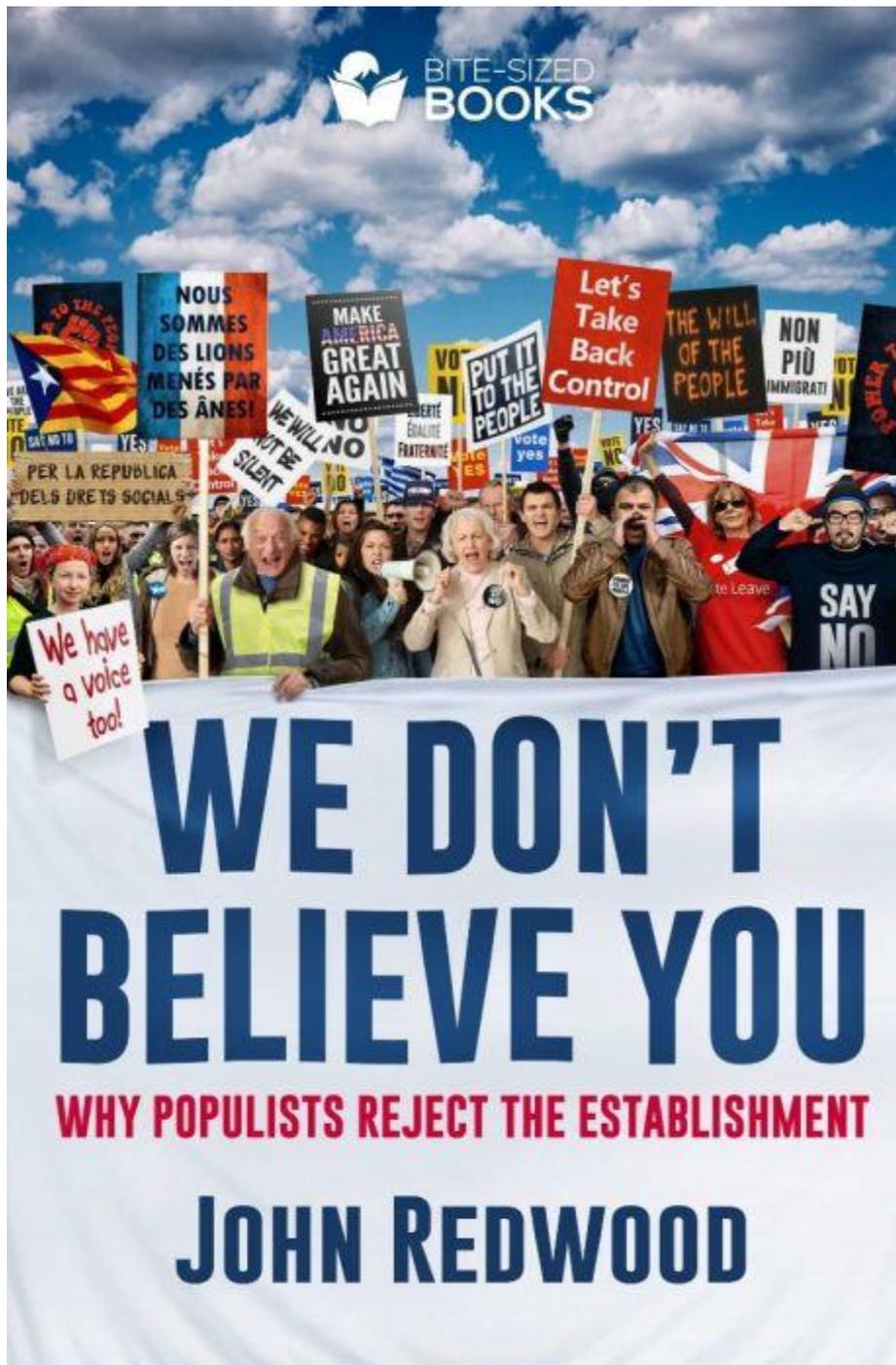
John Redwood: Brexit – the front line of the establishment's battle for control

We are pleased to be sharing an incredibly interesting extract from Member of Parliament for Wokingham Sir John Redwood's new Bite-Size book.

Titled 'We Don't Believe You: Why Populists and the Establishment See the World Differently', the book gives us fresh insights into why the populist movements and parties have been winning elections.

Sir John looks at how the experts and narrative pushed out by the established elites on both sides of the Atlantic have met with disbelief as well as with strong opposition. He shows how great parties have been all but destroyed as election winning forces as new movements and people sweep them aside. From the establishment himself as an expert and a member of one of the traditional parties, he seeks to show how the sensible elites adjust and respond to new moods and new ideas instead of confronting or denying them.

Enjoy an extract from the book below:



Brexit – the front line of the establishment’s battle for control

A fight in which one side did not properly engage was fought and lost. Phoney forecasts, silly scares and arrogant assumptions left a great deal of damage

In early 2016 the pro-EU establishment in the UK was feeling pleased with itself.

They thought granting a referendum to the people on the vexed issue of the UK's membership of the EU should settle the issue once and for all. The polls showed pretty steady leads for Remain.

Big business, the leading global institutions, the President of the USA and most informed commentators would come out for the UK to stay in. A win, any win, in the referendum would seal it.

The government had carefully told the UK people it was a once-in-a-generation opportunity and had tipped the scale in favour of Remain as much as they dare. They would send a leaflet to every home just before the campaign proper so the government could set out just how damaging they thought leaving would be.

They knew the public was a bit unruly on this topic and a few tabloid newspapers liked to make trouble, but they were confident that in the end in the privacy of the polling booth the voters would see sense and see there was no alternative. UK government would then be free to respond much more positively to the EU.

Without the authority of a recent referendum they saw a cramped and ugly debate, making it difficult to get through new EU laws and powers. Eurosceptic MPs would be briefed against as bad losers if they carried on their opposition after a referendum defeat. It would be so much easier to marginalise them once the public had spoken.

Everything the government did on the EU was in the teeth of determined criticism and opposition from within parliament to further transfers of power. In their view it would be such a relief to have the authority of the people behind making the further compromises with EU controls that a grown country needed to make.

Remain decided to run a campaign that remorselessly focused on a few economic issues, mainly to do with future trading once the UK had left.

They decided on a negative campaign, trying to persuade voters that though they might not like the EU, EU trade was important to our jobs and incomes and somehow that trade was at risk if the UK pulled out.

The Remain campaign had all the advantages that incumbency and the elite possess. They could call up plenty of free and powerful support for their case from a galaxy of international bodies, big businesses and overseas governments.

They felt able legally to use the considerable resources of the UK state to churn out negative forecasts for leaving. They set out in great detail a large number of things they thought could go wrong if the UK had the temerity to detach itself from EU rules. They should have won if elections can be manipulated by big money and big messaging, and most of the time most of them thought they would win.

The wrong campaign

Unfortunately for them their choice of campaign displayed arrogant mis-judgements that continued to haunt them.

The decision not to defend the EU vision or even to accept that it had a vision of full economic, monetary and political union made them look dishonest and out of touch.

Whilst the continental debate accepts that the cause of the EU is to work towards ever closer union, with countries and commissioners busily taking step after step on the road to a federal government of Europe, the Remain team pretended this was not happening and denied it in most of the debates.

Voters were told there would be no European army as plans proceeded for just that. They were told the UK was not in the Euro and never needed to join the Euro whilst the EU made clear that the Euro is central to the whole project.

The rest of the EU was becoming irritated at the UK's unwillingness for the EU to use the full range of EU institutions, powers and budgets to support the currency. The UK had to be excluded from finance meetings when they turned to Euro matters.

The electorate were told that the EU has no powers over the UK tax system at the same time as the VAT rules prevented parliament removing VAT from products it did not wish to tax, and as successive

court cases overrode the view of the UK parliament on what corporate tax we could levy on big business.

Some even tried to claim that as the UK is not part of the Schengen arrangements it therefore did not have to accept free movement of people, yet that policy is a fundamental principle which the UK accepts under treaty law.

They told their audiences the UK could control its own benefits system, yet Prime Minister Cameron in his renegotiation was not even granted the right to increase the length of time someone needed to be living and working in the UK from the continent before they qualified for benefits.

Remain argued that moves towards full union were not going to happen, they wanted people to believe it was all a fiction made up by extreme Eurosceptics. They sought to portray Eurosceptic campaigners as people who had a narrow fixation with the EU, had got it all out of proportion, and were on weak ground when it came to trade and economies.

We Don't Believe You: Why Populists and the Establishment See the World Differently is available now in Paperback and digitally on Kindle. [Find out more here.](#)