

A United Kingdom – your CIBUK continues to campaign for the WHOLE of Britain

CIBUK Newsletter, 30th March, 2023

“A United Kingdom – your CIB continues to campaign for the WHOLE of Britain”

As we approach the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, it is entirely appropriate to devote our pre-Easter newsletter to fluctuating events unfolding in Northern Ireland.

If a week is a long time in politics, a month can seem an eternity. Hailed for his miraculous negotiation with the EU over Northern Ireland's future only four weeks ago, Rishi Sunak's fabled Windsor Framework now appears to be worse than the Protocol it was designed to replace.

Quite how much worse can be seen from the devastating report by the Conservative-backed European Research Group (ERG) and its star chamber of lawyers. Its summary conclusions are devastating:

- EU law will remain supreme in Northern Ireland.
- The rights of its people under the 1800 Act of Union will not be restored.
- The Stormont Brake is practically useless.
- The Framework has no exit except through a highly complex legal process.

Shameful and dishonest are not words we choose lightly. But in relation to this particular 'agreement' it is hard to describe it as anything else.

Expediency may have won out over principle for now, but it cannot be long before the holes and contradictions at the heart of the Windsor Framework eventually resurface. The fact that the DUP refuse to participate in the power-sharing executive in the NI Assembly tells its own story.

Our main focus this week therefore has been on events leading up to the vote on the Stormont Brake and we are grateful to our Affiliate organisations for their analysis on the constitutional and practical implications of the vote and on those who are most directly affected by it.

IN OTHER NEWS...

Boris Johnson endured a three-hour pecking from the Privileges Committee of the House of Commons last week, headed up by Harriet Harman, with among others, Bernard Jenkin prodding and poking the former Prime Minister on whatever it was he was supposed have done.

Johnson repeatedly stated that he had not broken any lockdown rules and it remains to be seen whether the Select Committee votes for his suspension from the House of Commons, triggering a potential by-election in his Uxbridge constituency.

Elsewhere in the Palace of Westminster events of a more important nature were taking place as MPs voted on the Stormont Brake, the consequences of which we set out in a series of articles below.

Meanwhile, King Charles' planned visit to Paris on Sunday was postponed after French unions called for a day of national protests over changes to the pensions system. French President Emmanuel Macron said the move made "common sense".

In economic news, the threat of financial contagion raised its head again last week following the collapse of two prominent

US banks – Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and Signature Bank – and the takeover of Credit Suisse by UBS.

Sharply rising interest rates appears to be the common factor behind the latest financial scare. Central banks around the world have been raising the cost of borrowing to try to control inflation. After years of very low interest rates this has come as a shock, particularly to investors holding government debt.

As yields on government bonds go up, their value goes down, leaving many banks with assets on their books which are now worth considerably less than they were. However, commentators are at pains to emphasise that this is not a repeat of 2008. Capital requirements have been considerably tightened and most experts believe the current troubles can be contained.

As ever CIBUK will maintain a watching brief.

In the meantime, it only remains for us to thank all our followers for their continued support and encouragement and to wish you all a very Happy Easter.

‘Why the Windsor Framework is dangerous’

For 25 years Northern Ireland has enjoyed uninterrupted peace and stability under the Belfast Agreement in a delicate arrangement based on mutual recognition between the competing claims of loyalists and nationalists.

Thanks to Sunak’s deal all of that now hangs in the balance according to Derrick Berthelsen in an affiliate article which we publish in full below. Whilst the elements of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement which gave succour to the Nationalists remain untouched, those which



persuaded the Unionist Community to support the deal were torn apart.

A full explanation on the deal's constitutional implications can be read in full [here](#).

Fishermen 'gutted' following Sunak's Framework Agreement



There are practical consequences to the Windsor Framework too. The Prime Minister was at pains in his initial statement to the House last month to stress the benefits to trade following his negotiations with the EU.

In relation to fishing, however, the absurdities and anomalies of the Northern Ireland Protocol have not been resolved by the latest round of talks.

Outstanding issues include:

- Continued restricted access to Irish waters for NI vessels.
- An ongoing risk that NI trawlers landing their catch into their home ports will continue to be treated as though they are coming from a third country.
- Continued additional costs and delays associated with bringing seafood to NI from GB.

We are grateful to Brian Monteith for his in-depth research on the matter which we share in the enclosed affiliate article.

'Handing back control'

We leave the final say on the Windsor Framework to Evelyn Farr, aka Caroline Bell – a former civil servant who sheds light on the reality of Rishi Sunak's discredited re-negotiation. As one who project-managed EU Exit tax legislation during the Brexit negotiations while attached to the civil service, she should know of what she speaks. And the rest of us should pay attention.

The Windsor Framework is a fraud, she concludes, which has been perpetrated on the British people.

In two devastating articles she exposes the thread-bare substance of the agreement and its dishonest implementation into law without a parliamentary vote.

We are grateful for permission to share these articles with our readers and we would like to thank our affiliate, ***Briefings for Britain*** for allowing us to do so.

We provide links to articles on other topics we have covered over the past week which we list below:

The Rejoiners really are coming – to reverse Brexit

VIDEO INTERVIEW with Lord Cruddas on Rishi, Boris & Conservatism



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