

***“Politics, placards and protests.  
An event-filled weekend with your CIBUK ”***



**Dear Subscribers,**

It was your correspondent's privilege last weekend to attend the annual conference of our distinguished affiliate, The Bruges Group, which this year took place at the Army and Navy Club off Pall Mall in Central London.

Adding to the drama was the sight of thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators passing directly beneath our window during the afternoon session, making life awkward for the guest speakers who struggled to make themselves heard above the noise of the protestors outside. It lasted roughly an hour-and-a-half before finally moving on, by which time we were all in need of a cup of tea.

Nonetheless this was a stimulating day of debate and discussion on topics critical to the national interest which also included lively exchanges between speakers and members of the audience.

In writing the enclosed newsletter we hope to persuade our subscribers to spread the word and petition their MPs on the vital issues raised at this year's conference. These are matters which concern us all.

**The Bruges Group Conference 2023**

# 1. Immigration

## Lord Peter Lilley



In what was perhaps the highlight of the day, Peter Lilley demolished the economic case for mass immigration in a forensic analysis which brought the audience to its feet.

### **The case for mass immigration he said rested on three foundations:**

- It was needed to fill skill shortages.
- It would assuage overall shortages in the labour market.
- It would grow the economy.

### **He went on to identify the three main advocates of mass immigration:**

- Big business which prefers cheap labour to capital investment as its route to growth.
- The universities and higher education sector which depend on students and their dependents to fill their coffers.
- The cultural and academic elites who oppose controls on immigration on the grounds that such a policy is racist and curbs diversity.

### **The theory he said has failed on all three counts:**

- In relation to skills, this was entirely a UK problem that needed to be rectified by a UK government and UK businesses which should not rely on trained operators from abroad to fill the skills gaps in their own sectors.
- On labour shortages, he said there are record numbers sitting idle doing nothing and claiming benefit.
- And on growing the economy he said the effect of cheap labour has been to impede innovation, prevent automation, lower productivity and clobber wages in the process.

### ***'Let the market operate'***

Citing the shortage of lorry drivers during the pandemic when the UK economy could not rely on European drivers, he said the market eventually found its own equilibrium. The shortage of drivers in the UK meant there was a huge demand, driving up wages for those who were qualified.

Such were the rewards that many UK workers took up the challenge, retrained as lorry drivers and the equilibrium in the market was restored. And all this was done without the recourse to cheap foreign labour.

### ***'Train our own people up'***

Hertfordshire University has been doing a fantastic job training up nurses and doctors. But instead of expanding domestic training, UK governments decided to ration the places on offer which meant going abroad and finding their fully trained nurses and doctors there.

For a fraction of the cost of housing millions of additional NHS workers from abroad, we could have trained up our own, thereby easing the chronic housing and infrastructure shortages which are now blighting the country.

## **Nissan Sunderland**

In marked contrast to many big businesses, Nissan has taken the trouble to train up the local Sunderland workforce which is now one of the most productive in the country and an example to other manufacturers around the world. All it took was some remedial education and hands-on training and the response from their staff has exceeded all expectations.

## ***'Immigrants are consumers as well as producers'***

A blindingly obvious point you would have thought, but one which seems to have totally escaped our policymakers and civil service. No matter how rich or poor you are, everyone needs a roof over their head and schools and hospitals for their families. Far from being a net-benefit, mass-migrant labour is actually a substantial cost to the taxpayer.

## **Higher Education**

All the hidden costs of mass immigration are also manifest in higher education. With so many students and their dependents coming over, accommodation costs have soared as demand exceeds supply, making life even harder for the UK's already indebted student population to compete educationally or financially. Scarcely can a policy have been better designed to impede the life chances of Britain's own youth.

## **Asylum Seekers & Third World Migration**

In wrestling with the current migration crisis, the UK government might do worse than to look across the Channel to see how they do things over there.

- The French Courts are three times more likely to turn down asylum applications than the UK
- 34,000 were deported from France in the last full year before Covid.
- All of which beggars the question: if the French can do it, why can't we?

## **Conclusion**

Lord Lilley concluded with a series of urgent proposals across a range of sectors.

- More investment and training per head for our own population.
- A ban on overseas students bringing their dependents.
- Stop the cross-subsidy of university education by charging overseas students to come here.
- Instead reduce numbers and raise the student grant for our own people.
- Get as tough on illegal asylum claims as many European countries do.
- Put policies in place now before the demand to come over here from the developing world overwhelms us.
- Encourage trade development with the third world to raise living standards on the ground, thereby removing incentives to leave.
- The above actions are a matter of urgency. We are full up!

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## **2. The Unelected State**



## Christopher Chope MP

At last! An MP who is talking about the World Health Organisation's plans to take over lock-down policy from national governments, a scandal which has been covered extensively by our own research affiliate, [Brexit Facts4EU.Org](https://BrexitFacts4EU.Org).

According to Sir Christopher Chope MP, it is the latest and most egregious example of the unelected global elite attempting to usurp and undermine the sovereign will of democratically elected governments by telling them what to do in the case of future pandemics.

But the growth of unelected bodies is not just a matter of international concern. It is fast becoming an established fact within our own system of government according to the member for Christchurch in Dorset.

### Growth of quangos

In a wide-ranging speech, Sir Christopher cited the huge growth of unelected and unaccountable quangos which now play a huge role in determining policy outcomes.

From Natural England and IPSOS to the environmental agency and the Climate Change Committee, he said their influence all but drowns out the will of Parliament and establishes a huge barrier between the manifesto commitments of elected governments and the people who voted them in.

### Growth of Statutory Instruments

Another danger he identified was the growth of statutory instruments – a type of secondary legislation which allow the provisions of an Act of Parliament to be subsequently brought into force or altered without Parliament having to pass a new Act.

This gives ministers huge discretion to alter or amend provisions of the parent act without parliamentary scrutiny of any kind. These are in effect executive orders by another name.

He gave as an example the Coronavirus legislation, slipped out under the Public Health Act without any scrutiny which criminalised people in their own homes.

### ***'Yes Minister' – a documentary not a comedy***

To the charge that civil service controls the government and not the other way around, Lord Lilley said that when he was Social Security Minister, he experienced initial opposition to many of his ideas but won his department over because he had thought through what he wanted.

He said ministers must have a clear idea of what they want to do and the problems currently experienced by the present government are as much down to lack of political leadership as to the obstinacy of their civil servants.

In his concluding remarks Sir Christopher said that the 'unelected state' is now a huge problem for governments and one that needs to be urgently addressed. It is also a topic on which CIBUK will continue to campaign.

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### 3. The Legal Case for Brexit

by Barney Reynolds



The afternoon session consisted of two highly technical speeches on the legal and economic legacy of Brexit by Barney Reynolds, partner in law at Shearman & Sterling, and Bernard Connolly, economist and former adviser to the EU on monetary policy.

I regret there is neither the time nor the space to do full justice to their lectures beyond providing a brief summary and key-note recommendations.

#### **Securing Britain's legal Independence**

In a detailed analysis Barney Reynolds discussed the continual encroachment of EU law into post-Brexit Britain, its mutual incompatibility with British Common Law, and the corrosive effect of attempting to combine the two. This was one reason why it remains necessary to repeal inherited EU as soon as possible especially in relation to Northern Ireland where the Windsor Agreement continues to give primacy to EU law over UK law inside the Province.

For those who wish to read the speech in full, a copy of Barney's lecture is now up on The Bruges Group website and can be found [here](#).

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### 4. Western Economic Policy 1995-2023

by Bernard Connolly



Bernard Connolly, who was sacked by the European Commission in 1995 following the publication of his book *The Rotten Heart of Europe*, provided a historical and wide-ranging tour-de-force on the mistaken macro-economic policies committed on both sides of the Atlantic since the 1990s which have led us to our present plight.

Key among them was the decision to maintain artificially low interest rates for far too long precipitating the global financial crisis which followed, and the failure of the banks and EU officials to address the deep-seated flaws within European Monetary System which continue to cripple the eurozone to the present day.

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### 5. 'Never give up. A matter of conviction.'



## by Sir Bill Cash

In a glorious tribute act to mark his imminent retirement from Parliament, Sir Bill Cash gave a rousing speech to Conference on why the UK was right to vote in the way it did back in 2016.

He chartered the history of Britain's membership of the then EEC from the day the UK government signed the Treaty of Rome in 1972 consigning UK powers to unelected bureaucrats in Brussels all the way up to the 2016 Referendum which was its revolutionary counterpoint.

### ***Brexit has NOT failed***

Sir Bill was at pains to emphasise that we have achieved much since we left the European Union, contrary to the many misleading messages among Rejoiners.

- We have returned sovereignty to Parliament with the power to make and unmake our own laws.
- We have the right to keep, amend or repeal EU law.
- We rolled out our own Covid vaccination programme during the Pandemic.
- We have led Europe in the defence of Ukraine.
- We are signatories to the AUKUS partnership, a trilateral security partnership along with Australia and the United States which will help maintain UK influence in the Indo-Pacific region.
- We have signed multiple trade-deals across the world.

### ***On Immigration***

- Sir Bill conceded that we have failed to control our borders since leaving the EU and that this national emergency must be addressed.
- In the battle to secure our own borders, he assured Conference that sovereignty trumps international law and that we can pass laws to control immigration.

### ***'Hearts of Gold and Spines of Steel'***

In winding up the Conference debate he urged delegates not to give up. Brexit, he said was a fact not a slogan. We now need to have the courage to put it into practice IN FULL.

*We are grateful to our affiliate The Bruges Group for hosting the event, details of which can be found on their website [here](#).*

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## ***And finally...***

*In a show of solidarity, your CIBUK correspondent joined the many thousands who gathered on The Strand last Sunday afternoon (26<sup>th</sup> November) to take*

*part in the March Against Anti-Semitism, the largest march of its kind since the 1930's.*

*Foremost among the marchers were ex-Prime Minister Boris Johnson and a man who is after his old job, Reform Leader Richard Tice. It was an honour and a pleasure to be amongst them, upholding the proud tradition in Britain of standing up to antisemitism and defending Israel's right to exist.*

*In relation to the Bruges Group Conference the day before, may we be equally fearless in demanding the comprehensive Brexit we all voted for.*

*With all best wishes,*



**Ben Philips**

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