

CIB Annual Rally 14 April 2018 – a Resounding Success

OUR RALLY THIS YEAR was very well attended and I have to express my gratitude to colleagues who helped with the arrangements, the people who attended and, of course, the impressive panel of speakers who held the keen interest of the audience throughout. It was gratifying to receive email congratulations from people who had attended.

The speakers were

STEVEN WOOLFE MEP (Independent) who gave a stirring call to arms for pro independence activists to work together and oppose the Remainers who want to overthrow the democratic decision of the British people.

BRENDAN CHILTON – National Organiser for Labour Leave whose passionate, Old Labour oratory is now directed to campaign to ensuring that the many Labour constituencies which supported a return to democracy are not betrayed..

AARON BROWN of Fishing for Leave – an equally rousing speaker for our often-betrayed fishermen. He points out that there is an opportunity to be free of the plundering European Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) – but only if we leave it on March 29th 2019. Without that, the proposed “transition” period would lock us into the terms of the CFP forever and a day.

DR LEE ROTHERHAM Executive Director of Veterans for Britain who has served in the Reserves for twenty years with three overseas deployments. He spoke on the dangers remaining after Brexit in the process of EU defence and Security Integration and the “deep and special partnership” in defence to which the government has already agreed.

DR. GRAHAM GUDGIN – Associate at the Centre for Business

Research, Judge Business School, University of Cambridge and co-editor of the Briefings for Brexit website. He was special advisor to the First Minister of Northern Ireland from 1998 -2002 .For once, we heard an economist who was down to earth, devoid of jargon and whom members could understand with clarity.

ALL THE SPEECHES WERE FILMED AND WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THIS WEBSITE SHORTLY.

Here is how we started the afternoon..

Opening Speech by Chairman, Edward Spalton.

We held our Annual General Meeting for members this morning, so it is a pleasure to welcome friends from the wider independence movement this afternoon to exchange views and to hear from our distinguished panel of speakers. CIB was founded in 1969 before we joined the EEC and has always been a cross-party organisation, comprising a wide range of political views but always united in the aim of restoring democratic self-government and independence to our country. In 1972, in spite of valiant efforts by our founders, we failed to stop the passing of the European Communities Act by a slim majority of 8 votes. What a lot of trouble we would have saved ourselves, if only we could have persuaded those few MPs to do their true duty by their country!

Last year I remarked that this year's rally would be the last one held under our EU captivity, as the government had served the Article 50 Notice and, in accordance with its terms, **the treaties would cease to apply from 29th March 2019 at the latest. But I had to add "unless the European Council in agreement with the member state concerned unanimously decides to to extend this period" (clause 3, `Article 50).**

Well, it appears that the government and European Council have so decided in principle on an extended "transition" period of another twenty one months **which can be further extended by joint agreement.** So this 48th annual meeting and rally of the

Campaign for an Independent Britain will not be the last one under *de facto* subjection to the EU's laws even if the Article 50 Notice period has *de jure* expired.

The newsletter before this rally went to members before the announcement of this development, which was rather less triumphal than the press and media reports suggested – more just a matter of “kicking the can down the road”. Of recent months I have found *Private Eye's* “Brussels Sprouts” column very concise and accurate. The most recent (No 1467 p 11) sums things up very well

“...the impression of a breakthrough on all things from future trade to the 21 month transition is false: a deal is no closer and the Northern Irish border question is as vexed as ever....

...In substance, the Irish border dispute has always appeared synthetic: officials on both sides have recognised the reality of the new land border from the start... While the EU argues that Northern Ireland must remain aligned with the EU on goods to avoid border controls and Brexiteer “ultras” claim that HM Revenue and Customs can solve everything with an electronic pre-clearance system, UK ministers accept that this would not obviate the need for border inspections ...A hard border in other words.

....Having said that “no British prime minister could ever agree to” the EU's “backstop”, the prime minister quietly accepted it, should the two sides fail to agree a better arrangement....

That has been the pattern with the Article 50 process: the EU tables a proposal that is angrily rejected, then quietly and substantially agreed to later. With the EU making the running on almost every thorny subject, it's no surprise that Davis & co are chasing the game”.

And the proposals, for what the EU calls the “transition” period and Mrs May the “implementation” period, are very thorny indeed, truly a vassal state situation with the UK, helplessly subject to every jot and comma of existing EU law, anything they choose to spring on us during the 21 months, subject to the sole interpretation and ruling of the European

Court of Justice and – do not forget – **capable of being extended.**

For most years of our long struggle, I and most campaigners thought that leaving would be some, great, glorious single event when **Britannia waives the rules.** The European Union and other affected states would agree and we would continue our commercial relationships with them more or less as at present but as an independent country. Now we realise it is much more complex and that there will have to be a series of steps.

In the run-up to the referendum I was talking to one of our most determined, long-serving campaigners about what might follow.

“ We can’t just haul up the anchor and sail away” I said.

“Oh” said this lady – the sort of person without whom we we would never have got to a referendum – “ I do so wish we could”. It was deeply heartfelt and that is a feeling with which I can fully sympathise, having myself been opposed to our membership since 1972. We abhor our subjection to the European project but we would do well to remember who brought this evil upon us. The EU does have a dark side but in its various stages has always been pretty straightforward about its objective of political union. I must refer you to this quotation from 1947

“No government dependent on a democratic vote could possibly agree in advance to the sacrifice that any adequate plan must involve. The British people must be led slowly and unconsciously into the abandonment of their traditional economic defences”.

That was written in a pamphlet called “Design for Europe” by Peter Thorneycroft, later Chancellor of the Exchequer and Chairman of the Conservative Party. So the British people who had spent all of their treasure and much of their blood, fighting a war to preserve freedom and democratic self government for themselves and others, were to be led “slowly and unconsciously” into a completely different form of government – of which they were to be kept in ignorance. That is the arrogance of the British promoters of the European

project from the beginning.

It is in our own political class where the real, evil, sly, manipulative authoritarianism has lain – not so much with the EU itself.

The EU could have taken nothing from us without this deliberate concealment at the highest level of the state, by our own people who were sworn by their most solemn oath to uphold our sovereignty. And much of it was done not only in arrogance but later in ignorance too. Time and again at various crises, the governments of EU countries had to remind their British colleagues that they should “Go home and read the treaties” which they or their predecessors had signed.

Our leaders had not even bothered to do their homework and find out what they were signed up to. That is the negligence and contempt in which they held us, our rights and freedoms.

Recent events suggest that making good this ignorance is still necessary if we are to extricate ourselves in the most advantageous way, ensuring the smooth continuity of trade – on both sides – upon which prosperity depends. Businesses have to pay their wages and their bills every week and it is no use having some splendid, glorious conception of our ideal final terms of independence without knowing the steps we have to take to get there – minimising disruption and giving businesses ample, timely advice so they may adapt.

Another Europhile, Lord Hattersley, was more straightforward, speaking in a BBC programme in 2000 . **“Not only was it wrong for us to deal superficially with what Europe involved, but we have paid the price for it ever since...Because every time there is a crisis in Europe people say, with some justification “Well, we would not have been part of this if we’d really known the implications”.** This is the nearest thing to an apology which I have ever heard from any politician! Well, people did realise the implications and gave their verdict in the referendum.

Those two quotations are the first and last from our CIB booklet “A House Divided” – one of the series on sale today. All of them are deeply researched, written in clear, moderate

terms and have been very handsomely designed by our Deputy Chairman, Philip Foster.

We still have a job on our hands, educating our MPs and peers on the size of the hole they have dug us into and how to get us out of it. We cannot do this without informed campaigners to remind them. Whilst we do not claim infallibility, we are sure that any campaigner who takes the trouble to “read, mark, learn and inwardly digest” these pamphlets will be better informed than many MPs and Ministers (as evidenced by many elementary mistakes in recent debates and statements in the media). As our representatives have not informed themselves, it is up to us to urge and help MPs achieve what Parliament already agreed by a large majority – to deliver the independence settlement, the verdict of the people in the referendum. No ifs and no buts about that! It is their duty and privilege to be the people’s servants.

I will now ask Philip to describe them. They consist of reliable, well-researched information, presented in a most attractive way with Philip’s great talent for design. Remember, these are all ammunition –effective weapons of mass liberation, powerful if you master them . We can provide them but you need to know well and practice how to handle them. Well-informed MPs and peers will then have no excuse for the ignorance and muddled thinking (feigned or real) behind which they have hidden for so long.