

Why the EU would benefit from a free UK

The advantages to the European Union (the EU) of the United Kingdom leaving its failing political Superstate experiment are seldom mentioned. Yet "Brexit" would benefit the countries of Europe even if the political class and bureaucrats don't or won't acknowledge these benefits. There is plenty of historical evidence to prove that a strong, free UK is much better for Europe generally, especially for its ordinary peoples. We would be far more use to everyone as an independent country than as a subservient vassal administered by EU puppet politicians.

The UK, the Empire and Commonwealth have often come to the rescue of our European neighbours in their 'hours of need', not least during the Napoleonic and World Wars. It is somewhat humbling to read a letter of gratitude dating from the 1920s from the British colonial administrator to the local inhabitants in Bechuanaland (now Botswana) thanking them for their generosity in helping to save the poorer starving people of Poland.

The positive impact of these islands on mainland Europe goes back many centuries. During the Dark Ages, Christianity was kept alive on the Celtic fringe whose missionaries subsequently helped to re-introduce the faith to a largely heathen continent. John Wycliffe's ideas and teachings spread from Oxford to the Continent and provided an intellectual spark which was taken up by Jan Hus in Bohemia and later by Martin Luther, becoming the Protestant Reformation. Many of the foundations of Enlightenment thought and its predecessor, the revolutionary scientific thinking of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, were laid in these islands by such great luminaires as Isaac Newton, Adam Smith, John Locke and David Hume. In the nineteenth century our country saw great advances

in science and technology as the Industrial Revolution gathered momentum.

These are a small selection of the cultural, intellectual, industrial and political developments which have spread outwards from this enterprising country.

Over the centuries, the United Kingdom has provided Europe with stubborn military resolve, preventing the subjugation of the continent by ambitious, delusional, autocratic leaders. At the same time our ideas have contributed to the advance of enlightened material progress. How could such a small place, with so few people, achieve so much? The simple answer is because our history, philosophical outlook and national characteristics are so different from those of neighbouring countries.

Our history, somewhat by serendipitous accident, has evolved over a long period, traceable from at least as far back as King Alfred of Wessex and moving – at least until 1973 – towards increasing rule by consent under just and equitable (common) law. The concept of government of the people, for the people, by the people first appeared in 1384.

Our philosophical divergence (mainly empiricism, where knowledge and reality come from experience, versus idealism, where reality is a product of the mind) can be traced through William of Ockham, David Hume, John Locke and others; their empiricism providing a stark contrast to the idealism of continental Europe, exemplified by, for example, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Immanuel Kant. This is a subject briefly explored by Peter Osborne in an article entitled 'Europe's dogmatic ruling class remains wedded to its folly'.

Our behaviour tends to be more individualistic than our European counterparts as shown through research by John W. Hunt (Professor of Organisational Behaviour). He noted, *"This helps explain why talented people in Britain often prefer to*

work in the media and professions or start their own businesses, where there is greater freedom and teamwork is less important."

We appear at our happiest and best when can exert our colourful, irreverent individuality instead of being forced to conform to some drab overpowering orthodoxy. This national characteristic is powerfully expressed in our great literature. For example, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, which features sometimes bawdy individuality, rather than pious conformity or Jane Austin's opinionated heroine, Elizabeth Bennett, in her popular novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

Yet it is in our attitude to the future where our national temperament really stands out, for we believe – sometimes against formidable odds – that tomorrow can be better than today and many of us share the belief that we have a responsibility as individuals to make life better for family, friends and indeed, society as a whole.

By nature, we don't feel comfortable with EU solidarity, EU autocracy and pursuit of (naked) power over others. So it is obvious that our country, differing from the European mainstream, will always sit uneasily within an ideological federalist EU superstate, and as long as we do so, our potential will be dramatically diminished.

However, politicians and bureaucrats are happy with the current direction of EU travel; it means more power to them – indeed, they are free to increase the degree of control over ordinary people both here and in the rest of the EU because there is no restraint except that which they impose upon themselves. There is no alternative political socio-economic model for their performance to be judged against. An emasculated UK within the EU can be ignored and dissent suppressed.

The situation changes dramatically for the better – both here

and in the EU – with the emergence of a free, independent UK. We can do our own, democratic, self-reliant, enterprising thing and provide an alternative model for to the peoples of Europe and beyond – a model they could possibly emulate and from which they could certainly gain inspiration. An independent UK would provide a reality check on the EU's ruling élite and act as a potential facilitator of popular restraint upon their self-delusional excesses. It would be harder for the EU élite to continue to ignore the wishes, hopes and fears of their subject peoples when people could look across the Channel and see the benefits of, for example: lower tax, fewer and better thought out regulations, more transparent, accountable and therefore, effective government, greater personal liberty, less corruption and waste, the rule of law and protection against arbitrary actions by an overbearing state.

Our example, as a free country, independent of the EU and focusing on what we do best could help 'toughen up' the rest of Europe, helping our neighbours survive in a dangerous world and inspiring them to build prosperity in a competitive one. Most of all, Brexit could provide the peoples of Europe and the wider world, with something that is sadly missing these days – hope for tomorrow.