

Gisela Stuart

Key points in Opening Remarks at the AEJ Colloquium, September 28th 2018

Gisela Stuart, one of the leaders of the Leave campaign, was the first to speak in Panel 1 on *The UK In and Out of Europe : Identity, Politics and Cultures*.

She began by noting that people in the UK are still divided two years after the Referendum. This reflected far deeper causes than the referendum result showed.

Speaking to a metropolitan and largely pro-Remain audience, she stressed that people who voted Leave were not, as caricatured, old, stupid or racists.

They had reacted to profound changes in their worlds over recent decades.

The WTO had given the impetus to globalisation, fundamentally altering trading links and manufacturing processes.

Money flowed around the world in the absence of capital controls in vast volumes and unimpeded, while ordinary people were still suffering the effects of the financial crisis of ten years ago.

There was the problem of "global flows of people", the significance of which politicians had "not even begun to look at".

Unless we understand the reasons why Brexit happened, we will not solve the question facing the Colloquium (UK-EU relations beyond Brexit), she said.

She invited her audience to think of people in the North of England: people who live and work in towns where they were born, who cared about their communities, and who had voted leave.

A Second Referendum would not show a shift their attitudes or a different result.

Commenting on the negotiations for Britain to leave the EU, she observed that chaos was to be expected at this stage of the negotiations with the EU.

Looking 15 years ahead, she believed that liberal democracies that stay democratic will be successful.

The only circumstances in which she could imagine admitting being wrong about this would be if the Chinese succeed without becoming a democracy.

ends

Summary by Peter Norman.