

25th September 2017

Good evening Mr Rees-Mogg,

What a week! You, as usual, are popping up all over the place and I am sure, as usual, that you've had much to say. I hear from a friend that you were "incandescent" (his word) on some politics programme or other following Mrs May's speech in Florence. That must have been quite something and I truly regret missing it.

But to work! Today I thought I'd quickly run through the state of play between us and particularly the various reasons you – by which I mean your poor staff – have given for not responding to them. Some may find it quite amusing reading.

First I was told that you're terribly busy. Here is your staff member Stacey: "*Jacob receives so much correspondence ... if he gets the opportunity he will reply to you.*"

Well no: you've had plenty of opportunities since 21st June: don't tell me you haven't now! You've just chosen not to take them, that's all.

Then Stacey wrote, "*He is in meetings or the Chamber Monday to Thursday and then Friday to Sunday he has non-stop engagements in the constituency.*"

Well not really, Mr Rees-Mogg. As noted above you are constantly taking time out from both Chamber and local issues to bounce up and down on this show or that! Actually, I feel rather sorry for your constituents. I really do.

Then I was told – in an automated response bearing your signature – that "*there is a strict Parliamentary convention that I do not interfere in other Members' constituencies*".

Oh no there isn't! And even if there were, how does travelling the country to take your message – unbidden – to other MPs' constituents accord with this "strict protocol"? Come on, Mr Rees-Mogg: you aren't really bothered about that at all! Why, when I offered to send you a list of MPs who have communicated with me so that you may report them to the appropriate authorities I heard nothing back.

Stacey again: "*Jacob ... must prioritise his constituents ...*" Must? No, it's a matter of choice, as I'm sure you well know. How else can I explain that an acquaintance of mine in Spain only recently received a letter from you. I even have a copy of it. Spain, Mr Rees-Mogg: a foreign land nowhere near Somerset. At least you and I – however inconveniently – share the same blessed plot of earth. No, to reply to me is a matter of choice and you know it. (I leave aside the irony that, until you came along, the MP from whom I found it hardest to get a response was my own – your colleague Steve Baker!)

Then finally there's that curious matter of your statement in February 2013 about your willingness, if it came to it, to vote against your constituents' wishes over the matter of same-sex marriage. Now that's the one that really interests me! And I think you know why.

So I once again repeat for the umpteenth time my request that you respond to the two questions I asked you way back in June. You know the ones, and you know the answers too. You're just not saying.

Do you consider that Edmund Burke was wrong in his address to the electors of Bristol in 1774?
If so, with what principle would you replace that which he set out in it?

As ever, I'm keen to lubricate our intercourse so can I suggest a way forward? In lieu of the substantive answer I've been requesting, might I suggest that you just confirm to me that you have no intention of answering these questions? That would at least achieve a kind of clarity. Of sorts.

Please, Mr Rees-Mogg, I really am doing my best but I do have to say that you are a damnably slippery customer.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours,

Peter Roberts