

William Hague's political schizophrenia

William Hague stated at the end of last year that he is minded to vote for Britain to remain in the European Union partly because he fears "Brexit" could lead to the breakup of the UK and partly because "Brexit" would weaken the EU. This has hardly been a case of coming off the fence. Hague's euroscepticism has always been suspect. The general public saw through its shallowness in the 2001 General Election when they returned Labour to power and ignored the Tories' half-hearted campaign under Hague's leadership. His current position is much confused both intellectually and politically. He has failed to grasp that it is not possible to believe in democracy as well as EU membership.

BREXIT

William Hague may have been in the forefront of politics for many years and is much respected. However this does not confer any automatic right for his confused views on the EU to be taken seriously. On the other hand, it is useful for those of us who support withdrawal to listen to such a Europhile ally of the PM as it will help us to sharpen our attacks on supporters of "remain".

In this piece, where I comment respectfully upon his words in a Daily Telegraph article dated 22nd December, I will be using the excellent rebuttal of the Europhiles' arguments by Robert Oulds on this website, which also contains a rebuttal by CIB of 7 major Europhile issues.

SECURITY AND NON-DEMOCRACY

The security of Europe rests not with the EU; indeed the EU does much to unsettle it. Most certainly security depends not upon the forces of Luxemburg or even of the other smaller 25

EU members nor even with the might of the UK with France and Germany but upon NATO, where we work with the USA. It is NATO that provides security for Europe and the wider world. [Please see footnote A].

The EU has endangered that security with interference in the internal affairs of states from the Balkans, the Ukraine, Iraq, and North Africa as well as by its trade negotiations, as in Ghana for example. The EU provides no safety for anyone through its sclerotic involvement in foreign affairs. Yet Mr Hague says "We still need the EU to provide the safe harbour for the docking of fragile democracies, and it would be strange to champion that idea but abandon it ourselves."

I need hardly remind Mr Hague that there is not an ounce of UK-style Democracy in the EU. The EU "parliament" has only limited powers [Please see footnote B] and Mr Hague has acknowledged its limitations: "As to the European parliament, it does not remotely provide democratic accountability for the simple reason that most voters across Europe do not take elections to it seriously and are not usually aware of the identity of their MEPs. It is not possible to be accountable and anonymous at the same time." He misses the point of course. It is just because the EU parliament is without a strong set of democratic teeth that no one can take it seriously. Ask the MEP's in the UK.

Accordingly the idea of there being a democratic dock within the EU for "fragile democracies" is nonsense. The EU actually destroys national democracy. It was designed to do so and will not change its course.

EUROSCEPTICISM OF MR HAGUE

"And I am often asked whether the years I spent in EU meetings and negotiations made me less Eurosceptic than when I toured the country 15 years ago with my 'Save the Pound' campaign" said Mr Hague. "The answer to that is "no", since close

acquaintance with central bodies of the European Union does nothing to create enthusiasm for them. The Commission itself, generally the best-performing of the EU institutions, could benefit from the spending cuts and rigour to which most national governments have been subjected. The European Court of Justice has pushed the boundaries of treaties and is capable of imposing burdens on businesses which suggest a detachment from reality.”

“Even more worryingly, some of the most cherished projects of European unity are in deep trouble – the Schengen zone buckling under the weight of new migration, and the euro bedevilled by flaws which were obvious at the start. There is a legitimate question as to whether the EU can survive in its current form two or three decades from now.”

These statements are unquestionably true. The totalitarian Commission maintains its fundamental straight course onwards towards an united non-democratic federal auperstate, as it always has done. Mr Hague knows this full well.

“It is high time for a vigorous debate to get going. So far, what I have written above would be cheered on by my old friend Liam Fox, who has advocated withdrawal, by old Cabinet colleagues tempted to campaign to leave in the forthcoming referendum, and even by Nigel Farage as he reels from the discovery that a rebel who joins you from another party simply becomes a rebel in your own.” Correct in part only!

EUROPHILIA AND FEDERALISM OF MR HAGUE AND THE IRRELEVENCY OF THE PM’S NEGOTIATIONS

“Yet here I part company with these fellow critics of the EU, distinguishing between deploring the state of an organisation and deciding it is best to leave it. I wait, first of all, for the outcome of the negotiations the Prime Minister has launched, the importance of which should not be underestimated in continental capitals.”

Mr Hague forgets that how many issues which desperately need addressing are not on the PM's little list of four items which he is discussing. There is no reference to the ECJ and its control over the UK Supreme Court, Fisheries, the Free Movement of Peoples, the UK's right to represent itself on global bodies (The Top Tables), the cost of our membership, the red tape suffered by the 80% of UK GDP involved only with internal UK trade, reform of the CAP and so on.

In conclusion there is no substance to the PM's negotiations or "thin gruel" as Mr Rees Mogg called them. Their conclusion will be trumpeted as a success but in reality, the fanfare will merely be a repeat of Chamberlain's "Heston moment" in 1938 as John Petley refers in his January 2016 Article on the CIB web site.

THE ECONOMY OF THE UK

"The arguments about what is best for our economy will rage back and forth. Those who say we have to be in the single market to shape it and benefit from it have the edge and that will be a vital edge as the public weighs the implications of their choice for their jobs and businesses" says Mr Hague.

Many businessmen and economists would disagree. We can access the Single Market from outside the EU, by joining Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, who have plenty of say in the formation of EEA- relevant regulation, even if they do not take part in the final vote. People like Lord Bamford and Sir James Dyson may not have made detailed analyses of the best exit strategy, but their confidence that we can not only survive but prosper outside the EU is well founded. With only 20% of UK GDP linked to total global exports and of that only a diminishing 7% of UK GDP comprising trade with the EU, it makes little sense for that tiny dwindling tail of 7% to wag the growing dog of 93%!

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that Mr Hague is politically and economically generalising and being economical with the actuality. There is no attempt by Mr Hague to support his line of argument with facts and reasoning. Mr Hague's current position is much confused both intellectually and politically. It is not possible to believe in national democracy and at the same time support our bondage to the EU?

Furthermore, how can Mr Hague think that the UK has any possible useful influence inside this total disaster?

Why a tariff union, Mr Hague? It is entirely counterproductive to the UK trade outside the EU which comprises 64% of UK exports.

Why must the UK guarantee the obligations and debts of the Euro and its failed experiments to the ECB and the IMF? This weakens the UK and makes it vulnerable as it borrows ever more to do this and then borrows more to pay interest on the borrowed sums! Hence Mr Osborne imposes more and more taxes on those who can least afford it!

Why has the UK lost so many of its seats on important world bodies just to be represented by one member acting for 28 with conflicting and confused objectives? Why support our membership of a political union if all we are talking about is a free trade area, Mr Hague?

In short, Mr Hague, who seemed to show such promise when he made that memorable speech at the 1977 Conservative Party Conference when he was only sixteen years old, has proved one of the great political disappointments of recent years. His schizophrenia over the EU suggests that for all the hype of his early years, he possibly never was a suitable person to lead our country after all.

FOOTNOTES [FOR WHICH I AM INDEBTED TO THE CIB.]

A) NATO: *Since 1999 NATO changed from being a highly*

successful defensive alliance into an aggressive, go anywhere-bash anyone organisation with unlimited ambitions to “humanitarian interventions” anywhere in the world which suit US/EU policy. The first such adventure was Yugoslavia (1999), an unprovoked attack, admitted to be illegal but thought, as in “1066 & All That”, to be a “Good Thing”- also completely contrary to the then existing NATO charter but Blair & Clinton just did it. And the Bundeswehr used the opportunity to cease being “citizens in uniform” and become a force able to operate overseas. As General Naumann (whose title would have been Chief of the Great General Staff in palmier days) put it “German forces will be engaged for the protection of the market and access without hindrance to the raw materials of the entire world”. NATO is up to its neck and beyond in the operations in the Ukraine and elsewhere, targeted against Russia. Victoria Nuland, US Under Secretary of State, boasted of spending 5 billion dollars destabilising Ukraine and the EU itself, plus sundry intelligence agencies (like the Bundesnachrichtendienst and state funded NGOs like the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung) are not far behind). The EU has a slightly different terminology for these operations and calls them “The Export of Stability”.

B) The Powers of the EU parliament: – Actually the parliament (so-called) has acquired some powers, like confirming or rejecting the proposed President and members of the EU Commission. Whilst its function is mainly “advise and Consent”, it can withhold consent in committee and sometimes does. The Commission with the vital and perpetual sole power of initiative then has to come back with a modified proposal. What the parliament (so-called) does not have is any democratic legitimacy, as Mr Hague rightly points out. There is not much demos but quite a lot of kratos in it. It is by no means powerless and is asserting more power and influence than ever. If the parliament’s majority opinion (taken from the large central groups that control the EU parliament) coincides with that of the Commission, it is very likely to prevail. The

European Council (of prime ministers and presidents) would have difficulty in resisting determined, long-sustained, combined pressure by the Commission and Parliament singing from the same hymn sheet. The EU institutions do have a life and power of their own – just as Dr. Hallstein (see Edward Spalton's CIB earlier paper) intended.

Photo by Foreign and Commonwealth Office 