



First Property Group plc

32 St James's Street
London
SW1A 1HD

Tel: 020 7340 0270
Fax: 020 7839 7995

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“Voting to Leave will poison Europe and divide the West” - article by Sir John Major published in The Sunday Telegraph, 20 March 2016

Sir John Major accuses the out campaign of being disingenuous to suggest that the UK imports more from the EU than it exports to it. He fails to mention that the UK annually imports some £250 billion in EU goods, making it the single largest client of the EU in the World.

He goes on to say that 45% of UK exports go to the EU but that each EU member state only exports, on average, 7% of their total exports to the UK. Following through the maths: on average the UK exports only 1.7% of its total exports to each EU member state. In our commercial relationship with the EU we are, by a country mile, more important to its member states than they are to us.

By suggesting that the strength of our economy is born out of our EU membership is to overlook the enormous market oriented reforms made by Margaret Thatcher and the debt fuelled growth experienced by all developed nations over the last thirty years.

He claims that the exemptions negotiated by the UK to stay out of the Euro, out of Schengen and out of the EU's central aim of ever closer political union, should give us the comfort we need to remain a member. By implication he accepts that these EU initiatives, which are fundamental in nature, are flawed.

Sir John acknowledges that the EU would lose and be weaker without the UK. He should therefore accept that the UK would hold a strong negotiating hand in any post Brexit deal.

Ben Habib
Chief Executive Officer