

# **CIB Chairman Edward Spalton retires but his legacy continues**

**We offer four reflections on a genuine hero of Brexit, on the occasion of his retirement**

Following many years of service, Edward Spalton has stepped down as Chairman of the Campaign for an Independent Britain. At the National Committee meeting at which he announced his retirement, he was unanimously elected Honorary President, in recognition of his achievements for the CIB.

A new Chairman has been elected, and we will shortly be making an announcement about this, and about some exciting new developments as CIB moves forward to tackle the challenges of a post-Brexit world.

Firstly though, we present the thoughts of four people who have known Edward and have reason to be grateful to him for all he has done in the cause of freedom and independence over so many years.

## **1. Anthony Coughlan, Associate Professor Emeritus in Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin**

*"I have admired and been a friend of Edward Spalton for many years and am sorry that he has had to step down from active campaigning in the CIB following decades of service. I am confident though that his experience, wisdom and political insight will be at the disposal of the democratic EU-critical movement for as long as he lives. EU-opponents here in the Republic of Ireland wish him many more years of political involvement."*

*"I first met Edward at various meetings of TEAM, the European Alliance of EU-critical movements. This had been set up by Danish and Norwegian EU-opponents in 1992, and specifically by Denmark's Jens-Peter Bonde and Norway's Kristen Nygaard, to link democratic EU-critical movements across Europe. In the 1990s and early 2000s a wide range of EU-critical organisations from different EU countries met annually to exchange campaign experience in such places as Copenhagen, Helsinki, Vienna, Prague, Ljubljana, Riga and London.*

*"Edward represented the CIB at these gatherings, for the CIB was affiliated to TEAM, and his contributions at those meetings were a touchstone of good sense, insightful, cogent and always delivered with the best of British good humour. He spoke for an independent Britain vis-à-vis the European Union, but he also saw the "Take Back Control" campaign in the different EU countries as part of an international movement in defence of national democracy. Since those days popular opposition to the EU's assault on democracy and hollowing out of the Nation State has grown in every EU country. Brexit is one result of this will and will greatly encourage such international opposition further.*

*"I understand that Edward's family grain-business had business connections with Ireland and that helped to give him a special interest in this country, North and South. Edward and the CIB have been significantly supportive of the Irish EU-critical movement in the nine EU-related referendums that have been held in the Republic of Ireland between our EEC Accession Treaty referendum in 1972 and the Fiscal Treaty referendum in 2012. On two occasions, in the 2001 Nice Treaty referendum and the 2008 Lisbon Treaty (EU Constitution) referendum, Irish voters rejected EU supranationalism; but then a toxic mixture of bullying and bribery was used to make people vote a second time to reverse the previous democratic result. Edward's was a voice of encouragement and support to*

*Irish EU-opponents during those dreadful episodes.*

*“My colleagues and I in the National Platform EU Research and Information Centre that we run here in Dublin have been enormously encouraged by Brexit. The UK leaving the EU means that the costs of EU membership to the Republic of Ireland now significantly outweigh any benefits. While Brexit causes continuing consternation amongst the Republic’s europhile Establishment, it is only a matter of time before Irish public opinion will swing in an EU-critical direction and the Republic too will regain its democracy and independence from the Brussels monstrosity. Future historians of our times are likely to see Edward Spalton as someone who has significantly contributed to the restoration of national democracy and independence in both our countries.”*

▪ Anthony Coughlan, Associate Professor Emeritus in Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, Spokesman, The National Platform EU Research and Information Centre

## **2. Ray Bassett, former diplomat, and Senior Fellow for EU affairs at the think tank Policy Exchange**

*“I am of course sorry to see Edward retire as Chairman of the CIB.*

*“He has been a good friend and a constant and informative correspondent with me over the last few years. I first met Edward and his wife Ellen at a CIB meeting and was immediately struck by their warm and engaging personalities. Both have a tremendous sense of fun and humour. Because he wears his wisdom lightly and is not given to vanity, this should not be taken as anyway indicative of a lack of gravitas. He is a person I admire hugely.*

*“Edward has always been prepared to offer wise advice, drawn*

*from his own experiences and his great general knowledge.*

*"In my own writings I have drawn on much of my interactions with Edward and I have no doubt but he will continue to offer his unique and very insightful observations post his retirement.*

*"I greatly value him as a friend and wish him and Ellen well in his retirement."*

- Ray Bassett. Ray is a former diplomat and senior fellow for EU affairs at the think tank Policy Exchange. He is also the author of Brexit: Options for the Border and Brexit and the Border.

### **3. Leigh Evans, Chairman of Facts4EU.Org, Vice Chairman of the CityUnited Project think-tank, Chairman of the China Analysis Group**

*"I've followed Edward's work for years but I first dealt with him during the EU Referendum campaign of 2016. Unfailingly courteous and generous, he gave our team great encouragement in those difficult days. On a personal level I can say that his support was invaluable.*

*"Over the years he has been a stalwart of the campaign to take back the independence and freedom of the United Kingdom from the yoke of foreign control. There is still much to do but he has put us in a very good place.*

*"Few know just how much Edward did behind the scenes and as a modest man he will never sing his own praises. I'm delighted the National Committee has seen fit to make him Honorary President of the CIB. No-one deserves it more."*

- Leigh Evans, Chairman, Facts4EU.Org

#### **4. Jim Reynolds, Honorary Secretary, The Campaign for an Independent Britain**

*"I would simply like to add that I was grateful to Edward for being my speechwriter for my public appearances which were so well received by both Greek and French audiences. I was merely the messenger. Edward was the wordsmith."*

#### **The CIB's exciting new future**

As stated above, we will shortly be announcing exciting new developments at CIB which will take us forward in addressing the new challenges ahead. Our work is most certainly not yet done. Watch this space....