

BREXIT MEANS BREXIT

By Rod

Based on some of the characters of Yes Prime Minister this sketch is designed to accompany Leviticus 11 where the food laws are listed. The key point being that there are lots of them and their presence meant that the Levites and Priests were very important members of the Jewish society.

CAST

Sir Humphrey Cabinet Secretary and so Head of the Civil Service

Bernard Prime Minister's Private Secretary

Levi Priest A top Civil Servant

[Sir Humphrey is seated at his desk. Bernard enters.]

Bernard Good morning, Sir Humphrey.

Sir H *(Rising)* Bernard, how wonderful to see you! *(Offering hand for handshake)*
And may I congratulate you on your appointment as Private Secretary to the Prime Minister.

B I think she wanted continuity at a time of change.

SH One can rely on the Civil Service not to change. Nevertheless, Bernard, it says much about your qualities that she has seen fit to retain you in post.

B Thank you, Sir Humphrey.

SH *(Sitting down)* So to what do I owe the honour of your visit?

B I came on the behest of the PM.

SH I thought as much.

B She wants reassurance that the Civil Service understands that Brexit means Brexit.

SH You can set her mind at rest.

B So arrangements for renegotiating our relationship with the EU and formulating new laws of our own are going well?

SH Oh splendidly, Bernard, splendidly. My team of negotiators is coming together as we speak. *(Looking at watch)* In fact I have someone I see as a key member coming to see me right now. *(Knock on door.)* Right on time.

That is Civil Service punctuality for you. Come in. *(Sir Humphrey rises to welcome in Levi who enters. They shake hands.)*

Levi You wanted to see me, Sir Humphrey?

SH Yes, Levi, I did. Thank you for coming along. *(Turning to Bernard)* Bernard, you know Levi Priest?

B Of course, good morning, Levi. *(They shake hands)*

L Hello, Bernard. *(To Sir H)* Does Bernard's presence suggest this meeting might have something to do with the new PM's commitment to Brexit?

SH Bernard's presence is coincidental, but you are spot on nevertheless, Levi. And it is that perception and shrewdness that has led me to invite you to take a lead role in our negotiations.

L Lead role eh? So you want me to take charge of Trade? Vital to our economy. We must preserve the position of London as the financial capital of Europe.

SH No, not Trade. Something even more important.

L Ah, you mean Immigration. After all that is what most Brexiteers thought they were voting for in the Referendum; so important to get it right.

B And the PM has made it quite clear Britain must regain control of its borders.

L I am sure I can deliver on that. After all, we are an island so it should be a piece of cake.

SH Not Immigration, Levi. You were closer with 'a piece of cake'.

L Piece of cake?.... you don't mean?

SH Yes, I do, Levi. I want you to take charge of Food.

L Oh no! That is massive!

B The EU Codex Alimentarius consists of 4783 standards to be precise.

L Not to mention laws on hygiene standards, animal welfare, fisheries protection and quotas, farm subsidies..

- SH Yes, around 40 % of EU regulations pertain to food.
- L It will take for ever.
- SH That is why your role is so important, Levi.
- L To the country?
- SH To the country.... No, no, to the Civil service.
- L How do you mean?
- SH Well the PM has said 'Brexit means Brexit'.
- B And she does want the job done quickly.
- SH Exactly, Bernard, but the only way that can happen is if a department with a big responsibility like yours, Levi....
- L *(Light bulb moment)* Recruits more Civil Servants.
- SH Precisely many more Civil Servants. Levi, if you make your case well, you could be responsible for the biggest growth in the Civil Service since the time of the Empire.
- L *(Daydreaming)* If it goes well there might even be a gong or two in the offing... perhaps an MBE.
- B *(Aside)* Manager of the British Exit.
- L Or I have always rather fancied an OBE.
- B *(Aside)* Organiser of the British Exit.
- SH *(Putting arm around Levi)* Levi, I can see that I have chosen wisely in appointing you. *(Turning to Bernard)* Bernard, as you can see, when you return to the PM and she asks you whether the Civil Service understands that Brexit means Brexit, you will be able to reply.
- All Yes, Prime Minister.

THE END