



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on June 28, 2016

Brexit Leader Nigel Farage Blasts EU in European Parliament Speech

Nigel Farage (shown) has been ridiculed for many years for his efforts to get the United Kingdom out of the European Union while a member of the European Parliament from England. But he is now enjoying his day in the sun. Basking in the glow of last week's Brexit success, he addressed the European Parliament on Tuesday, telling the body that the Brexit vote by his countrymen was a rejection of the EU and its politics. He was — in every meaning of the word — ebullient.



For its part, the European Parliament was less than welcoming of its soon-leaving member. Before Farage could even get through his cheerful introduction of wishing them all a good morning, the multinational body was booing and hissing to the point that EU President Martin Schultz had to remind them that “one major quality of democracy is that you listen” to someone “even if you don't share their opinion.”

Farage took it in stride and thanked Schultz before beginning again. “Isn't it funny?” he asked the assembled members, adding, “You know when I came here 17 years ago and I said that I wanted to lead a campaign to get Britain to leave the European Union, you all laughed at me. Well, I have to say, ‘You're not laughing now, are you?’”

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There is little doubt that Farage's very presence served to remind them of the failures of their policies. It also caused some confusion. EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, who had spoken before Farage, asked what Farage was even doing there since the United Kingdom had voted to leave the EU.

In his address, Juncker said he “would call on the UK government and I will be speaking to the Prime Minister later” to ask him “to clarify the situation as soon as possible,” adding, “We cannot be embroiled in lasting uncertainty.”

Farage spent the lion's share of his nearly seven-minute speech spelling out — in vivid detail — both the reasons for and the implications of the Brexit victory, telling the assembled members, “You — as a political project — are in denial.” He then listed the three most obvious examples of that denial.

“You're in denial that your currency is failing,” Farage said before being interrupted by the crowd. He responded to the interruption by clarifying his point. “Well, just look at the Mediterranean! No, no, no. As a policy to impose poverty on Greece and the rest of the Mediterranean, you've done very well.”

He then addressed the issue of borders. “And you're in denial over Mrs. Merkel's call last year for as many people as possible to cross the Mediterranean into the European Union,” he told the angry group.



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This unchecked immigration, Farage pointed out, “has led to massive divisions between countries and within countries.”

Saving the best for last, Farage accused the body of rank dishonesty in the way it has brought about “political union,” and told them that the Brexit was a reasonable reaction to that subterfuge:

But the biggest problem you’ve got — and the reason, the main reason the United Kingdom voted the way that it did — is you have, by stealth, by deception, without ever telling the truth to the British or the rest of the peoples of Europe, you have imposed upon them a political union. And when the people in 2005 in the Netherlands and France voted against that political union, when they rejected the constitution, you simply ignored them and brought the Lisbon Treaty in through the back door.

What happened last Thursday was a remarkable result, it was indeed a seismic result — not just for British politics, for European politics, but perhaps even for global politics, too. Because what the little people did, what the ordinary people did, what the people who’ve been oppressed over the last few years and seen their living standards go down did, they rejected the multinationals. They rejected the merchant banks. They rejected big politics. And they said, actually, “We want our country back. We want our fishing waters back. We want our borders back. We want to be an independent, self-governing, normal nation.”

As if to rub salt in their collective wounds, Farage predicted that the fallout has only just begun. He said that by leaving the EU, the United Kingdom has put itself in the position of offering “a beacon of hope” to other member states who have had enough. “I’ll make one prediction this morning,” he said: “The United Kingdom will not be the last member-state to leave the European Union.”

Looking over his shoulder at EU Commission President Juncker, Farage said, “So the question is, ‘What do we do next?’ Now, it is up to the British government to invoke Article 50, and I have to say that I don’t think we should spend too long in doing it.” He added, “I totally agree with Mr. Juncker that the British people have voted and we need to make sure that it happens.”

Since that will mean a “new” form of government and a “new” way of interacting with the countries still in the EU, Farage began laying out his idea of what that should look like. “What I would like to see is a grown-up and sensible attitude to how we negotiate a different relationship,” he said. “Now, I know that virtually none of you have ever done a proper job in your lives, or worked in business, or worked in trade, or indeed ever created a job, but listen, just listen.”

Schultz, who again had to quiet the body before Farage could continue, used this moment to get in his own jab at Farage: “Ladies and gentlemen, I do understand that you’re getting emotional, but you’re acting like UKIP [UK Independence Party — of which Farage is the leader] normally acts in this chamber,” Schultz said, adding, “So please, don’t imitate them. Mr. Farage, however, I would say one thing to you. The fact that you’re claiming nobody has done a decent job in their life, you can’t really say that, I’m sorry.”

Farage used the interruption and Schultz’s jab to illustrate a point: The times, they are a-changing. “You’re quite right Mr. Schultz,” Farage responded. “UKIP used to protest against the establishment, and now the establishment protests against UKIP, so something has happened here.”

Farage then used the last remaining minutes of his time to lay out his plan for how the now-free United Kingdom could continue to be a good neighbor to the EU:



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Let us listen to some simple, pragmatic economics. Between your countries and my country, we do an enormous amount of business in goods and services. That trade is mutually beneficial to both of us. That trade matters. If you were to decide to cut off your noses to spite your faces and to reject any idea of a sensible trade deal, the consequences would be far worse for you than for us. And even no deal is better for the United Kingdom than the current rotten deal than we've got. But if we were to move to a position where tariffs were reintroduced — on products like motorcars — then hundreds of thousands of German workers would risk losing their jobs. So, why don't we just be pragmatic, sensible, grown-up, realistic, and let's cut — between us — a sensible tariff-free deal and thereafter recognize that the United Kingdom will be your friend, that we will trade with you, we will cooperate with you, we will be your best friends in the world. But do that, do it sensibly, and allow us to go off and pursue our global ambitions and future.

His was the voice of a man who knows he is throwing off the shackles that have so long bound him and his countrymen. It was the voice of a man who is willing to negotiate because he knows he doesn't have to beg any longer. Nigel Farage spoke with the voice of freedom and the conviction of principle that comes along with that freedom.

As he sat down, the vaunted European Parliament was a booing, hissing group of bureaucrats who seem to know that their days are numbered.

Photo: Nigel Farage (from a screen-grab of his address to the European Parliament)



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