

29<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Dear Mr Rees-Mogg,

You, I know, are a God-fearing man (although in your case I'm not quite sure I've got that the right way round), so the other day I was shocked to hear you described, and by a very significant British thinker who knows both his onions and you inside-out, as "that tortured soul".

Now it may of course be that I go to the wrong conferences and meet the wrong people at them. If so, I promise to take correction from you in that regard, though not before you've grown the balls to answer the two questions I put to you when the year was still young. Until then, I'm afraid that the phrase "that tortured soul" is now out there; and my God it has stayed out, in my mind at least. And will stay out; or I, Sir, am a Chinaman!

"Tortured." TORTURED, Mr Rees-Mogg!

Interesting, that! Our Christian God is not, we are told, vengeful – at least not this side of the grave – so the first thing I thought is that He appears to be making an exception just for you. Nothing too controversial there: I am sure that you are as special in His eyes as you are in your own. But, I then reflected, what IS life as a sinner if not insufferable? So let me reassure you: your torture is ours too, Mr Rees-Mogg; as, I regret to say, is your insufferability! (I mean that so sincerely that I don't even care whether insufferability is a word. And it's sincerity that matters, isn't it!)

Anyway, while on the painful subject of torture, I fear I must again acquaint you with my thought processes. In fact, I shall take advantage of the fact that you never bother to answer me to give them a right old airing.

On Saturday, shamefully avoiding many better things I had to do, I dipped into *The Daily Mail* – or *The Daily Braille* as I like to call it, since its customers appear blind in equal measure to both their reality and your mendacity. (You will therefore understand why I hesitate to call them "readers", if for a less literal reason than I refuse to ascribe the term to those who purchase or otherwise acquire *The Sun*, another organ you are wont to stroke with occasionally indecorous agitation, one result being the unspeakable mess in which our once-great nation is presently not waving, as you and your pimps in the press would have us think, but drowning.)

But I digress. Although it appears lost on *The Braille*, just thumbing through its pages reminded me of a time-honoured phrase with which I am sure you are familiar and cherish as much as I, namely: "Thank God we British can laugh at ourselves!"

Now, with little to do but recover from having, just the night before, seen you on the telly once again interfering away in other MPs' constituencies in defiance of what you call "strict Parliamentary protocol" – was it *Question Time*? *The Jeremy Kyle Show*? *Embarrassing Bodies Live*? It's all a blur to me, Mr Rees-Mogg! – I felt compelled to augment the maxim thus: "We British may indeed have God to thank that we can laugh at ourselves, but we have only ourselves to thank that there is so much to laugh about."

Then, my thoughts inexplicably locking on to you like the contents of a herring gull's bottom onto the unsuspecting bonce of a Clevedon mud-flatter on August Bank Holiday, I recalled that I still haven't had a reply

to the two elementary questions I asked you back in June (even Stacey, bless her, no longer has the energy to fob me off on your behalf):

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

So if you have a moment, would you ... would you kindly?

Yours,

Peter Roberts (You have my name: look up my number.)