Sarah Wollaston Totnes

The Prime Minister has set out the many things that remain to be reformed, but if this grudging and threadbare deal is the best the EU is prepared to concede, what serious hope is there of meaningful renegotiation if or when we are tied in long term under a referendum?

David Cameron The Prime Minister, Leader of the Conservative Party

I would make two points to my hon. Friend. First, this is not coming at the time of a more general treaty change; it is a one-off. We are the first Government, and I am the first Prime Minister, I can think of who from a standing start have achieved a unilateral agreement for the good of their country inside the EU. I do not think it is threadbare; as others have said, it is very solid. I am sure that treaty changes will be coming down the track—the process of reform is never fully completed—but there is no danger, once the agreement is signed and, I hope, confirmed in a referendum, of Europe running away with a whole lot of other plans for Britain, because we have the referendum lock. Nothing can happen to Britain without a referendum in this country. That was such an important piece of legislation back in 2010, but I think sometimes we forget about it.

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