



Anne-Elisabeth Moutet  
**IN THE  
SHADOW OF  
BONAPARTE**  
p.11



Ambassador Piotr Wilczek  
**ONE FOR  
ALL AND ALL  
FOR ONE**  
p.9



OLD-SCHOOL JOURNALISM - REPORTING YOU CAN TRUST



Issue #3 | March 2019

# THE CONSERVATIVE

A fortnightly Newspaper by the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE) | theconservative.online

## Sweden Democrats MODERATE ANYWHERE,

## but in Sweden

### THE PARTY HAS DOUBLED IN EVERY ELECTION

In the European Parliament election in May, the Sweden Democrats are set to double their number of MEPs, from two to four. Based on the most recent polls the party's result is at an all-time high of 18 per cent and the party could plausibly even elect five MEPs. It is therefore probable that the Sweden Democrats will be the second largest Swedish party in the EP, after the Social Democrats, following the election.

In the last decade, the Sweden Democrats have grown to a major political force. On average the party has doubled in every election since it was founded in 1988. The Sweden Democrats entered the national parliament with 5.7 per cent of the vote in 2010. Four years later they had 12.9 per cent, and last September the party increased its share of the vote to 17.8 per cent, taking 62 seats in the 349-seat parliament.



The party entered the European Parliament in 2014 with 9.7 per cent of the vote electing two MEPs.

*The Conservative* takes a closer look at Sweden Democrats and finds a party that would be seen as a moderate centrist party in any country, other than in Sweden. The main factor

that has enabled the party to grow so fast is that the voters are tired of being lectured about multiculturalism and tolerance. The voters want a normal European discussion on the benefits and drawbacks of migration. The *Conservative* profiles Jimmie Åkesson, the national chairman of the party, and interviews Peter Lundgren the party's delegation leader for the EP election. Peter Lundgren, an ECR MEP, is a former truck driver who was nominated for the Parliament Magazine award as the best EU parliamentarian in the transport section six months after winning his first election. **CONTINUED ON p.10**

Daniel Dalton MEP

### REPORT CLOSES A "GAPING LOOPHOLE"

A "gaping loophole" which allows third country nationals to hide their criminal records in the European Union was closed by MEPs. **p.3**

Brexit

### SWISS-EU TALKS STUCK AMID PARALLELS WITH BREXIT

The similarities between the Brexit negotiations and the ongoing negotiations between the European Union and Switzerland are obvious and striking. **p.5**

Jan Zahradil

### CAMPAIGN DIARY Part II.

Paris, London, Prague, Belcoo and Blacklion **p.16**

Conservative Icons

### JOSEF PIEPER

by Roger Kimball

More and more, so-called liberal arts institutions are vocational schools at best; at worst they are circuses of narcissism. **p.18**

Conservative Wine

### MACRON'S VIEWS ON BREXIT ARE LEAVING A SOUR TASTE

by Iain Martin

Presidents of countries that want the British to continue buying their wine, and much else, after Brexit should try being pleasant for a change. **p.21**

Conservative Books

### Jane Austen's PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

by James Delingpole

The genius of Jane Austen is that she also works quite brilliantly as she is often seen today: as a creator of feisty, sparky heroines, a sublime comedian and spinner of gloriously romantic yarns. **p.22**

SPECIAL FEATURE  
**POPULISM**



## CONSERVATIVE APPROACHES TO MIGRATION POLICY REFORM, AND THE AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE

An Interview with Tony Abbott, former Prime Minister of Australia

Tony Abbott, having ended the humanitarian catastrophe of people smugglers reaching Australia by water, points to a successful resolution of a migration crisis, and urges Europe and its leadership to take a hard stance on illegal migration. He further emphasizes on how certain misconceptions about the nature of refugee and migrant status can lead to a false moral responsibility narrative, and subsequently exacerbate illegal migration challenges.

How Europe now deals with the *Völkerwanderung* is arguably the most important question of our age. **CONTINUED ON p.15**







# We don't need NO Education

by Richard Milsom

The first two issues of "The Conservative" have been a resounding success. The response from readers has been overwhelming and letters and comments from across Europe and the rest of the world clearly show that there has been a genuine deep-felt demand for a newspaper from a conservative perspective. We intend to build on this and aim to continue to deliver and improve.

This issue contains a special feature on populism. The word is rarely defined, but it is certain that populism isn't popular in Brussels. The label of populism is applied to anything the establishment dislike such as referenda, tax cuts, sovereignty; and, on anyone the establishment despise from the utmost left to the furthers right. In our special feature on populism we seek to define and discuss populism without the normal disdain but as a potentially legitimate response to policies that commanded support only in a narrow section of society; a reaction to the politics of the metropolitan bureaucratic class, with mainstream middleclass outlooks on the problems of society.

We also have a profile of the Swedish Democrats and its leader Jimmie Åkesson. We look at how a party can grow when the established parties aren't responsive to the popular will and let a small section of society dominate policy in an important area such as immigration. By contrast our interview with Tony Abbott, former prime minister of Australia, who adopted stricter border control to ensure immigration was lawful and controllable, to save lives.

In the culture section we have a travel guide to Madrid, a book review of Jane Austen's book Pride and Prejudice, a discussion of the trade and politics of wine, and what we can learn about the Soviet system through music.

In news we cover the EU's efforts to tackle strategic propaganda by Russia, the Chinese government implementation of its social credit score

programme, Rwanda launching a satellite to provide broadband internet to schools in remote areas, upcoming elections in Lithuania and Spain, and the recent elections in Estonia and Nigeria. We look at what impact a large influx of illegal immigration has had on polls in Spain. Finally, also have a short article on how thousands of Dutch high school students have been skipping class to protest about climate change.

The article about Dutch high school students skipping school to attend climate protests is illustrative because similar strikes are occurring across the continent. It struck a core with us at *The Conservative*. While we like to see dedication in young people, and also can see why they worry about environmental problems, we don't necessarily think skipping school is the right way to go. Students creating more work for already overworked teachers by skipping class, learning less, wreaking havoc with lesson planning and test schedules isn't the most efficient means to deal with climate change. If anything, the waste of school meals, poster sprayed with environmentally hazardous paint and later disregarded, and kind mothers who drive their children to the demonstrations by car will, on the margin, cause further environmental damage. Would it not have been better if the students, instead of skipping school, had demanded their schools open on Saturday to enable them to take extra classes on the natural sciences to learn more about climate change.

The environmental challenges we face will never be solved by strikes; it will be solved by hard-won knowledge we get through science. The basis for this science starts in school with tough long hours of lonely work learning math, physics, chemistry and biology. As always, the solution to our problems is down to the dedication, hard work, and knowledge of individuals not the emotional, short term demands of groups. ■

## ACRE WELCOMES SEVERAL NEW MEMBERS



“Our voice and vision for a reformed EU must be heard. We need to counter the generic arguments of the other parties, who regardless of the frontman, all want the same thing - more Europe.”

The Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE) is Europe's fastest growing political movement. At the Annual General Assembly, ACRE welcomed four parties: The Bulgarian and Northern Macedonian National Movements (VMRO); the Democratic Party of Kosovo and the Enough is Enough Conservative Party in Serbia. The four new members officially joined the conservative alliance during 'La Convenzione Blu' Council Meeting & Summit in Rome. Since our foundation in 2010, we have become the third largest of the European political groups with an active family of representations in the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the Committee of Regions and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

At the General Assembly meeting attended by all of ACRE's 42 existing member parties, ACRE President Jan Zahradil said, "We are proud to accept new conservative parties into our family; our party is the fastest growing political movement in Europe and continues to receive regular applications for membership."

The **VMRO Party**, or **Bulgarian National Movement**, was founded in 1991 (the successor to the historic Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization), along with the North Macedonia **VMRO-DPMNE Party** (the sister party of the Bulgarian VMRO). The leader of the Bulgarian National Movement is Krasimir Karakachanov, who is currently Minister of Defence. Since December 2017 VMRO-DPMNE has been led by Hristijan Mickoski.

The **Democratic Party of Kosovo** was founded in 1999 and is currently the third-largest political party in Kosovo. The leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo is Kardi Veseli, who is currently Chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo. The former leader of the DPK is Hashim Thaci who was elected President of Kosovo in 2016.

**Dosta je bilo (Enough is Enough)** is a political party in Serbia founded by former Minister of Economy Saša Radulović in 2014. Radulović is a harsh critic of corruption not only in Serbian, but also in the media across other former Yugoslav states. During his ministerial tenure Radulović tried to bring transparency based on a vision of open government. In the most recent 2016 elections, Dosta je bilo tripled its support and succeeded in securing 16 out of 250 seats in the National Assembly, as well as 7 out of 120 seats at the Assembly of the Autonomous province of Vojvodina.

All ACRE parties are dedicated to the centre-right values expressed in the Reykjavik Declaration. The values that underpin our politics are individual liberty, national sovereignty, parliamentary democracy, private property, limited government, free trade, family values and the devolution of power.

Jan Zahradil, ACRE President and candidate for Commission Presidency, welcomed the new allies and stressed, "Our voice and vision for a reformed EU must be heard. We need to counter the generic arguments of the other parties, who regardless of the frontman, all want the same thing - more Europe."

ACRE also heard applications to join from The Swedish Democrats, VOX Party from Spain, Debout La France Party and The Forum for Democracy in the Netherlands. These applications will proceed to full membership at the next regular Assembly in June 2019. ■



Kristina Winberg MEP

## MEPs vote to establish new Internal Security Fund

A new fund that will support Member States' efforts to boost security within and between their countries has been endorsed during a vote in the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

As currently proposed, the Internal Security Fund will have a budget of just under 5 billion euros to support objectives such as increasing the exchange of information between law enforcement authorities, tackling radicalization, and strengthening crime prevention.

Speaking after the vote, Kristina Winberg, who followed the proposals for the ECR Group, said:

"We are all unfortunately aware of the struggles Member States are facing in the fight against terror. It's a cross border issue and we need to do what we can to support Member States' to help them cooperate more effectively, exchange information and share best practices on tackling terror groups that pose a threat to Europe."



The new legislation will also support improving emergency response as well as strengthening the focus on the external dimension of the EU's security challenges.

Winberg continued:

"A number of the challenges we are facing are a direct consequence of the failure to secure the EU's the external

borders. While this new fund won't solve all our problems, it is another small step that provides targeted and flexible support to help member states improve the security of their citizens."

The report will now enter institutional negotiations with the Council of Ministers in order to find an agreement on the final legislation." ■



# Retune the EU

## JAN ZAHRADIL



#RetuneTheEU  
acreurope.eu/janzahradil



twitter.com/ZahradilJan  
facebook.com/jzahradil  
instagram.com/janzahradil

Daniel Dalton MEP

## Report closes a “gaping loophole” in cross-border crime fight



A “gaping loophole” which allows third country nationals to hide their criminal records in the European Union was closed by MEPs.

They backed legislation, led through the European Parliament by ECR MEP Daniel Dalton, establishing a central database that will alert Member States if individuals have previous convictions in the EU.

Mr Dalton told MEPs that the change was essential to fight crime and terrorism, in a world where people were increasingly mobile and cross-border crime was on the rise.

He said: “There is currently an efficient way to identify previous convictions for EU nationals but not for people from outside the bloc or those with dual nationality”.

“Officials who suspect a non-EU national may have a criminal past can only find those convictions by asking all 27 other member states. This means previous criminal convictions are rarely found. It is a gaping legal loophole which

leaves people in the EU less safe.”

The new European Criminal Records Information System Third Country National (ECRIS-TCN) database will reveal if a third country national has a criminal record in the EU and which member state holds the details. Judicial authorities will then be able to quickly obtain that information and take it into account when sentencing the person for a new offence.

Mr Dalton added: “The inclusion of dual nationals in this system will prevent them from hiding past criminal convictions in the EU simply by disclosing only one of their passports.

“This is a good agreement. It will make our citizens safer, ensure serious criminal convictions are disclosed to judicial authorities and ensure that EU and non-EU nationals are treated equally. At the same time we have protected the rights of individuals by placing safeguards on how this information can be shared - this is not a database that can be simply browsed through.” ■

Anna Fotyga MEP

## Disinformation poisons minds and consciences



Fotyga has welcomed the report and the work carried out to date by the East StratCom Task Force, and has reiterated her call to turn it into a fully-fledged unit within thee EEAS.

Speaking after the vote, Fotyga who chairs the Parliament's Security and Defence sub-committee said:

“We can no longer deny the fact that our institutions and societies are targeted by the Kremlin's hostile propaganda, which is part of a broader strategy. Fortunately, we are more experienced, determined and united to counter such activities. Our answer depends on resilient societies, transparent media and encouraging pluralism, while taking steps to ensure that we avoid censorship.”

MEPs have backed ECR MEP Anna Fotyga's report into EU efforts to tackle strategic propaganda against the EU and its Member States by third parties, such as Russia.

The report reviews the response of the EU and its Member States to the first Strategic Communications (Stratcom) report adopted by the European Parliament in 2016 and provides further recommendations on how best to tackle strategic propaganda from third countries.

A number of Member States still haven't recognised the impact and magnitude of disinformation campaigns and the report therefore calls on these countries to take proactive measures to counter the threat and to establish permanent structures to this effect. The report also underlines the crucial role of an independent media and quality journalism as the best safeguards against disinformation campaigns, as well as stressing that a legal framework allowing for a robust EU response to these hybrid threats should be put in place.

Fotyga concluded: “In 2019 there will be of over 29 elections in EU Member States, including the European elections in May. Experience tells us there will be further interference by the Russian Federation across the EU and in our partner countries. Therefore we have to be aware of and continue to strengthen our resilience against this kind of activity and interference.” ■

## THE CONSERVATIVE



The Conservative is a fortnightly newspaper available in print and online, owned by the Alliance of the Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE).

The Conservative can be read online at theconservative.online

### REPRODUCTION RIGHTS

All content and materials of *The Conservative* are copyrighted, unless otherwise stated. For permission to republish articles appearing in *The Conservative*, please contact the Managing Editor at editor@theconservative.online.

### DISCLAIMER

Alliance of Conservatives & Reformists in Europe (ACRE) is a Belgian EUPP No: 0820.208.739, recognised and partially funded by the European Parliament.

The views and opinions expressed in the publication are solely those of individual authors and should not be regarded as reflecting any official opinion or position of the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE), its leadership, members or staff, or of the European Parliament.

### EDITORIAL BOARD

#### EDITOR

Richard Milsom

#### MANAGING EDITOR

Themistoklis Asthenidis

#### ADVISORY BOARD

Jan Zahradil MEP  
Anna Fotyga MEP  
Raffaele Fitto MEP  
Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP  
Prof Ryszard Legutko MEP  
Daniel Hannan MEP

#### DESIGN

VIDEOR o.d. (videor.ba)

### HOW TO CONTACT US

ADDRESS Alliance of Conservatives & Reformists in Europe (ACRE)  
Rue du Trone 4, B-1000, Brussels, Belgium

WEB theconservative.online

EMAIL info@theconservative.online

### INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Please address submissions and letters to the editor to:  
Managing Editor / The Conservative  
EMAIL editor@theconservative.online





## FRONTEx Sharp drop in migration to Europe via Central Mediterranean



The European Border and Coast Guard Agency, FRONTEX, has reported the statistics for the number of illegal border crossings by migrants detected during the month of January. The report shows a reduction in the number of detected illegal border crossings on the main migratory routes to a total of 6,760. This is one third less compared to December and a fifth less than in January 2018.

The really interesting numbers are, however, found in the fundamental shift taking place between the different routes. In January the Central Mediterranean route, basically between Libya and Italy, saw the largest drop ever in the number of detected illegal migrants. Only 150 migrants were detected on this route, which is a fall of 73 per cent compared to the month before and of 96 per cent compared to January 2018. Bangladeshis and Tunisians were the most common nationalities among the migrants reaching Italy. It is clear that the strict measures taken by Italy have had the intended outcome and resulted in a sharp drop in the number of illegal immigrants, but it appears that the migrants who used to come via

the Central Mediterranean route have been diverted to the Eastern and Western routes.

The number of migrants detected on the Eastern Mediterranean route via Morocco to Spain was 2,540, which was 44 per cent lower than the previous month but 10 per cent higher than the same month a year earlier. The FRONTEX statistics show that more than half of the detected illegal migrants – 3,780 individuals – came via the Western Mediterranean route via Turkey to Greece. While the number of detections on this route fell by 18 per cent from the previous month, the number is more than double the figure detected in January 2018.

Crossing the Mediterranean Sea has always been perilous. Since 2014 nearly 17,000 people have drowned attempting a crossing. And, whilst 2,275 people died attempting to cross in 2018, which is much fewer than in previous years, the proportion of migrants dying at sea increased substantially. It would appear by this measurement that 2018 was the worst ever, with 1 in every 49 migrants was losing their life in the Mediterranean. ■

## Estonian election Opposition party wins and EKRE doubles



The liberal Reform Party won the general election with 28.8 per cent of the vote, with the governing Centre Party reduced to 23 per cent. The real surprise of the election was the Conservative People's Party (EKRE), which more than doubled its previous vote share to 17.8 per cent.

The Conservative People's Party, which won only seven seats in the 2015 election, now has 19 of the 101 seats in parliament. The appeal of the Conservative People's Party was primarily rooted in the misgivings of rural Estonians, but also among Estonians abroad, of whom 43.7 per cent voted for the party while the Reform Party received just 17 per cent of the overseas votes. EKRE won many voters by

promising to lower income and excise taxes, reduce immigration and end Russian-language teaching in the education system. The party strongly supports NATO membership but has called for an "Estxit" referendum on Estonia's EU membership.

The leader of the Reform Party, Kaja Kallas, is on track to become the first female prime minister of Estonia. Kallas is very strongly in favour of the European Union. She has been a Member of the European Parliament and is the daughter of the former Estonian Prime Minister Siim Kallas, who also led the Reform Party before serving as a European Commissioner. It is therefore likely that EKRE will be a leading opposition party. ■

## European Commission Member States disappointed with Commission's work on opening up services

The European Commission's inability to open up the service sector has been the focus of much disapproval. This criticism now seems to be boiling over into the public. In a letter dated 26 February to EU Council President Donald Tusk, the Prime Ministers of 17 EU Member States urge the Commission to remove the "remaining barriers from labour and learning mobility while stressing that "mutual recognition of professional qualifications should be guaranteed".

The letter, which expresses frustration at the weak performance of the Juncker Commission in opening up Europe's services market at a time when a lot of potential growth could be unlocked in this way, was delivered ahead of the March EU Summit, where EU leaders are due to set single market priorities for the next five years. The initiative came from Finland's Prime

Minister Juha Sipilä, and the signatories are the Baltics, Benelux, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland, Malta, the Nordics, Slovenia, Visegrad (without Hungary) and Portugal. Notably absent – apart from France, Germany and Italy – are Austria, Bulgaria, Romania and Southern European countries Greece and Spain.

This happens against the backdrop of Polish officials arguing that the single market has been damaged by measures making it harder to post workers temporarily to other EU countries. EU Commissioner Marianne Thyssen is responsible for this legislation, which has reduced labour mobility within the EU. France and Germany also support this, despite both countries being the second and third biggest source of posted workers in the EU, after Poland.

The new rules, which limit the posting of workers to a maximum of 18 months and interfere with their salary



requirements, are not expected to make a big change. The main reason why many posted workers from, for example, Poland are more competitive than workers in France and Belgium is that in the latter countries, employers need to pay much higher social security contributions. Instead of tackling this issue, the affected Member States prefer to limit the single market.

The coalition of 17 EU countries backing a more liberal EU indicates one dividing line within the EU after Brexit. ■

# FAITH & FREEDOM SUMMIT II

## 2019

OUR SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

**Jan Zahradil MEP**  
ACRE president and lead candidate for European Commission president.

**Kristina Arriaga de Bucholz**  
President of the Oxford Society of Law and Religion

**Jan Figel**  
EU Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the European Union

**Laurentiu Rebeaga MEP**  
Member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Affairs, European Parliament

### 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019 • 09:30-13:00

### European Parliament (Room A1H1)

MORE INFO & REGISTRATION:  
**acreurope.eu**



## Lithuanian election in May Valdemar Tomaševski running for president

Valdemar Tomaševski launched his bid for the Presidency of Lithuania during a press conference on 19 February. Representing the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania – Christian Families Alliance (EAPL-CFA) Valdemar Tomaševski will run on a programme for a renewal of Lithuania based on a proven track record.

Explaining his decision to participate in the presidential elections, which will take place in May, Tomaševski stressed the need for socially responsible, economically efficient and responsible policies that aim to create a more educated and free society, as well as the need to listen to the citizens and realise their wishes. "Our programme is to implement what we have done regionally and locally in the whole of Lithuania. Our achievements at the local and regional level speak for themselves," said Tomaševski.

The coalition of 17 EU countries backing a more liberal EU indicates one dividing line within the EU after Brexit. ■

the country according to polling, is guided by Christian values. "When Christian values are the foundation, the outcome is to strengthen honest reliable politics and the policy of supporting the traditional family," Tomaševski explained.

The EAPL-CFA has often been in government coalitions at the national, regional and local level. The party has achieved much in the field of family policy and social responsibility. It proposed the child support system that has been realised and the Family Card programme intended to support large families, which will start on 1 July this year.

Tomaševski pointed to the fact that only 13 per cent of EU funds go through the Lithuanian local government, which is the lowest rate in the EU, but said that the EAPL-CFA-governed Vilnius district is proof that local government can work effectively despite



having relatively small budgets. In the last decade, that local government has made very substantial investments in roads, water and sewage infrastructure. It has also constructed 7 new kindergartens, 3 schools, 2 hospitals, 6 social care facilities, 16 sports fields and 50 playgrounds. All of these investments have been made without the local government incurring any debts, proving that the EAPL-CFA has managed the budget effectively and worked honestly for the residents.

This will be the third time that Valdemar Tomaševski runs as candidate for the post of President of Lithuania. In 2009 he achieved 4.7 per cent of the vote and in 2014 he almost doubled that to 8.4 per cent. ■

# BLUE GREEN SUMMIT

## 2019

WE WILL DISCUSS CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS TO:

## WATER AND WASTE MANAGEMENT & CLEAN ENERGY

### 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 • 09:30-13:00

### Solvay Library • Brussels

MORE INFO & REGISTRATION:  
**acreurope.eu**

## Brexit Swiss-EU talks stuck amid parallels with Brexit

The similarities between the Brexit negotiations and the ongoing negotiations between the European Union and Switzerland are obvious and striking. In both cases a sizeable European economy wants to trade with the EU without being a member of its single market or customs union. But while the Brexit stalemate is getting lots of media, the impasse in the negotiations between Switzerland and the EU is attracting no attention. It is becoming increasingly clear that the Brexit negotiations may affect the Swiss negotiations, just as the Swiss agreements previously affected the Brexit negotiations.

The story goes back a few decades. In the 1980s the European Commission under President Jacques Delors proposed that the EU's relationship with the various European countries that were not members should be governed through what was then called the "European Economic Community". The principle was quite simple: non-Member States could get full access to the single market under the condition that they accept all of the EU's rules. Sweden, Austria, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein accepted the proposal and the Swiss – after a referendum in 1992 – rejected it.

A solution had to be found, and for seven years the EU and Switzerland negotiated to what extent the country would enjoy access to the single market and to what extent it would accept to implement the EU's rules. The negotiated package of seven sectoral agreements signed in 1999 were all about "pay to play", or rather "pick and choose".

The UK Government's "Chequers Plan" was to a large extent modelled on the Swiss arrangement. The EU was very hostile to the Chequers Plan, which basically proposed that the UK stay in the single market for goods, but not for services, in return for selectively taking over EU rules. It is hard to think of alternatives. If the UK only got the access that any random third country gets to the EU, supply chains of industrial companies as well as general trade would be severely disrupted. If the UK became a full rule-taker, very much like Norway, the same democratic issues that made the Swiss reject the proposal would quickly come to the fore.

Not only with regard to market access, but also in terms of external trade policy, there are strong similarities to Brexit. The UK has the world's fifth largest economy and, just like Switzerland, wants to be able to conduct its own trade policy and therefore set its own tariffs. Customs checks would cause a degree of disruption, but only about 2 per cent



of road freight is physically inspected. The Head of Swiss Customs, Christian Bock, told UK MPs at a hearing in 2017 that he thinks a soft border on the island of Ireland could be "possible", suggesting "common patrols between the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland" as a way to avoid a hard border, as well as checks away from the border and "trusted traders" arrangements.

Currently, the EU and Switzerland are updating their relationship, and there is still no deal. In March 2018 the Swiss Government said that it would agree to accept a special arbitration court to settle judicial disputes arising from Swiss-EU bilateral relations, but there is still no final deal. To give the European Court of Justice a role – even an indirect role – would be hard to swallow for many Swiss. It is notable that Theresa May accepted a very similar arrangement for the EU-UK relationship. Another EU demand is for the Swiss to automatically adapt its migration and social security rules to EU legislative changes, something that is not foreseen in the agreements from the 1990s.

To increase the pressure, the European Commission issued an ultimatum to Switzerland in December, threatening to cut off the access of the Swiss stock exchange to the EU, which would cause it to suffer a drop in liquidity. Switzerland had anticipated this and could point to a loophole in EU rules, making it impossible to implement. Just before New Year a truce was agreed, whereby the EU offered the Swiss stock exchange access to its markets for another six months, allowing Switzerland to hold a consultation process on the proposed "framework agreement" treaty that would govern future ties.

In January Swiss President Ueli Maurer warned the EU that it would need to have more patience, referring to upcoming Swiss and EP elections, and urged it to renegotiate parts of a deal to create framework conditions governing future ties between the two sides. Maurer does not believe that Swiss voters would agree to the proposed version if it came to a referendum.

Meanwhile, both sides are following the final throes of the Brexit negotiations. ■

## Dutch climate march Truth or truancy?

Thousands of Dutch high school children have been skipping class to protest about climate change. Following the example of 16-year-old "climate poster girl" Greta Thunberg from Sweden and mobilised by teachers, schoolboards and politicians, more than 15,000 students between the ages of 12 to 18 gathered near the National Parliament to encourage the Dutch Government to reduce greenhouse gases. The Dutch Minister of Education, Arie Slob (Christian Union), expressed that even though he had sympathy for the cause, school attendance was compulsory and should be enforced.

Many schoolboards have openly encouraged their students to skip school to participate in the climate protest, inviting a debate as to whether they would have

been as encouraging if their students had been skipping school to protest about issues such as immigration. A recent investigation into the voting behaviour of high school teachers confirmed that the vast majority of Dutch teachers voted for left-wing parties. Numerous left-leaning party leaders came to the protests to take selfies with the students and often seemed to encourage the truancy. ■







## Nigerian presidential election Centre-left victory challenged in court

President Muhammadu Buhari officially won the Nigerian presidential election on 23 February. The outcome of the election has become controversial, however, with opposition candidate Atiku Abubakar challenging the result in court.

President Buhari won the election in 2015, running for the then newly formed All Progressives Congress (APC). APC, an ideologically centre-left party, promised to fix the economy, create jobs for the youth and end economic insecurity. Instead, Nigeria's economy weakened, foreign investors left the country because of the instability of the government, and the promise of jobs for the young was replaced by social benefits. Finally, the terrorist group Boko Haram wreaked havoc on a large part of the north, and many believe the government's response was lacklustre at best.

President Buhari's policies caused the government revenue to fall and the deficit spending to increase. The national debt accumulated from 1999 to 2015 under a People's Democratic Party (PDP) government doubled in three years under Buhari. Nigeria was declared the poorest country in the world by the World Poverty

Clock in 2018. Not surprisingly, President Buhari became deeply unpopular with those in favour of free markets and less regulation of business. The country's stock market was expecting the pro-market economy opposition candidate Atiku Abubakar to win, and lost \$234 billion when the result was announced.

When former Vice President Atiku Abubakar announced two years ago that he would attempt a fourth bid for the presidency as the PDP candidate, he was then widely expected to lose. Atiku Abubakar's campaign was focused on issues and based on a manifesto that would instil free market dynamism in the country. His political campaign gained ground as the country's economy and security fell apart and his message reached the voters.

Based on an analysis of actual votes cast Atiku Abubakar is seen by many as the real winner of the presidential

election. He has rejected the official result and aims to challenge the outcome in court.

The PDP is a centre-right party, which has attended ACRE and IDU events, promotes best practice taken from other global centre-right parties, and therefore promotes free markets, economic liberalism and limited government intervention. Parallel to the court case, Atiku Abubakar wants to restructure and grow the PDP in order to combat socialist populism and demonstrate that democracy and free market principles will also work in this largest populous country in Africa. ■

## China's social credit score Totalitarianism 2.0



The Chinese Government has decided to accelerate the implementation of its social credit score programme. By 2020 China will have implemented a social credit score (SCS) so that "sincerity and trustworthiness become conscious norms of action among all the people". Technological developments like big data, AI, facial recognition and affordable DNA analysis are now giving rise to a new form of totalitarian control.

Local governments are currently testing 40 different parallel pilot programmes assessing different SCS systems. The common principles of the different programmes are quite simple. All citizens start with a score of 1,000. Those citizens who maintain a score close to 1,000 will be granted advantages, while those whose score drops below a certain limit will face negative consequences. In one survey, 80 per cent of Chinese nationals are already registered in one of the SCS programmes.

Crime will of course lower social credit, but also behaviours as varied as frivolous spending, smoking in smoke-free zones, occupying reserved seating on trains, playing too many video games and having unpaid loans. Those who lose too many points will not be able to buy property, find employment or use dating websites, and their children will be blocked from preferred schools

and universities. The authorities have already partially implemented the programme with regard to travel by refusing the sale of 17.5 million flight tickets to would-be travellers, with 6.5 million Chinese having already been banned from flying to destinations outside of China.

It will be possible to earn back SCS points by demonstrating "trustworthiness", which includes paying back loans or paying taxes. Interestingly, in one programme buying nappies for a child will also increase credits, as it is considered "trustworthy and responsible" behaviour. The system is by nature skewed towards the upper classes, as keeping points or gaining them back is much easier with sufficient financial means.

Individuals with high scores will enjoy preferential treatment from businesses and governmental institutions. Those with a sufficiently high SCS will be given discounts, will no longer have to pay deposits for hotel rooms, will be given better visibility on dating sites and will received preferential treatment in hospitals and in applications for certain jobs and universities.

One example of how these systems impact individuals is Liu Hu, a journalist in China who had published articles on censorship and government corruption. He was blacklisted from travelling after a Chinese court put him on a

list of "Dishonest Persons". He told the Globe and Mail: "There was no file, no police warrant, no official advance notification. They just cut me off from the things I was once entitled to" and once aware he was left with no one to speak to. "What's really scary is there's nothing you can do about it. You can report to no one. You are stuck in the middle of nowhere," Liu Hu said in a comment.

Polling indicates that 80 per cent of the population either somewhat approves or completely approves of the programme. But, given the existence of the programmes, this data could be questioned as citizens may be hesitant of giving their views on controversial topics if they believe it might impact their SCS.

It is probable that the Chinese Government has started to include DNA data in its database. Since 2016, 36 million Uighurs, a predominantly Muslim ethnic group, have been given "free health checks". In this health check no test is taken of heart rates or kidney function, but DNA samples are collected, and facial features, fingerprints and voices are recorded. There are no possibilities to access the results of the health check and those who ask to view the results are told to go to the police. Adding facial recognition would permit round-the-clock surveillance and recording of citizens' behaviour with already available technology. ■

### Internet access for rural schools

## Rwanda launches satellite



Rwanda has launched a satellite that will provide broadband internet to schools in remote areas. It was launched into orbit from a spaceport on the Atlantic coast of French Guiana. The satellite, which was designed by a UK-based company, will enable other schools across different regions to connect to it and provide internet access to remote areas.

The location of some remote schools makes it extremely costly to be connected to standard fibre cables, and a satellite connection is an alternative solution to provide schools with internet connectivity. The

investment in space technologies is part of a broader mission to bridge the digital divide by providing equal digital opportunities to rural and remote communities.

The Rwandan satellite is one of six satellites that will be launched with the backing of major players in the space industry and finance, including Virgin, Qualcomm, Airbus and Soft-Bank of Japan. The Minister of ICT and Innovation, Paula Ingabire, said that the investment was proof of the government's commitment to continue connecting underserved communities. ■

### India

## General election starts on April 11<sup>th</sup>

The next general election in the world's biggest democracy start on April 11 with the nationwide result set to be announced on May 23. Five years ago, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Narendra Modi stormed to power but the party has since suffered losses in several state elections. The opposition Congress Party have grown stronger since the last elections but still looks feeble. Instead, polls suggest that several dozens of small regional parties will hold the balance of power after the elections.

Voters increasingly feel like Narendra Modi's promise to transform India has not been realized. The Congress Party have focused on attacking the Modi government but have failed to outline its own vision for the country. The BJP's election message is simply that they need more time to deliver on their promises.

In the last three decades Indian elections have always been a two-horse race, but since the last elections dozens of regional parties have united



across ideological lines. The regional parties have grown stronger but are still not big enough to take on the BJP or Congress nationwide. These parties are however increasingly likely to garner enough support to hold the balance of power in the next Parliament. This makes the election unpredictable.

In 2014, the BJP garnered just 31 per cent of the vote but could secured power largely because of the fragmentation of the opposition. If BJP lose only a few percentage points in the next elections they could be relegated to the opposition benches. ■

### Making America Great Again

## US economy grows at record speed



In 2018 the US economy grew at its fastest pace since 2005 with an annual growth rate of 3.1 per cent. This second consecutive year of economic growth outperformed the Blue Chip consensus forecast of 2.3 per cent. This marked an acceleration in comparison to the economic trend. The 1.1 percentage point performance above trend is in line with peer-reviewed estimates of an exogenous tax shock of the same magnitude as the Tax Cuts and

Jobs Act, and is consistent with the Administration's own estimates of the effects of the law.

The growth was in line with the Administration's official forecast of 3.1 per cent, in contrast to the consistent overestimation of growth by

the preceding Administration. Over the seven full quarters of the Trump Administration, real output has grown at a compound annual rate of 2.9 per cent, compared to a compound annual growth rate of 2.3 per cent under the Obama Presidency. ■

### New Zealand

## National Party fights Labour's capital gains tax proposal



New Zealand's Labour government has proposed a capital gains tax (CGT) that would apply to properties greater than 4,500 square metres. Figures from the authorities show that there are 403,883 freehold properties around New Zealand that are greater than 4,500 square metres. About 50,000 of these are farms.

Labour has claimed that family homes would be exempt, except for properties of over 4,500 square metres – a little over half a rugby field – but those who run a business from home, or who have flatmates, would also be subject to a CGT.

Leader of the Opposition, Simon Bridges, has vowed to fight the government's capital gains tax proposal and that the National Party will repeal the CGT if it is introduced.

Many New Zealanders view the tax as unfair since it would exempt multimillion-dollar homes on small plots, while it would include relatively modest houses on larger plots.

The tax would also be inefficient. A CGT would discourage people from starting and growing their own business, creating jobs and contributing to economic growth. That the Labour Minister for Small Business claims not to have heard from a single small business about its concerns regarding a CGT, is not credible.

National Small Business spokesperson Jacqui Dean is quoted as saying "A Capital Gains Tax (CGT) is front of mind for every small business owner I talk to. You would have to bury your

head in the sand to avoid hearing their concerns. They could be taxed if they run their business at home, then pay taxes all their working life, only to lose a third of their gains when they sell up to retire."

To implement the recommended CGT regime would necessitate billions of dollars of compliance costs. Every small business owner, farmer and property owner would want to maximise the valuation on "valuation day" to limit the future capital gains tax they have to pay and the CGT would therefore necessitate an evaluation of every single business, farm, rental property or family home without benefiting anyone. According to one estimate, the cost to the wider economy would be about \$5 billion if every small and medium-sized business owner in New Zealand had to pay for a new valuation robust enough to stand up in court. Remarkably, this is roughly how much a CGT is projected to raise in its first four years.

Using proxies for assessing the valuation of properties – such as local authority rating valuations – would typically understate the true market value and therefore increase any future CGT. And using mass automatic valuations as a way to avoid the compliance cost of valuations should be ruled out, because in some cases they would inevitably create significant errors and inequities.

The National party argue that the compliance costs, the lack of fairness and the arbitrary nature of the tax ultimately will undermine the credibility and it will therefore be dismantled. ■

### The Opioid Crisis

## This time it is personal



In the past 18 years more than 300,000 Americans have died from opioids. Opioids are a medical substance primarily used for pain relief that produce morphine-like effect in the body. As a result, the Trump Administration has declared a nationwide Public Health Emergency to address this abuse. Responding to the Public Health Emergency, the US Food and Drug Administration has now fast-tracked facilitates for the development of a new opioid antidote.

The Administrations Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) recently released a report on the economic costs of the opioid crisis. CEA found that previous estimates of the economic cost of the opioid crisis were greatly underestimated because it undervalued the most important component

of the loss: fatalities resulting from overdoses.

It is becoming increasingly clear that for President Trump, addiction is more than a policy issue. As a young man he witnessed the pain of addiction in his own family with a brother struggling with alcohol addiction. This is likely to be an area in which the Trump Administration will continue to invest significant efforts. ■

### Woke government

## Canadian Conservatives take poll lead over liberals

In the latest federal track poll released on 5 March, the Canadian Conservatives have a slight lead over the Liberals, according to Nanos Research. The weekly tracking data shows the Conservatives at 34.7 per cent, followed by the Liberals at 34.2 per cent. The New Democratic Party is at 15.5 per cent and the Green Party at 9.1 per cent. The Bloc Quebecois have 3.6 per cent of the vote, while the People's Party of Canada have 0.7 per cent.

The shift is due to the scandal that has engulfed Justin Trudeau's government in recent weeks. The affair centres on the question of whether the Prime Minister improperly pressured Jody Wilson-Raybould, former Minister of Justice and a member of the We Wai Kai Nation, to reverse her decision to prosecute a well-connected engineering firm charged with fraud and corruption. When Wilson-Raybould refused to reconsider her decision the PM removed her, and the new Justice Minister David Lametti seems quite open to revisit the original decision. Polling suggests that this has done severe damage to the Liberal brand in the run-up to this year's national election.

Most Canadian voters have unfashionable concerns about jobs and the economy, and indications are that

most Canadians do not think that Trudeau is less ethical than most of his predecessors. The bullying of Wilson-Raybould – which is the way many Canadians have come to regard her treatment – makes a mockery of earlier statements by the Prime Minister. Justin Trudeau looks like a hypocrite when he embraces the most faddish

forms of ultra-progressive social justice, portrays himself as being at the forefront of #MeToo with statements like "when women speak up, it is our duty to listen to them and to believe them", and pontificates about the sins Canadians have committed against indigenous peoples, while at the same time sending a close associate to discredit Wilson-Raybould's narrative with the words "I believe she spoke... her truth".

Maybe now the Trudeau government will cut down on the lectures on how Canadians should practice feminism, raise children and use pronouns. ■



### New Direction report

## THE NORDIC MODELS

The five Nordic countries, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Iceland, are rightly regarded as successful societies. They are affluent, but without a wide gap between rich and poor. They provide social security, but without a significant erosion, it seems, of their freedoms. They are small, but they all enjoy a good reputation around the world as peaceful, civilised democracies. The Nordic nations are healthy and well-educated and the crime rate is low.

But what is it that other nations can learn from the Nordic success story? Harvard economist and UN development expert Jeffrey D. Sachs is in no doubt about the answer. He recalls Friedrich A. Hayek's warning against socialism, "Road to Serfdom", and argues that he was wrong and that the Nordic countries prove it. "In strong and vibrant democracies, a generous welfare state is not a road to serfdom but rather to fairness, economic equality and international competitiveness."

In this report, it will be argued that this is a misunderstanding, not only of Hayek but also, more importantly, of the Nordic success story. The system of high taxes, extensive redistribution, and general and generous welfare benefits without any means-testing that Scandinavian social democrats introduced in the 1950s to the 1970s turned out to be untenable. Moreover, there is in fact no one Nordic model, even if there are some resemblances between the three Scandinavian societies, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, with Finland and Iceland being different in various respects. Indeed, because the 'Swedish model' is frequently invoked, a distinction can be made between at least three Swedish models, the liberal one of 1850-1970, the social democratic one of 1970-1990, and the present model of a liberal, restrained welfare state.

It is also not true that social democracy captures any essence of the Nordic nations. The main reasons for the overall success of the Nordic countries are their open economies, a



strong rule of law, the protection of private property rights, the freedom of contract, social cohesion, civic participation, respect for hard work and self-reliance (unfortunately somewhat eroded by the welfare state), and the lack of social exclusion (until recently and then produced by the welfare state). The Nordic countries are successful despite, but not because of, social democracy, which had anyway lost much credibility in the Nordic countries. ■



You can download report at  
[www.newdirection.online](http://www.newdirection.online)





# WHAT WOULD EDMUND DO?



**Danny Kruger**  
is a senior fellow at the Legatum Institute. He has a D.Phil from Oxford in Modern History and was formerly a leader-writer at The Daily Telegraph newspaper and a speechwriter for David Cameron.  
@danny\_\_kruger

Like the Bible, the work of Edmund Burke is a source of authority for many divergent opinions; like the Bible, there is a deep and singular truth running through it all. Conor Cruise O'Brien, following Yeats, called it Burke's "great melody", which he defined as the fight against the abuse of power.

This explains Burke's battle against corruption in Parliament, his great campaigns on behalf of the natives of India, the Catholics of Ireland and the rebellious colonists of America, and his episodic – and for the time, quixotic – defences of Jews, homosexuals, debtors and slaves.

It also explains his defence of property rights, the established church, the crown and the Whig aristocracy, "the great oaks which shade a kingdom". This is the Burke we now know best, the author of thundering philippics against equality, republicanism, and other political abstractions that threaten to uproot the settled order.

Burke's defence of establishment was not, or not only, aesthetic and self-serving. The son of a small-time Irish attorney who grew up on the precarious edge of economic and political security, Burke was always conscious of how the little people suffered when big people turned the world upside down. Does this make him a Whig (which he was, formally) or a Tory (the tribe which has claimed him ever since)? Of course he was both, playing a greater melody than either.

This wasn't always apparent at the time. Few people understood how he could support the American Revolution and oppose the French one; many – like Marx in the next century – thought him a hypocrite, motivated only by the interests of his Whig patrons. But his friends today can hear the melody. Liberals like Yeats and O'Brien – and his most recent (Conservative) biographer Jesse Norman – call it opposition to oppression. This conservative would say the singular theme of Burke's writings is defence of settlement, and of the particular settlement emerging through the "long 18th century" between the Glorious Revolution and the ascent of Queen Victoria.

“The son of a small-time Irish attorney who grew up on the precarious edge of economic and political security, Burke was always conscious of how the little people suffered when big people turned the world upside down. Does this make him a Whig (which he was, formally) or a Tory (the tribe which has claimed him ever since)? Of course he was both, playing a greater melody than either.

This was the period in which Britain became the country we now know: a parliamentary, law-governed, industrial, tolerant, globally-engaged and united kingdom. In each of these developments Burke helped make the case for the modern order we have inherited. He did so in the face of forces of reaction, and he defeated these forces by framing his argument in ancient idiom, explaining the emergence and continuation of an order which he saw to be latent in British history. What Marxist historians (describing this period) call the invention of tradition, Burke called reforming in order to conserve.

How, then, should modern Burkeans follow his lead? What would Edmund do? Something impractical, is the answer. Burke's own political career was not successful, partly held back by his low birth, partly by his exuberant and vehement loquacity. His one direct responsibility during his party's brief period in government in the early 1780s was a vast diffuse reform of the vast diffuse corrupt patronage system of the Crown in Parliament; he failed, as he did in his attempt to bring Warren Hastings to justice for his abuses as Governor-General of Bengal.

Rather than following Burke the politician, let us consider how we should apply his thinking. Beneath all the psycho-social, theological-philosophical, existential-apocalyptic questions of our time – our turbulent politics and the world-shaking effects of technology – is quite a simple question: what to do with the twisted hero of modernity, the autonomous self-determining individual?

As Jesse Norman shows, one of Burke's great contributions was to identify, and rebuke, the emergence of this figure in his own day, and to challenge "the idea that human wellbeing is just a matter of satisfying individual wants". More than anyone before or since, Burke framed individual fulfilment in terms of social membership – not the coercive membership of the totalitarian state but the membership, both given and chosen, of an organic community.

But it is difficult to see Burke supporting the EU itself; everything he objected to in revolutionary France – its cant about equality and human rights, its geometrical tyranny, its bogus internationalism – is reflected in the modern European pseudo-state. More immediately Burke has much to say to our present discontents. There is in each generation a battle for the soul of conservatism, which reflects the two sides of Burke's own thinking: what O'Brien calls the "harpist" Burke, advocating grand reforms for noble reasons, and the "common sense, down-to-earth Burke, concerned with practical interests and assessment of forces". Now, I suggest, is a time for harpists.

Britain faces two great immediate challenges with which Burke's successors in Parliament are wrestling. The first is how to reduce public spending to balance the national finances and thereby start, at last, shrinking the

servants to adapt their work to the new realities.

The harpist Burke, by contrast, would see austerity in a historical perspective – the final bankruptcy of a model built on the illusion that government can supply all the wants of all the people – and seize the moment for reform. We need better



“It is difficult to see Burke supporting the EU itself; everything he objected to in revolutionary France – its cant about equality and human rights, its geometrical tyranny, its bogus internationalism – is reflected in the modern European pseudo-state.

national debt. The down-to-earth Burke would manage the task of adjusting to austerity in the same way that, in most cases, the Coalition government did: salami-slicing budgets without reforming the services they support, and trusting to the good sense of local public

practical politicians than Burke himself to do this work, but it is the work that's needed: only by reforming the public sector can we reduce demand on the state to a point the taxpayer can afford.

The second challenge is how to extricate ourselves from the European

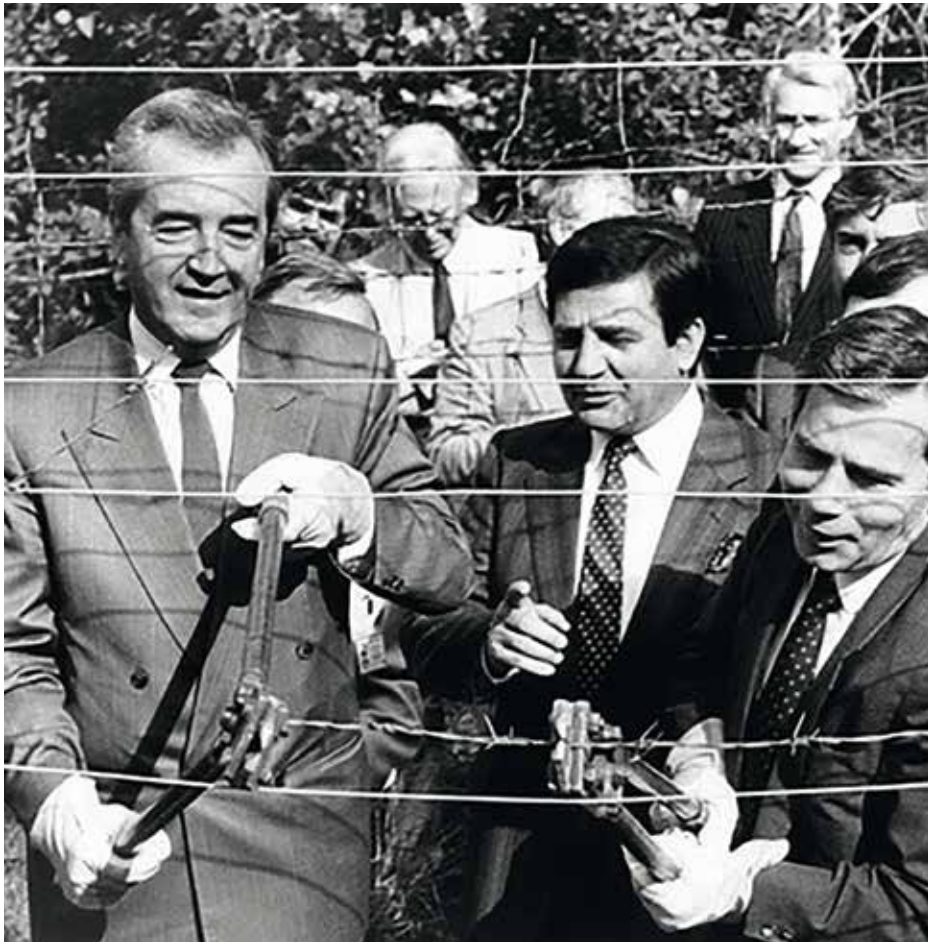
Union and reset our relations with the world. It is possible that Burke, in his down-to-earth incarnation, might have been a Remainer, much as many conservatives were – for reasons of practical common sense and concern for the disruption big changes can cause to little people.

Burke objected to big changes in long-established, naturally-evolved institutions which may appear irrational but are in fact habituated to real life. The EU is none such: recently-evolved, supremely rational, it, not Brexit, represents the incursion into the settled life of Britain which must be resisted. Surely here the harpist should predominate – albeit with a set of practical politicians and negotiators in the lead. I hope Burke would endorse the Prime Minister's sense that Brexit must be done properly, if at all – we need full extrication from the institutions of the EU if we are to benefit from the opportunities of global trade.

A subtext to much Brexiteer rhetoric is "the war", and Churchill's (the supreme harpist) achievement of liberation from continental oppression. A better reference is to the American Revolution – the formation of a new country, to be sure, but one that sought its inspiration from its inheritance of political liberty, the common law and property rights. Burke saw the American Revolution to be continuing the traditions of British settlement even as it created new ones; so, I think, he would see Brexit. ■



# WAR AND DEFENCE IN A NEW AGE



**Eli Hazan**  
Foreign Affairs Director of The Likud Party in Israel and a Lecturer in Politics  
@realEliHazan

The world was simpler before the fall of the Iron Curtain. The bipolar structure of the Cold War was simple: we were the good guys fighting for democracy locked in a struggle against the bad guys supporting dictatorship and communism. We had identified the enemy, and the wars we fought were well-defined. Then we had the events of 1989 and the breakup of the Soviet Union which fundamentally changed the geopolitical relations of the world.

Unfortunately, wars between countries did not end. However, it became more difficult, but not impossible, to find examples of conflicts between the two sides of the Cold War. We all remember, for example, the Russian invasion of Crimea, the terrible civil war in Syria, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. But the conflicts now are fewer and less severe. It is doubtful whether wars will even end, since conflicts of interests are ever-present in international relations, but they do seem to be changing direction.

“The nations of the free world must understand that the world has changed, and that investment in other forms of defence are necessary in order to face the forces of evil.

We must give credit to Francis Fukuyama for this thesis of "the end of history". When dealing with great and medium powers, his thesis is largely accurate. Notwithstanding the very real differences between the United States and Chinese today, where neither side is thinking of attacking the other. The clashes we see are rhetorical attacks in the international media, threats of a trade war, and diplomatic notes. Globalization brought countries very close together and changed their characters.

Humanity has been completely changed by an unprecedented rate of technological development and dramatic economic development stemming from openness and global interaction. But it has also

made man dependent on the machine. The remarkable progress we have seen over the last three decades has resulted – perhaps unwittingly – in new rules of war and defence. While the military confrontations have been dramatically reduced, they have been replaced by confrontations that do not require firearms.

Where once the Battle of Britain required four months of Luftwaffe attacks to bring the country to a standstill, in 2017 the attackers only needed some hackers and their computers. On May 13th, 2017, ninety-nine countries were struck by a deadly cyber-attack and the country most affected by this was the United Kingdom. In the UK it led to almost total paralysis of the country's entire healthcare system.

Another example is the nuclear threat against Israel. In the late 1970s Saddam Hussein's Iraq was threatening Israel with a nuclear holocaust. On the evening of June 7th, 1981, Israeli planes destroyed the Osirak atomic reactor in response. In early 2018, it was the Israeli Mossad that revealed how Iran was acquiring nuclear weapons, obtaining documents and secret Iranian archives which proved Iran had not actually stopped their nuclear program as they had agreed.

The need for self-defence has not so much diminished as it has changed. The nations of the free world must understand that the world has changed, and that investment in other forms of defence are necessary in order to face the forces of evil. We need cyber warfare and intelligence to stop those that threaten evil. Increased cooperation is an absolute must between nation-states with shared values of freedom. We must accept and understand that the world still is divided into black and white even if it is harder to see. ■

# ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR ONE



**Piotr Wilczek**  
Ambassador of Poland to the United States  
@AmbWilczek

For over half a century now, Europe has experienced an unprecedented period of peace. But it would be naïve to think that today's world is without serious challenges. Aggressive imperialist Russian policy, political instability in the Middle East and international terrorism are just a few examples. These global threats must be answered with unity of purpose that drives decisive action – we need solidarity more than ever before.

Solidarity, properly understood as the resolution to promote the common good while maintaining mutual respect for individual members, threatens no one. A lasting solidarity not undermined by particular interests can only be built on a foundation of sovereign nations united around shared values. Recognizing this truth, Poland has been and will continue to be a champion of international solidarity.

This past February Poland and the United States, in the name of the global community, took on the task of organizing the Ministerial to Promote a Future of

“Our experience proves that solidarity is strength. We can't forget this as we take on the challenges of today and those that still lie ahead.

Peace and Security in the Middle East. Sixty-five international delegations gathered in Warsaw for open dialogue on pressing issues. We're hopeful that the discussions will continue within the working group format in order to provide meaningful recommendations.

That Poland and the US, allies from across the Atlantic, hosted this historic event reflects how the community of values isn't limited to one continent. America plays an essential role in Europe's security, and while Poland supports initiatives such as PESCO, our focus will continue to be on the North Atlantic Alliance. As US Vice President Mike Pence reminded on the eve of the Ministerial in Warsaw, "To confront the threats that we face today, the

people of Poland know, and the people of the United States know, that the free world needs the members of NATO to be strong and united." There's much to be said for NATO's approach of "one for all and all for one" as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of NATO's establishment and the 20th anniversary of Poland's membership in the Alliance.

In this spirit Poland is consistently demonstrating its commitment to fair burden sharing as one of the few Alliance members who meet NATO guidelines for defense spending of 2% GDP and beyond. Given the importance of our trans-Atlantic cooperation, we also want to see an increased American military presence in our country.

America is a natural partner for Europe. For decades the US has been integral to European security, and the two are bound by deep political, economic and cultural ties. It's in the best interests of both sides to uphold this unity, and any weakening of our partnership undermines the peace and prosperity of all European nations. Poland is for a united EU, strong NATO and an everlasting transatlantic bond.

This is why the absence of unity Europe has sometimes demonstrated in response to external threats should be treated with all seriousness. Nord Stream II is the best example of how lack of unanimous condemnation of Russia's dangerous and damaging project has put some European countries in a hazardous position.

Threats from outside the EU remind us that Europe doesn't exist in a bubble and that in today's world challenges as well as opportunities are global. Situated at a geopolitical juncture, Poland has a unique role in building the international community. Our experience proves that solidarity is strength. We can't forget this as we take on the challenges of today and those that still lie ahead. ■





# Sweden Democrats MODERATE ANYWHERE, but in Sweden

CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE

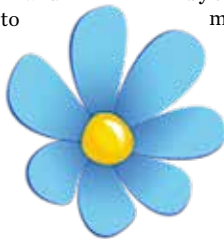
In Sweden, the mainstream parties for decades have espoused the blessings of multiculturalism and the virtue of unlimited and unqualified tolerance towards other cultures. So much so, that normal discussions on the benefits and drawbacks of migration were long avoided in polite company. But, while shunning those who wanted to discuss migration might have pushed the issue out of the public discourse, it did not push it out of the minds of the voters. The reverberations of the 2015 migration crisis, when Sweden took a record 163,000 asylum seekers, have ensured that, even in Sweden, the politics of immigration are growing more heated and complex.

The main reason for the success of the Sweden Democrats is of course widespread anxiety about immigration. And no wonder. Sweden is in the midst of a very substantial demographic shift. In 2017 the proportion of individuals either born abroad, or whose parents were both born abroad, had risen to 24.1 per cent. The lack of integration and assimilation in a segment of society raises concerns in a substantial portion of the population. Until very recently, the Sweden Democrats were the only party to have addressed these concerns.

The Sweden Democrats recognise that many immigrants in segregated suburbs around the big cities live in parallel societies and do not have a chance to become part of Swedish society. Already there are three Swedish municipalities where inhabitants with a foreign background outnumber ethnic Swedes. The party does not believe that this situation is healthy for either the migrant or society. The party points to the fact that the country's public services are overwhelmed and that refugees are placing strains on welfare, schools and housing. Employment rates among those born abroad are far lower than those of native-born Swedes, with only the Netherlands experiencing more inequality in this regard, according to the OECD. The same is true of the proportion of Swedes living in relative poverty. More than one in four Swedes living in immigrant households are currently in poverty, while the figure is 15.4 per cent for those living in native-born

households. "We are the only party that prioritises the interests and welfare of Swedish citizens ahead of mass-immigration," leader of the Sweden Democrats, Jimmie Åkesson, said in his summer speech.

The Sweden Democrats want to freeze immigration, including family reunification, and enable more immigrants to return to their native countries. Most Swedes agree. In a poll conducted by Pew Research in 2018, 52 per cent of those asked wanted fewer immigrants to be allowed into the country, 33 per cent wanted to retain the existing level of migration and only 14 per cent wanted to increase immigration. The policy of the Sweden Democrats is to increase the aid to real refugees – often women and children in dire circumstance closer to the conflict zones – instead



The Sweden Democrats want to freeze immigration, including family reunification, and enable more immigrants to return to their native countries. Most Swedes agree.

of settling the small fraction of relatively well-off immigrants that can pay smugglers to get to Sweden, in segregated suburbs. The Sweden Democrats are also strong on other issues that especially vex less well-off portions of society, such as healthcare, pensions, and law and order. In Sweden, as in much of Europe, the established parties often neglect these issues. Another polling company, Novus, also found that the Sweden Democrats' immigration policies had much more support among voters than those of any other party; they also ranked joint second on healthcare and a close third on law and order. The Sweden Democrats point out that the traditional centrist parties have been hollowing out social welfare by encouraging the immigration of people who do not have the education, skills or compatibility of values that will enable them to assimilate and become productive members of society. The party also points to the fact that much of the country's crime (for example, most convicted rapists and most of those involved in organised crime) is



## Who is Jimmie Åkesson?

Jimmie Åkesson was born in 1979 in the small southern town of Sölvesborg, where his fiancée is now mayor. Mr Åkesson's mother was a care provider and his father a businessman. He studied political science, law and philosophy at Lund University, before entering local politics. His political activism began in his teens when he joined the youth wing of the conservative Moderates, but he was rapidly disillusioned with their economic liberalism and support for Swedish EU membership in 1995. He was elected to the helm of the Sweden Democrats youth branch when he was still at school.

When Mr Åkesson was elected party leader in 2005, few observers anticipated that he would be able to transform the small party's fortunes, but during his tenure Mr Åkesson has strengthened the party organisation. A former web designer, Mr Åkesson has made the party a force to be reckoned with on social media, at the same time substantially broadening the electoral appeal and support for the party. Mr Åkesson insists that "those who are not democrats cannot be Sweden Democrats" and politically he has taken the party much closer to the Danish People's Party.

Jimmie Åkesson is a charismatic speaker who, despite his relative youth at 39, is in his fourth legislative elections in 12 years. But the endless days of campaigning took their toll on Mr Åkesson, who suffered a burnout after the 2015 elections and went on sick leave for six months. It is telling of his position in the party that there was never any discussion of replacing him during his long absence, and he is soon to become the longest-serving and most experienced of all the party leaders in the Swedish Parliament.

committed by foreigners. In theory the party supports a "Sweexit" referendum, but has recently announced that it will not be pushing this policy in the upcoming European elections.

A further reason for the success of the Sweden Democrats is the practice – by the media and the establishment – to brand those who express even the mildest concern about the number of immigrants, or regarding the impact on social cohesion of the demographic changes triggered by migration, as xenophobic or racist. The establishment parties in Sweden, in stark contrast with the sentiment across Europe, are still dominated by a liberal consensus in favour of increased

coalition government, with additional support from the former Communists. It splits a 15-year alliance between the centre-right parties, and in the view of many voters, ignoring a fifth of the electorate is neither fair nor a rational way

to find solutions to the problems that Sweden is facing.

Given the political environment of the other political parties in Sweden, the Sweden Democrats are likely to continue to grow for the foreseeable future. ■

## An interview with Peter Lundgren

You made a name for yourself in the European Parliament when you worked on the mobility package. Can you describe briefly what this was for us that didn't follow it so closely?

PL: It was a set of regulations for the commercial transportation sector, for example foreign trucks are allowed to transport, maximum driving time and minimum rest periods. The abuse of these rules creates unjust competition, especially for Swedish firms, and I was working to create a level playing field.

Do foreign drivers not adapt to the Swedish rules?

PL: Often they do not. Furthermore, the rules are filled with loopholes that I have been trying to fix with clear and easy rules and effective control mechanisms.

You also insisted on the need for a special permit to drive during the winter. Why?

PL: I have 30-years of experience of driving in northern Sweden and Norway. You need special training to drive in extreme weather conditions. If you do not you are a danger to everyone else on the roads.

Your work in that area was nominated for a prize?

PL: Yes. After six months I was nominated for an MEP award. Finally, I came in second place which was the best result ever for a Euro-sceptic Member of the European Parliament.

What issues do you think will be big the upcoming term?

PL: The migration issue. The EU has no answer to this problem and been forced to accept Turkish extortion. We have seen this in particular in Poland and Hungary refuse the EU's unreasonable demands to take more refugees. I don't believe the agreement these countries signed when they joined contained a requirement to accept unregulated mass immigration. This is a question that must be reserved for each country's parliament.

What is the worst decision taken by the European Union since the elections in 2014?

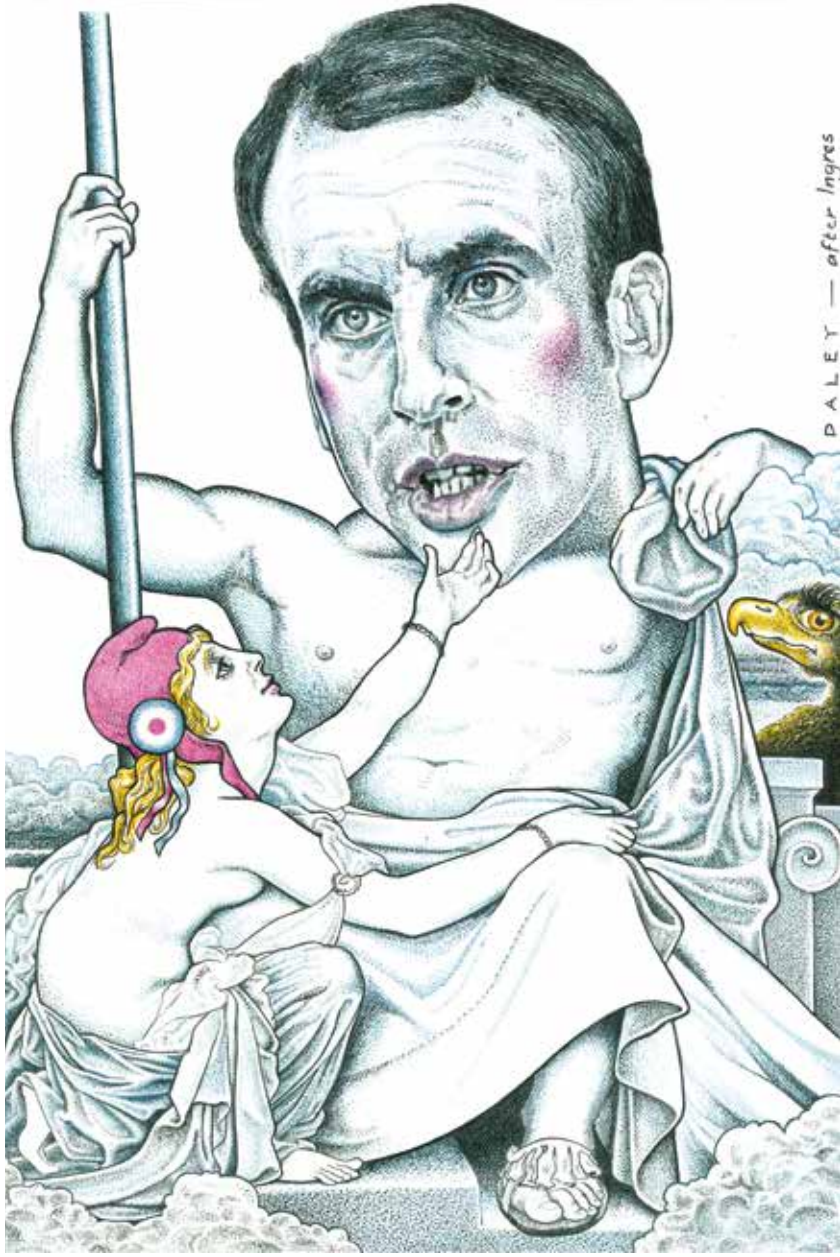
PL: The decision to pay tribute to Turkey. It is an undemocratic country and the payment amounts to nothing less than giving in to extortion.

### A QUESTION FOR Karl Robbjens

Your political commitment is often questioned in a rather hostile and nasty manner by left-wing activists. Why?

KR: My mother comes from Libya. When I meet left-wing activists, especially during the parliamentary elections last autumn, they very often make comments about my origin. They question how I could campaign for SD and habitually told me 'you are not Swedish'. I have never heard as much racism from any other group as I have from the left. They expect me – almost demand of me – to have a specific set of opinions because of my origins.

# SPECIAL FEATURE POPULISM



If "nationalist" is the harshest word in Brussels, "populist" runs it a close second. A Euro-crat will spit out the epithet like a teenager who has mistakenly taken a swig from a beer can that was being used as an ashtray.

The word is rarely defined, but that doesn't stop it being bandied about a great deal. Calling a referendum is populist. Upholding the result of a referendum is populist. Defending your national interest is populist. Demanding tax cuts is populist. Exposing malfeasance within the governing class is populist. Sovereignty is populist. The one thing it seems unequivocally to mean is, "something that other people like, but I don't".

The populist label can thus be slapped on politicians with widely divergent opinions who happen to challenge the status quo. It was applied simultaneously to Bernie Sanders and to Donald Trump, to Syriza and to the AfD.

Yet, as John O'Sullivan points out in this special feature on populism, if we define populism by its traditional characteristics – elevation of the leader, disdain for parliamentary procedure, vagueness about policy other than opposing the "corrupt old parties", pretensions of being beyond Left and Right – the most successful example today is Emmanuel Macron, whom Anne-Elisabeth Moutet describes in these pages as heir to the long tradition of autocratic French movements – Bonapartism, Boulangerism, Pujadism and, indeed, Gaullism.

Despite his almost comical sense of Führerprinzip, however, the French President is not called "populist" because he happens to dislike national sovereignty and favour European integration. Which raises a dilemma for pro-sovereignty conservatives. Should we treat the populist surge as a threat or an opportunity? Are angry and anti-systemic parties our adversaries or our allies?

Is populism a necessary and legitimate reaction against Left-liberal oligarchy? Or is it a menace to conservatives who (one hopes) believe in restraint, civility, tradition, decency and the defence of high culture? The answer depends on circumstance. The essence of populism is a belief that those in power are governing in their own factional interest rather than in the interests of the people as a whole. To make what might seem a rather obvious point, the validity of the populist reaction depends on the truth of that analysis. When power is diffused, dispersed and democratised, populism has a forced and ersatz quality. But when power is concentrated, closed and concealed, populism is a proper antibody.

The conservative ideal, surely, is a polity where populism doesn't have to arise, because the people who pass the laws are properly accountable to those who obey them. To put it another way, conservatives should want a society based on liberty under the law, and on a sense of affinity one with another that makes people willing to abide by majority decisions.

We can all think of policies that commanded the support of the Establishment, but were utterly wrong: nationalisation, price controls, the ERM, the euro, the bank bail-outs. By and large, voters turned out to be wiser than their leaders.

The challenge of our time is to narrow the rift between the people and their elites, between the *paese reale* and the *paese legale*, between what David Goodhart in this issue calls Somewheres and Anywheres. That task cannot be accomplished by the Left: we have seen that demonstrated amply. Often, it is flunked by the Right, too. Closing that gap is arguably the single most important challenge for conservatives today. ■



# In the shadow of Bonaparte

If populism is about the reality, or the illusion, of loss, its latest manifestation in France, the election of Emmanuel Macron, a consummate insider whose polished youthfulness, education, career and connections guaranteed him a position in the country's most rarefied elites anyway, makes more sense.

The French are not harking back to their lost Empire, or to the days of the monarchy, or to a wealth of jobs created by market forces. What they really want to see again are Les Trente Glorieuses, the three decades from 1946 to 1974. These saw the country rebuild itself at an annual growth of 5 per cent, with Marshall Plan subsidies, a Five-Year Plan, and a slew of nationalisations: coal, steel, electricity, gas, transport, the largest banks and insurance companies, and the odd business owned by notorious collaborators, such as the carmaker Renault. Les Trente Glorieuses were overseen by a dedicated, competent and largely selfless cadre of civil servants, many of whom came from the Résistance, and all familiar with the historical blueprint provided by Philippe-Auguste, Colbert and Napoleon.

Anyone looking for a lesson on successful reconstruction could do worse than study that rare moment in the 1950s and 1960s when France managed the charmed balance of private enterprise and public stewardship of the economy. French conservatives were known to joke about the perils of French planning "because, unlike in the Soviet Union, it worked". The first oil embargo sealed its fate: its time had probably passed anyway.

Ever since, the country has lived in the illusion that its unique combination of efficient social welfare, rising salaries, public infrastructure investment, national and foreign private investment, and comparatively tame unions (you could then, and can still now, prompt the fiercest Communist Party card-carrying CGT union official to outrage by describing the sabotage routinely perpetrated on British plants' assembly lines by the unions in the 1970s) can be replicated.

Marine Le Pen promised nothing else as she raised the National Front's share of the vote to 34 per cent in May 2017: her platform included a generous dollop of state intervention, social protection, even some nationalisations. The French, in the grip of *dégagisme* (kicking any incumbents out), might have voted for her if the choice had been between her and the tired old men of yesterday: Hollande, Fillon, Juppé or Sarkozy.

But Macron, with his brand new party, brand new look, and insolent youth, seemingly disdainful of old hierarchies and old practices, appeared to offer an alternative both safer and somehow more exciting. Marine lost her chance in the fatal pre-runoff debate, in which she came underprepared, blowsy and blustery. "Elle n'est pas présidentielle" was the verdict even among her own supporters on Twitter: faced with their own Trump, in the end, they trusted Macron better, not in spite of his past as an elite civil servant, but because of it. Which is a rational choice if you want Les Trente Glorieuses back.

Like Tolstoy's unhappy families, each European nation does populism in its own way. French populism has rarely been about rough-hewn "Men Of The People" vowing to upend the social order. General Georges Boulanger, a hero of the French-Prussian war and the conquest of Indochina, ran as a militaristic, anti-German candidate simultaneously in half a dozen constituencies in 1888, and was elected in four. He led his own party, whose MPs mostly came from the Left and far-Left, while being financed by the Duchesse d'Uzès, a descendant of La Veuve Clicquot of Champagne fame, and supported by both Royalists and Bonapartists.

Pierre Poujade, the Auvergnat shopkeeper who led an anti-Parliamentarian, anti-elite, anti-Rome Treaty revolt in the mid-1950s and won 52 MPs in 1956, was the son of a solidly bourgeois architect. His slogan "Sortez les sortants" ("get rid of the incumbents") was re-used by the National Front, Melenchon's La France Insoumise, and many Macroniens, sans attribution, in the 2017 campaign.

All that remains to be seen is whether this serves him well enough, or whether French populist voters decide that after all, the two extreme opposition parties appear more believable populists. ■



Anne-Elisabeth Moutet

is a Paris-based journalist and political commentator. She is a columnist for the *Telegraph* and also writes on French affairs for *CapX* and for the *Weekly Standard* in the US. She is a regular commenter on the 28 Minutes news talk show on ARTE-TV, and also comments on the news for the BBC, BFM-TV, Deutsche Welle and France 24.

@moutet

## TOP CANDIDATES IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS



Peter Lundgren

in 2014, stepped out of the truck and into the European Parliament. His primary influence has been on EU transport policy, where he has argued that Swedish hauliers have been negatively affected by unjust EU rules undermining competition the roads. He built relationships with constructive conservative forces, which enabled the SD's move to the ECR group last summer.



Jessica Stegrud

was raised on the island of Gotland and is an economist with a focus on the energy industry. In recent years she has made a name for herself in social media as a passionate advocate of freedom of speech and critics of feminism and immigration.



Charlie Weimers

has been one of Sweden's most distinct conservative voices. He was the national leader of the Christian Democratic Youth Association, a municipal councillor and the political assistant to the minister of social affairs. Currently, he is working as a political expert at ECR in Brussels.



Kristina Winberg

originally is from Blekinge in Southern Sweden and started her career as a traveling salesperson. She was a member of the Swedish Parliament before she in 2015 was elected to European Parliament.



Johan Nissinen

is the district chairman of SD in the county of Jönköping and member of the City Council in Värnamo. He is a former Member of the Swedish Parliament and was a representative on Council of Europe.



Karl Robbjens

is self-employed in the security industry and a member of Gothenburg City Council.





# Argentina’s peronist nightmare is over

The beginning of the 21st century found Argentina in the midst of a storm.

In 2001 the country was submerged in a deep recession which spiralled into a political crisis after the mid-term elections of October. By the end of that year, the administration led by Fernando de la Rúa fell and more than a decade of populist policies followed.

The '90s looked nothing like the early 2000s. After the fall of the Berlin wall, the whole of Latin America, from Mexico to Argentina, experienced the so-called “neoliberal wave”. In Argentina, neoliberalism meant a series of economic reforms. For instance, the privatisation of highly inefficient state monopolies – such as the one in telecommunications. It also meant the reduction of public employees, and a relative opening of the economy. But the key issue was a monetary regime named “convertibility.” The currency board implemented by the then minister of finance, Domingo Cavallo, almost immediately stopped a chronic and decades long inflationary problem which had evolved by 1989 into hyperinflation.

By the end of the '90s the inconsistencies of the economic program were causing imbalances, huge deficits, and unemployment. In 1998 the economy entered a prolonged period of recession. President de la Rúa came to power running a conservative campaign – promising to maintain convertibility and price stability but also to boost the economy and fight rampant corruption.

At the same time, Hugo Chávez was elected in Venezuela. The message of Chávez was diametrically opposed. It would be soon clear that the exhausted neoliberalism was going to be replaced – across the region – by a new wave of populism.

The seeds of neopopulism in Argentina were planted by President Eduardo Duhalde. An obscure figure from the province of Buenos Aires, he arrived to the presidency thanks to a parliamentary procedure just two years after losing the elections to Mr. de la Rúa. Many claim that both Mr. Duhalde and the Peronist party were conspiring against the government and eventually provoked its collapse.

The Duhalde administration will be remembered for two decisions. The first was the abolition of the convertibility regime. Leaving the convertibility regime was one of the most traumatic events in the country's history. Parity with the dollar had created a de facto dollar economy, since Argentines tended to distrust the peso. Politicians knew this. They also knew that it would be too hard to honour people's contracts and savings in dollars. So they must have cried “Eureka” when somebody came with the concept of asymmetrical devaluation – which in practice meant the destruction of all existing contracts.

This procedure represented a major transfer of wealth. The losers were savers, people living on salaries,



**Federico N. Fernández**  
is President of Fundación Internacional Bases (Rosario, Argentina) and a Senior Fellow with the Austrian Economics Center (Vienna, Austria). He is also the president of the Organizing Committee of the International Conference “The Austrian School of Economics in the 21st Century” which has taken place every two years since 2006 in Rosario (Argentina).

creditors of private dollarised contracts like mortgages, and many more. All of them saw their income and savings liquidated by an imposed exchange rate and the eroding power of inflation.

The second was the implementation of export taxes, retenciones in Spanish, to the agricultural sector. Not many countries in history have taxed their own exporters. The ones who have tend to be highly extractive economies with corrupt and inefficient political elites. Mr Duhalde seemed to be eager to join this pathetic club of Third World leaders.

In 2003 the Kirchner couple got into power. They remained for three consecutive terms for a total of twelve years (Néstor Kirchner 2003-07 and Cristina Kirchner 2007-15). The policy of export taxes was the cornerstone of their economic plan.

the Venezuelan model to local conditions. The government of Venezuela exercises ownership and control of the national oil company, PDVSA, while the Argentinian government, starting with the unelected transition administration of 2002-3, heavily taxed commodity exports.

The rise of Argentinian (and Venezuelan) populism must take into consideration the Federal Reserve's monetary policy and its impact on commodity prices. Contrary to the claims of their propaganda apparatus – which spanned public education, media, and the intellectuals – the driving force of the socio-political process in both countries is not the so-called “accumulation model with social inclusion” or the “Bolivarian revolution” but chiefly the dollar cycle and its commodity price repercussions.

the hypothetical situation of Germany today having had an extremely popular National Socialist party, and all the other German parties copying and imitating the Nazi agenda.

The economic programme of the Peronists, and the populists of all parties, aptly described by a term coined by Ludwig von Mises: Destructionism. It has produced nothing. It has created

pauperised suburban belt of the province of Buenos Aires. It may be that the excesses of former president Cristina Kirchner marked the pinnacle of the Peronist power and the start of its decline.

After so many years of populist mismanagement, the economic decadence – and frustration – is palpable. The defeated presidential candidate

“  
Destructionism. It has produced nothing. It has created nothing. It has only parasitically lived off resources created by previous generations and favourable international contexts.



“  
The currency board implemented by the then minister of finance, Domingo Cavallo, almost immediately stopped a chronic and decades long inflationary problem which had evolved by 1989 into hyperinflation.

Democratic order returned to Argentina in 1983. Between then and 2015, Peronists were in power for 24 out of 32 years. The only exceptions to their hegemony were the Alfonsín (1983-1989) and de la Rúa administrations (1999-2001). Both of these finished before they were supposed to.

The pervasive populist influence of Peronism can be traced back to the late 1940s. Since then, Peronism has had a hegemonic influence over the political life of the country. Gabriel Zanotti believes this is precisely the “cultural drama” of Argentina and compares it to

nothing. It has only parasitically lived off resources created by previous generations and favourable international contexts.

Thus, the rise of Argentinian (and Venezuelan) populism must take into consideration the Federal Reserve's monetary policy and its impact on commodity prices.

But after seven decades of political dominance, hegemonic populism seems to be showing signs of exhaustion. The once mighty Peronist party is today reduced to a feeble league of northern feudal lords and the most

Daniel Scioli ran a campaign in 2015 promising to build sewers for the population. Yet Mr. Scioli himself was governor of Buenos Aires for eight years and his party was in office in that province between 1987 and 2015. Twenty-eight years, apparently, were not enough for Peronism to solve the sewage situation.

The current president, Mauricio Macri, went to elections offering a clear anti-populist alternative. He won in an election that was as surprising and shocking as Brexit and Trump. He did very well in all sectors of society, including the worse-off.

Why? What explains this new phenomenon?

“It's the economy,” insists a certain sort of political pundit. Having woken up to emergence of political outsiders, many insiders reach for their default explanation for voter behaviour. “Those who vote for these new radicals are losers, who have lost out to globalisation.” Really?

Over the past 30 years, hundreds of millions of additional workers from China,



# The myth of ‘the people’ against the ‘elites’

Following the result of the Brexit referendum and the election of Donald Trump in 2016, some irresponsible commentators predicted that an Anglo-American wave of populism would sweep across Europe too. They foresaw Marine Le Pen in the Elysée Palace and Geert Wilders as prime minister of the Netherlands. They even evoked the possibility of Angela Merkel's CDU bleeding to death by haemorrhaging votes to Alternative für Deutschland. After the Dutch elections and the French presidential election when Marine Le Pen confounded all the opinion polls losing the election, it became clear that this was all nonsense. Why?

First, the prediction of popular revolution sweeping out old elites was itself a product of ideology, not of analysis. The wish is father to the thought. The myth of “the people” rising up against hated and corrupt elites, which is at least as old as the French Revolution, is a seductive one, whose power over people's minds seems only to have grown since the end of the Cold War.

The ostensibly revolutionary regimes in Eastern Europe – which were in reality socially and politically conservative – having themselves collapsed, the revolutionary mythology has migrated West instead. Fairy tales about “colour revolutions” from Belgrade to Baghdad have now excited the Western mind for two decades; the events in Kiev in 2014 were only the latest re-run of a script which has been played out identically in Georgia, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and elsewhere. People believe in the fairy tale because it corresponds to Oscar Wilde's definition of fiction: the good end happily and the bad unhappily.

Second, the Hegelian determinism underlying such predictions crassly fails to take account of two key factors in history: human agency and cultural difference. All countries are not the same and historical events depend on choices. Both the Brexit referendum and the election of Trump were particular events rooted in the political history and

culture of their respective nations. They are not easily transposable to other lands.

It is well known, for instance, that the EU has been a major bone of contention in British politics, off and on, for 40 years: membership of that body never commanded the cross-party consensus, still less the emotional appeal, which it enjoys across the continent. (This is itself due in no small measure to Britain's role in the Second World War, which was unique in Europe.)

Trump, for his part, benefited largely

“  
The prediction of popular revolution sweeping out old elites was itself a product of ideology, not of analysis.

political discourse with the language of populism: Trump's inaugural speech, and UKIP's “People's Army”, are textbook cases of anti-elitism.

On the other hand, the same is probably true of every single candidate in a democratic election: what else is Emmanuel Macron's “On the move!”, a political party created out of nothing in order to destroy and replace France's existing political parties? Moreover, the idea that the Brexit campaign was based on a rebellion against elites, when six incumbent Cabinet ministers and several former heavyweight ministers – including two Tory Chancellors of the Exchequer, now members of the House of Lords, as well as one of the best-spoken and talented orators of his generation (Daniel Hannan) – campaigned for it, is a little quaint: you could hardly move in the Brexit camp for Oxbridge graduates and Old Etonians. As for Trump, he won because he was the leader of the opposition and he was brought to power as the official candidate of one of the oldest political parties in the world. He did not win the popular vote.

Far from being proof of the power of populism, the Brexit referendum and the Trump victory show instead the decisive role of the political establishment, in these cases the Conservative and Republican parties. These two outcomes are impossible to imagine without the support they received from that establishment. Marine Le Pen and Geert Wilders, by contrast, not only flogged the anti-elitist horse until it was dead; by positioning themselves exclusively as angry anti-system candidates, and not as potential heads of state or government with the charisma necessary to draw people towards them in the name of a national project, they precisely demonstrated the insurmountable weakness of exclusively negative electioneering.

People in elections do not vote to clean out the Augean stables of a corrupt elite; they vote instead for a political leader in whom they can believe and whom they can respect. Populism fails where an air of natural authority,

and the ability to be a true leader of men, wins. When everything seemed lost on June 18 1940, Churchill held out the prospect of “sunlit uplands”; he did not, like Marshal Pétain, plunge his country into the miasma of guilt and recrimination.

These are important lessons for conservatives. Political power is wielded through the institutions of the state, which conservatives seek to preserve and uphold because they are part of the fabric of civilisation. Political power consists in elevating the population towards higher things, and in consolidating the sense of nationhood which constitutes one of the greatest constructions of human civilisation: nations are to politics what cathedrals are to theology.

Power is never wielded by the will of the people, a debased and vacuous slogan, but instead only by its leaders. Marine Le Pen was consoled for her loss at the presidential election by winning a parliamentary seat in a



**John Laughland**  
is Director of Studies at the Institute of Democracy and Cooperation in Paris (www.idc-europe.org) and the author of several books, most recently *A History of Political Trials* from Charles I to Charles Taylor.

desolate and déclassé proletarian constituency whose inchoate anger she certainly articulates; but the simple rules of sociology tell us that the ethic of such a place can never be a springboard to the leadership of a proud and ancient nation whose middle classes and political and business elites, however weakened they may be by decades of socialism, still do and should play a decisive role. Conservatives are not revolutionaries and revolutionaries are not conservatives. ■



**Douglas Carswell**  
co-founded Vote Leave, and is the author of *Rebel: how to overthrow the emerging oligarchy* (Head of Zeus, 2017)  
@DouglasCarswell

swimming pools in their basements, millions living in the South-East of England under the age of 40 cannot afford to buy their own home.

There is something cringy at the heart of our capitalist system, with its easy money subsidies for big banks. A radical overhaul of banking is needed to ensure that those who own them are liable for their losses, so that they can no longer conjure up credit – and make a series of one-way bets underwritten by the rest of us. Corporate law needs to be changed to ensure that those who own firms control those who run them. Those on whom we confer the privilege of limited liability when they conduct business cannot be allowed to run corporate boards as self-enriching cliques.

If capitalism is to flourish, we need to redefine capital itself, so that states cannot control the currency in the interests of officialdom. Those of us who believe in free-market capitalism need to advocate far-reaching reforms – if we don't, there will be plenty of charlatans and snake oil salesmen out there who will. ■

“  
If economically distressed blue-collar workers explained the rise of Donald Trump, why is it that his most fervent supporters in the primary elections earned on average \$72,000 a year, way above the US national average?

Prime, people now expect to get what they want, when they want it. Self-selection and choice are cultural norms.

Whether or not our political elites are more or less accountable to the electorate than they were in generation of so ago is debatable. But public expectations about accountability have never been

## Welcome to mass digital democracy

There is something wrong with the way we are run – and if we don't fix it, some profoundly un-conservative politicians will try to.

Something extraordinary is happening in politics. New radicals are on the rise. In Britain, the United States and much of Europe, angry, insurgent voices – which would not even have found an audience a generation ago – can be heard.

Whether victorious in elections, like Donald Trump in America, or Syriza in Greece, or simply successful enough to form the opposition, like Jeremy Corbyn in Britain or Marine Le Pen in France, these new radicals all have one thing in common: whichever side of the political spectrum they are supposed to come from, they are all offering the electorate ideas from beyond the range of what was once considered the political mainstream.

Why? What explains this new phenomenon?

“It's the economy,” insists a certain sort of political pundit. Having woken up to emergence of political outsiders, many insiders reach for their default explanation for voter behaviour. “Those who vote for these new radicals are losers, who have lost out to globalisation.” Really?

Over the past 30 years, hundreds of millions of additional workers from China,

So what does explain the rise of the new radicals? The sort of angry voices that rage against “the elite” are being heard for one simple reason: they can be. Digital technology makes them audible. A generation ago, only approved insiders got airtime. Digital creates an array of competing platforms for news. It has democratised communication and the process of opinion forming.

That might explain why populist advocates and ideas get airtime. But why do they find an audience? What explains the rage? Was populist anger always there?

“Populism,” many political observers claim, “is all about those who are ill at ease with modernity.” But what if this populism was actually made possible by modernity? We now live in a world where consumers have control. From Netflix to Amazon

higher. It is this that has helped fuel the sense that politics is a cartel – and in a sense it is.

In Britain, most parliamentary constituencies are “safe seats”, almost guaranteed never to change hands between political parties at a General Election – insulating the incumbent MP from his or her own electorate. In America, instead of voters choosing their representatives, gerrymandering allows representatives to choose their electorates. In many European countries, the party list system ensures small elites, rather than the voters, get to decide who gets elected.

At the same time, there's a growing sense that the economy, notionally free-market, is rigged. While the returns on capital invested in large FTSE firms over the past 15 years has been modest,





# A legitimate reaction against liberal oligarchy

The spectre de jour is the rise in “populism” or what the media and the political classes call populism – namely, the emergence of new parties, some Left, some Right, some a blend of the two, that challenge the mainstream parties, campaign on issues that the existing parties have neglected, and become a serious and perhaps permanent part of the political system. A recent issue of the Journal of Democracy, published by America’s National Endowment for Democracy, provided a handy compendium of all the parties defined as populist. Takis S Pappas, a Greek political theorist living in Hungary, listed 22 different parties in this broad category. Seven have held power in coalition and another four alone.

existing parties as corrupt and incompetent (not without some evidence); he founded a new party based around himself – EM standing for both En Marche and Emmanuel Macron; he carefully selected both parliamentary candidates and Cabinet members on the basis of being loyal to him and “untainted” by the past; he advanced a set of policies that blended “pro-business” economic reforms with extreme social liberalism on identity politics, which in France counts as Left and Right; and finally, since his election, he has sought to present himself as a national leader above politics, at one point summoning all the legislators to Versailles where he addressed them for about ninety minutes. (He got bad reviews.) Altogether

recent past – the days of FDR and Churchill, JFK and Harold Macmillan, Reagan and Thatcher – liberal democracy meant free competitive elections in an atmosphere of free speech, free assembly, a free press, etc. An election could hardly be free without free speech to allow full discussion of the issues at issue? We fought the Cold War under this sign. To be sure, there were some additional liberal restraints on majority-rule, but they were few and modest in number. In recent years, however, liberalism has come to mean the proliferation of liberal institutions – the courts, supra-national bodies, charters of rights, independent agencies, UN treaty monitoring bodies, etc – that increasingly restrain and correct parliaments,

not discussing these issues – in the common phrase, by keeping them out of politics – and leaving the courts or others to carry them out. Immigration is one example of such excluded policies in many countries. Majoritarian democracy in these conditions mutates into a system that the Hudson Institute’s John Fonte calls post-democracy, in which elites and the institutions they control exercise more power than the voters and their elected representatives. But every action stimulates a reaction. So the more power has shifted to liberal institutions in recent years, the more populism has emerged to demand that the will of the voters should be respected and restraints on it removed. That is what the recent surges of populism represent.



**John O’Sullivan** is a journalist, author, lecturer and broadcaster. He is editor at large of *National Review* magazine, President of the Danube Institute in Budapest, Associate Editor of the *Hungarian Review*, International Editor of *Quadrant Magazine* in Sydney, Australia, a Fellow of the National Review Institute, and co-founder and director of 21st Century Initiatives in Washington DC. @JohnOSullivanNR



They are serious challengers to the mainstream Left and Right. That is not, of course, the way that political establishments, existing parties, or the media, or Professor Pappas want us to think about populism. As the professor sees it, these parties are challengers to democracy. He is echoed by many other political commentators who instruct us as follows: the main choice before us today is that between populism and liberal democracy – which hardly seems like a choice at all. It sounds more like a slogan to conscript the voters into continuing to vote for what are called the “legacy parties” without thinking too much about it. And as we shall see, populism and liberal democracy, though common terms in the higher journalism, are indeed slippery ones. Consider the textbook accounts of populism. Among other things, it supposedly describes a movement that is personalist, rooted in a leader-principle, hostile to the “regime of the parties,” and based on blending Left and Right in a vague new synthesis. If that is the case, then the most successful populist leader in Europe today is Emmanuel Macron, President of France. He denounced the

Macron’s performance has been, if anything, an exaggeration of what populism traditionally means. Yet Macron is never described as populist. Quite the contrary: the EU Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, even hailed his election as the beginning of the end of populism. That is because Brussels and establishment opinion generally approve of his ideological bent which embraces such familiar policies as multiculturalism, open borders, a banking union to underpin the Euro, and a kind of militant born-again Europeanism. They regard populism as a threat to these policies and so they ignore the populist aspects of the Macron victory. As generally used, therefore, populism is not a neutral dispassionate description but a “boo” word employed to discredit those called populist or to indicate disapproval of them. This definition of populism seeks to end debate rather than to advance or clarify it. Liberal democracy too is also a protean concept that today needs a considerable amount of clarifying. In the relatively

“ Liberal democracy too is also a protean concept that today needs a considerable amount of clarifying. congresses, and elected officials. This shift of power was questionable when these bodies merely nullified or delayed laws and regulations. But more recently they have taken to instructing democratically accountable bodies to make particular reforms and even to impose them on the entire polity through creative constitutional and treaty interpretation. Their decisions have concerned a wide range of official powers from welfare rules through gay marriage to regulations on migration and deportation (of, among others, convicted terrorists.) Liberal democracy under this definition becomes the undemocratic imposition of liberal policies. This transfer of power has happened in part because progressive elites at the top of mainstream political parties have gone along with it. It helped them to ignore those opinions they opposed. They did so by the simple expedient of

But the opposite is also true. If majority rule remains the driving force of democracy, then populism will be absorbed within traditional democratic debate and made subject to its conventions. The UK referendum on Brexit achieved exactly that. Once the voters had made their decision, and once the government had accepted and promised to implement it, Brexit became an orthodox part of the political debate, with the government proposing measures to implement it, the opposition suggesting amendments to those measures, the courts hearing cases to ensure that Brexit is pursued within the rules of the political game, and so on. UKIP then saw its support drain away since one mainstream party – the government, too -- adopted its signature issue and are carried it into practical effect as the small and relatively powerless UKIP simply cannot do. Once we take these (fairly major) developments into account, it becomes possible to craft a definition of populism that is not simply a way of abusing



## CONSERVATIVE APPROACHES TO MIGRATION POLICY REFORM, AND THE

# EXPERIENCE

### An Interview with Tony Abbott, former Prime Minister of Australia

by Themistoklis Asthenidis

#### CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE

**THEMISTOKLIS ASTHENIDIS** You are known to have taken a hard stance against illegal migration. Under your premiership, Australia adopted a stricter border control system, effectively intercepting vessels carrying migrants and refugees before reaching the country’s coasts. Is the solution as simple as stricter border control, or are there any other key elements of the Australian migration policy reform?

#### TONY ABBOTT

Australia had a relatively modest influx of boat people under the Howard Government but it had been largely stopped by 2002 through offshore processing (so that people arriving by boat didn’t initially come to Australia), temporary protection visas for people found to be refugees (so that people arriving by boat could not expect permanent residency in Australia) and – on four occasions – turning boats back to Indonesia from whence they’d come.

These policies were denounced by the human rights lobby as cruel and even illegal and were promptly abolished by the new Labor Government in 2008. Within a couple of months, the illegal boats started again. And why wouldn’t they, if making it to Australia meant a new life in a country that was generous to newcomers?

From 2008 till 2013, there were nearly 1,000 illegal boats, more than 50,000 illegal arrivals by boat, and more than 1,000 known drownings. Under these circumstances, stopping the boats became an absolute moral imperative because the only way to stop the deaths was to stop the boats.

In the peak month alone, July 2013, there were almost 5,000 illegal arrivals by boat. In response, the former Labor Government belatedly re-opened Howard-era offshore processing centres on Nauru and at Manus Island – and the numbers dropped to 1,500 arrivals the following month – but it refused to countenance boat turn backs or temporary visas for people arriving illegally by boat.

My position was that Australia would: first, work with the Indonesian government to stop illegal boats leaving in the first place; second, prevent boats from landing in Australia wherever possible; third, process offshore anyone coming to Australia illegally by boat; and fourth,

deny permanent residency to anyone coming illegally by boat. In other words, they wouldn’t leave, they wouldn’t land and they certainly wouldn’t stay.

On coming to office in September 2013, my government added some refinements to the Howard-era policies: first, under Operation Sovereign Borders, there was an integrated chain of command under a senior military officer; second, there was a news black-out on operational matters because media attention tended to become propaganda for people smugglers; and third, and most important, we provided unsinkable life rafts when people smugglers scuttled their boats so that their customers could return to Indonesia rather than be taken aboard Australian ships.

Under Operation Sovereign Borders, the Royal Australian Navy and Australian Border Force have intercepted and turned around almost 30 people smuggling boats. By Easter 2014, people smuggling had virtually stopped and there have now been no illegal arrivals by boat for over two years. There has been some media hostility from Indonesia which resents the presence of would-be illegal travellers to Australia but the number of people entering Indonesia hoping subsequently to get to Australia has also dropped dramatically.

#### THEMISTOKLIS ASTHENIDIS

**Massive and uncontrolled flow of migrants and refugees from Syria, North Africa and the Middle East has revealed Europe’s inability to enforce an effective migration policy response.**

“ I’m a supporter of migration but migration has to be in a country’s national interest or it will never have popular support. That’s why governments – and not people smugglers – have to control who comes under any rational migration arrangements.

“ Europe has made two fundamental mistakes: first, it has confused the duty to help people in trouble with an obligation to give people permanent residency; and second, it keeps describing as “asylum seekers” people who are actually illegal migrants.

**Where do you attribute this failure to implement such policies? What are the critical steps European nations and the EU as a whole must take in order to safeguard EU and national borders?**

#### TONY ABBOTT

Europe has made two fundamental mistakes: first, it has confused the duty to help people in trouble with an obligation to give people permanent residency; and second, it keeps describing as “asylum seekers” people who are actually illegal migrants. An asylum seeker is someone seeking sanctuary from imminent danger. Anyone who has moved beyond a place of refuge seeking a better life is a would-be economic migrant.

#### THEMISTOKLIS ASTHENIDIS

**During the Second Annual Margaret Thatcher Lecture in October 2015, you spoke of “a misguided altruism” that Europe shows towards migrants and refugees. On the other hand, Germany’s Chancellor had previously spoken of the responsibility of Western nations, and has followed a more welcoming approach to migration. Are nations with stricter immigration laws less ethical or altruistic, and how far does our duty to help extend?**

#### TONY ABBOTT

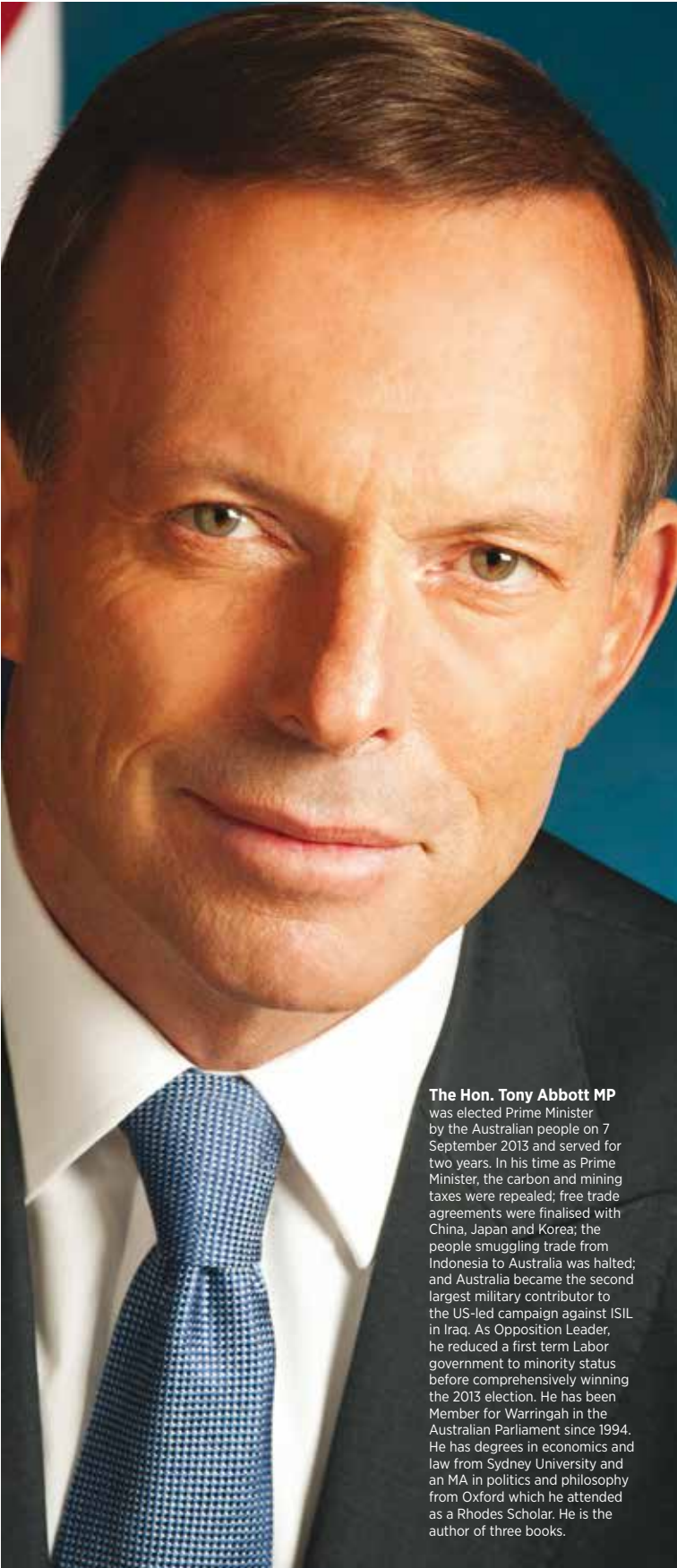
Any response that makes a problem worse is not a moral one. Europe’s “responsibility” is to support countries and people where they are first seeking safety – not to admit ever growing numbers of outsiders seeking a better life.

#### THEMISTOKLIS ASTHENIDIS

**Going back to that same speech at the Second Annual Margaret Thatcher Lecture, you mentioned that the “love your neighbor” imperative is “leading much of Europe into catastrophic error”. Is Europe weakening itself by not tackling uncontrolled immigration?**

#### TONY ABBOTT

I’m a supporter of migration but migration has to be in a country’s national interest or it will never have popular support. That’s why governments – and not people smugglers – have to control who comes under any rational migration arrangements. As well, there has to be a clear expectation of migrants that they will “join the team”.



**The Hon. Tony Abbott MP** was elected Prime Minister by the Australian people on 7 September 2013 and served for two years. In his time as Prime Minister, the carbon and mining taxes were repealed; free trade agreements were finalised with China, Japan and Korea; the people smuggling trade from Indonesia to Australia was halted; and Australia became the second largest military contributor to the US-led campaign against ISIL in Iraq. As Opposition Leader, he reduced a first term Labor government to minority status before comprehensively winning the 2013 election. He has been Member for Warringah in the Australian Parliament since 1994. He has degrees in economics and law from Sydney University and an MA in politics and philosophy from Oxford which he attended as a Rhodes Scholar. He is the author of three books.

#### THEMISTOKLIS ASTHENIDIS

**How did mass-migration and respective social unrest play a role in shifting European political landscape?**

#### TONY ABBOTT

If people think that their government has lost control of the country or is failing to govern in their nation’s best interests they will seek a better government. Why wouldn’t they?

#### THEMISTOKLIS ASTHENIDIS

**Can there be any permanent solution to uncontrolled migration influxes? Is the**

**solution more foreign or humanitarian aid? Can there be a more effective solution than patrolling borders?**

#### TONY ABBOTT

There has to be an effective response to what could easily become the peaceful invasion of Europe. People need to understand that there is no right to leave one country to enter another except to avoid imminent danger. People also need to understand that our duty to people in danger is to keep them safe as far as we can; not to give them permanent residence. ■





# Jan Zahradil

# CAMPAIGN

# DIARY

## Part II.



Paris, London, Prague, Belcoo and Blacklion

## EVENTS

### Jan Zahradil welcomed new allies at the ECR Group Bureau meeting in Paris



ACRE's President and member of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group in the European Parliament, Jan Zahradil, met new allies from France and the Netherlands in Paris at the end of February.

Together with ECR Group Co-chair, Professor Ryszard Legutko, the leader of the French party Debout la France, Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, and Thierry Baudet, who leads Dutch party Forum for Democracy, they announced that they are joining forces for the 2019 European elections.

This alliance with the new French and Dutch parties aims to bring together constructive Euro-realist political forces that agree on the essential need to defend the interests of Member States while working together in areas where the EU can bring added value.

With their new allies, the ECR Group aims to form a new Euro-realist majority in the next European Parliament.

"The grand coalition between the EPP and the Socialists in the European Parliament, which has ruled Brussels for years, must end. And I am certain that we will be the ones to end it. We will bring about the change needed in Brussels after the next European Elections," said Jan Zahradil to the journalists during the press conference.

### Jan Zahradil met with the British Defence Secretary and the Minister of State for Brexit



At the beginning of March, ACRE's lead candidate Jan Zahradil travelled to London to meet British Secretary of State for Defence, Gavin Williamson, and British Minister of State for Exiting the EU, Lord Callanan.

The letter sent by the British government to the European Commission proposing an agreement on citizens' rights in the event of a no-deal Brexit was on the agenda of the meeting with Lord Callanan. ACRE's President assured Lord Callanan that he would urge the Commission to accept the draft.

With Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, the role of NATO was discussed and the two politicians agreed that NATO needs to remain the cornerstone of European security after Brexit.

### It's possible without quotas!



In the Czech Republic, International Women's Day, celebrated on 8 March, enjoys a poor reputation in the country as it is associated with the communist regime. To mark the occasion and stress the importance of concrete actions in this field, ACRE President Jan Zahradil, member of the Czech ODS Party, decided to organise an event in Prague bringing together successful businesswomen, female politicians, lawyers and doctors to discuss successful career-building. The event entitled, "It's possible without quotas" promoted the message that positive discrimination in the form of quotas is not a prerequisite to success for women and the Czech Republic is proof of this.

### Jan Zahradil visited the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland



On 9 March, the ACRE's lead candidate Jan Zahradil visited Northern Ireland. He gave a key note speech at the Annual Conference of the Ulster Unionist Party in Belfast where he stressed the importance of preserving the territorial integrity of the United Kingdom after Brexit and the importance of having a strong UK operating in partnership with the EU.

In the afternoon he had the opportunity to visit the villages of Belcoo and Blacklion where the hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland used to be. "Nobody wants a hard border here after Brexit so we must make sure it won't happen. We must not return to the borders of the past," commented Zahradil after the visit.

“

We do not want a Europe that is paralysed by a dysfunctional EU and we do not want a dysfunctional EU paralysed by its efforts to be something that it cannot be. We need the EU to be a flexible, useful, ready-for-action instrument that fits the Europe of the 21st century.

## TWEETS



8:02 PM - 9 Mar 2019

This afternoon I had the opportunity to visit the Belcoo / Blacklion bridge to see where the hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland used to be. We must not return to the borders of the past.

#Brexit #backstop



10:22 AM - 5 Mar 2019

@EmmanuelMacron wrote letter to the citizens of Europe. At least we know what his idea of #EU is about: it's only another version of outdated federalist tune called "more Europe". No wonder @federalists applauded. But EU needs new, different tune. #RetuneTheEU with @ACEurope.



5:41 PM - 28 Feb 2019

"We don't want a Europe that is paralysed by a dysfunctional #EU & we don't want a dysfunctional EU paralysed by its efforts to be something that it cannot be." I am speaking at our @ecrgroup Bureau in Paris & I am glad we agree on this with @thierrybaudet and @dupontaignan.



6:41 PM - 27 Feb 2019

Tomorrow we are in Paris presenting our partnership between @ecrgroup and @DLF\_Officiel. The grand coalition of EPP+Socialists will be over after #EuropeanElections2019. It is time for a new eurorealist majority. With our allies we will #RetuneTheEU.

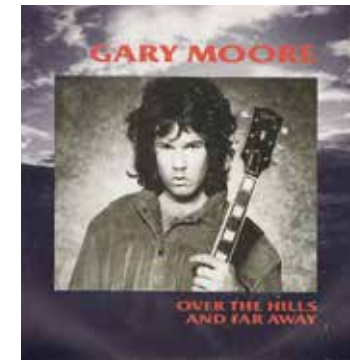


## IN THE NEWS



## MUSIC

WHAT I AM LISTENING TO RIGHT NOW



Gary Moore

Over The Hills And Far Away



Thin Lizzy

Whisky In The Jar

## ZAHRABEER

Onboard the flight from London to Dublin.



## Grassroots activism? It's the new “Big Thing” in campaigning...

It is a fact that regrettably, far too often, classically traditional grassroots campaigning gets relegated to a mere postscript within election campaign planning. Building, and then maintaining, large teams of volunteer activists often seems far too much like hard work to many campaigns. Equally, in many quarters, it is viewed with misgivings as an outdated concept that went out with the ark. Why spend hours traipsing streets, and only ever reaching small handfuls of the electorate, when you can sit at home collecting Facebook “Likes” and Tweeting to your large list of faithful followers?

And it is indisputably true that social media has added a genuinely astonishing new set of communication tools for candidates and their campaigns. The almost unbelievable capabilities, and reach, of digital campaigning is pretty much every campaigner's ultimate dream!

The negative side of the new digital age though is that it seems sometimes as if virtually the entire focus of all campaign strategy, and budgeted campaign spend, in “modern” electioneering is dedicated to digital ads, online videos and the like. And why is that a negative?

Firstly, “everybody” in campaigning now seems to be a ‘specialist’ digital geek! You cannot help but trip over these ‘experts’ who want to become involved at, what they perceive to be, the cutting edge. Everyone wants to be the one running, what is considered to be, the “sexy” aspects of the campaign. “Bread and butter” campaigning is certainly seen as much less alluring than keeping up with finding new angles within the latest digital engagement tools.

Secondly, although digital campaigning provides unquestionably magnificent and hitherto previously impossible methods for reaching all sorts of voter types, it is also starting to trigger suspicion and wariness amongst sections of the voting public. The feverish medialed hype about so-called “fake news”, allegations of political interference from overseas, and the potential for misuse of personal data, has seen almost continuous regulatory investigations into the alleged non-transparent use of digital campaigning techniques.

Assuredly some of these concerns may well be genuine, undoubtedly many are not. However, perception is reality and increasingly electors appear to be becoming concerned and sceptical about the use of their personal private data and so on.

The irony is that having invented such amazing technological tools, the deployment of them is slowly breeding a degree of distrust. So, despite everything, it is age old personal human interaction with voters that is starting to win the day once more.

Societies, the world over, are losing trust in politicians and faith in our politics. People are angry and there is demonstrably a significant disconnect between them and their politicians. They do not feel listened to and are fed up feeling ignored by political parties and the establishment. Which is why, regular, local community campaigning increasingly has a disproportionate influential effect on people.

Be in no doubt. A strong volunteer led grassroots organisation is now almost an

absolute prerequisite to electoral success. It has become the new “Big Thing” in campaigning. Proof of this can be found in numerous recent election campaigns around the world. The question is, how do you create such a network of motivated volunteers? And the answer is that it is not straightforward. It takes time. It takes huge patience. And it takes massive levels of hard work.

Even once you have achieved your goal, you still need to proactively manage and maintain that network and you also need to actually *utilise* it. All of this requires significant organisational skills and resilience in itself. It is no task for the fainthearted. It is not easy. However, who ever said that getting elected within a democratic system was easy?

We sometimes forget that it is the duty of politicians to seek out, listen, and respond to the views of their electorate. This cannot be done if one does not go out and talk to people. How can someone honestly represent peoples' views if they do not even know what they are? And, in any case, in the first instance a candidate has the intimidating task of persuading people that they are actually worth voting for, or that their party is worth being supported.



Richard Murphy

Managing Director of Communication Strategy and Management (CSM), ACRE's Campaigns' Consultant info@csm-limited.com

So, how does a candidate start? Or, if they already have a network, however robust or even inadequate, how do they continue the work of capacity building and voter communication?

Crucially, they need some leaders to kick things off properly. They require people who have the time, and the commitment, to give to the campaign. Once they have these individuals, they must treat them like gold dust. They are special. They are going to help the candidate get elected. These volunteers need time given to them occasionally; they need to be encouraged and motivated by the cause; they need to be led from the front; and, most importantly of all, they need to be thanked. And once the candidate has thanked them for their work – they need to thank them again. One of the key golden rules as a candidate, or as an elected representative, is never to take your volunteers for granted. They are just that. They are volunteers. They don't have to be doing this work for you. They are not being paid. They can walk away at any time they like. They do what they do out of conviction and belief. *They also do it for you.* Candidates should never forget this – and so a “thank you” now and again goes a long, long way!

This key senior team needs to establish a formal central Campaign Team. This must not be, or ever become, a bureaucratic structure. It is there to

actually make things happen. And it is there to make things happen based upon the formal, pre-defined, strategy of the campaign. So, that being said, what are the sorts of areas that the Campaign Team should focus upon?

In reality, there are any number of key aspects of campaigning that require organisational capacity building – and then subsequent proactive delivery of the relevant tasks in hand. What some of these will be, will depend upon the type of campaign you have decided to run, how strong funding of the campaign is and what that all-important strategy document dictates. However, some characteristics of a grassroots ground campaign should always be ever-present. These should most certainly include a strong canvassing organisation; the production and distribution of campaign literature; outdoor publicity; volunteer capacity building; postal voter recruitment (where applicable); 'Get out the Vote (GOTV) and polling day organisation (again, where applicable) and, most critically, fund raising.

Each of these key lieutenants, as discussed previously, should agree (with the input of the candidate/s) which key areas of the campaign need to be addressed as a priority. Perhaps this will mean one or two additional areas to those set out above. Either way, once a conclusion has been determined, each member of this senior volunteer team should be allocated a specific Campaign Team role. Each member of the team must have the various aspects of their role clearly defined, alongside a formally agreed set of key performance indicator targets. They should then set out ensuring that an efficient volunteer grassroots organisation is created in their particular sphere of responsibility.

So, what are examples of the types of activities in question? The list is extensive but would definitely include ensuring that enough volunteer literature deliverers are recruited; that canvassing and surveying is conducted systematically; that individual poster sites are found; that various methods of volunteer capacity building are explored and exploited and so on.

The Campaign Team should meet monthly, all year round, until the election campaign itself draws closer. After this, they should meet far more regularly. The organisational challenge ahead of the team should not be underestimated but, then, nor should the eventual electoral benefit!

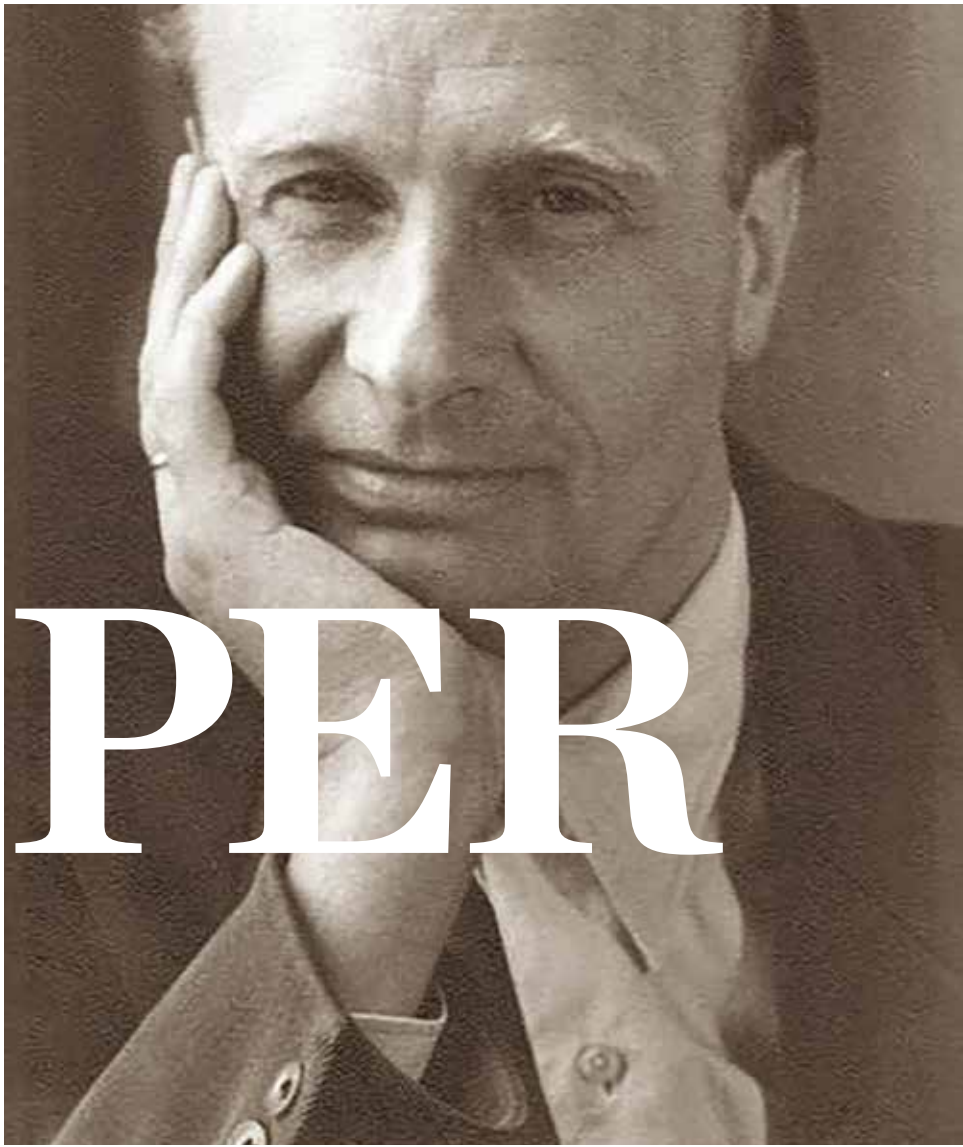
In the next edition we will explore these activities in more detail but, until then, be in no doubt. There is a direct correlation between a strong grassroots campaigning organisation and the subsequent winning of elections. It's not rocket science. If you connect with people, keep them engaged, ask their opinions and help them with their issues and concerns – you will build electoral loyalty. And you will have earned it. And so that almost infamous slogan, in UK political local government campaigning, should be taken to heart by us all. And that is that we should “*campaign all year round – not just at election time*”. Having said that, it is almost never too late to start and so if you haven't yet begun – *tomorrow would be good...* ■

Richard Murphy is ACRE's official Campaigns' Consultant. Richard is Managing Director of Communication Strategy & Management Ltd (CSM), a political campaign consulting firm based in the UK. CSM works alongside Members of Parliament, Members of the European Parliament and candidates delivering professional advice on the construction and management of their communication strategies. With almost thirty years' experience of working with the UK Conservative Party, Richard has campaigned directly with seven party leaders including the incomparable Margaret Thatcher. He has a wealth of experience and expertise in structuring and managing election campaigns at European, Parliamentary and Local Government levels. Richard specialises in grassroots capacity building and GOTV. He also trains party activists nationally, and internationally, in “on the ground” field campaigning techniques. Richard has trained party political activists in countries such as Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Trinidad & Tobago, Slovenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Serbia and Montenegro. A member of the Institute of Leadership & Management, Richard is also a former Board Member of both the International Association of Political Consultants and the European Association of Political Consultants. In each edition of “The Conservative”, Richard writes a short piece on a particular aspect of campaigning. He has penned his second article below. If you wish to contact Richard, please email info@csm-limited.com.





# Josef Pieper



One can learn a lot about a culture from the words and ideas it pushes into early retirement. Our own age is rich in such conceptual emeriti, as anyone who has pondered the recent careers of “disinterested,” “manly,” “respectable” or “virtuous” knows well. And consider the word “leisure,” an idea that for the Greeks and for the doctors of the Church was bound up with the highest aspirations of humanity. For Plato, for Aristotle, for Aquinas, we live most fully when we are most fully at leisure. Leisure – the Greek word is *scholē*, whence our word “school” – meant the opposite of “downtime”.

“Leisure,” Aristotle wrote, is “better than” action and is its end. Leisure in this sense is not idleness, but activity undertaken for its own sake: for example, philosophy, aesthetic delectation, and religious worship. It is significant that in both Greek and Latin, the words for leisure – *scholē* and *otium* – are positive, while the corresponding terms for “busyness” – *ascholia* and *negotium* (whence our “negotiate”) – are privative: not at leisure, i.e., busy, occupied, engaged. And for us? Of course we still have the word “leisure.” But it lives on in a pale, desiccated form. Think for example of the phrase “leisure suit”: this odious object epitomises the unhappy fate of leisure in our society.

At first blush, it might seem odd that leisure should survive in such degraded form. After all, the United States and Western Europe have never been richer or more concerned with “quality of life”. By every objective measure, we can certainly afford leisure. An army of experts and a library of self-help books urge us to salvage “quality time”. What time could be of higher quality than leisure, as Aristotle understood it? But all such remedial gestures underscore the extent to which our society has devoted itself to defeating genuine leisure, replacing it where possible with mere entertainment, and disparaging efforts to preserve oases of leisure as the pernicious indulgence of an outmoded elite.

Probably the most profound meditation on the meaning of leisure is a little

book by the German neo-Thomist philosopher Josef Pieper called in English *Leisure, the Basis of Culture*. It consists of two essays, “Leisure and Worship” and “The Philosophical Act”, both of which Pieper wrote in 1947. They were published together in English in 1952 in a volume introduced by T.S. Eliot. Pieper, who died in 1997 at the age of 93, is pretty much a forgotten figure today. But in the Fifties and Sixties he commanded wide respect and exerted considerable intellectual influence.

The introduction by Eliot is one sign of the seriousness with which he was regarded. Another sign was the book’s reception by reviewers. The *Times Literary Supplement* devoted a long and admiring piece to the book, as did *The New Statesman*. The *Spectator* was briefer but no less admiring: “These two short essays... go a long way towards a lucid explanation of the present crisis in civilization.” The book was also widely noticed in the United States: reviews from *The Nation*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Commonweal* and *The San Francisco Chronicle* commended it to readers, and the review by Allen Tate in *The New York Times Book Review* probably did as much as Eliot’s introduction to stimulate interest in Pieper.

Pieper not only wrote about leisure. He was also a writer whose work requires leisure (I do not mean simply “spare time”) if it is to be properly read. Not that he is “difficult” or overly technical. On the contrary, Pieper wrote with a glittering simplicity, but the tinkinnabulation of unlearned life deafens us to such quiet dignity. We must stop to listen if we are to hear these arguments, and stopping and listening are difficult things to accomplish in a world that rejects leisure. Pieper’s is the hard-won simplicity that comes at the end of an intellectual journey. It is the fruit of confident mastery, like *The Tempest* or Beethoven’s String

Quartet Op.135. Pieper had no use for jargon or technicalities. His favoured form is the long essay made up of short sentences. His books, almost all shorter than 150 pages, carry quotations from Aristotle, Plato, Aquinas, Descartes and Kant. And yet they somehow escape seeming academic.

This is in part because of the Pieper’s subjects. Although he wrote important books about Plato, he was first of all a specialist in the philosophy of Aquinas. His *Guide to Thomas Aquinas* is a splendid introduction to the intellectual and social world inhabited by the philosopher. It is true that Aquinas does not always elicit clarity from his commentators. But Pieper wrote about him not as an academic subject but as someone who had irreplaceable things to say about the moral and intellectual reali-

As is often the case with things that are indispensable, the importance of these principles goes unnoticed until they collapse. Then their centrality snaps into focus. In *No One Could Have Known* (1979), an autobiography that takes Pieper from his birth in a village outside Münster to the end of the Second World War, he recounts a chilling story from 1942 when he worked as a psychologist in the German army. Hitler’s surprise attack on the Soviet Union had put German troops deep into Russia. Pieper encountered a young man of 18 “who still had the look of a child about him”. He wore the uniform of a volunteer driver and worked for the Nazis behind the front. Pieper asked the boy what he did.

“Lately we did practically nothing but transport Jews.”

“

More and more, so-called liberal arts institutions are vocational schools at best; at worst they are circuses of narcissism.

ties of life – our life. He manages to make Aquinas’s vocabulary seem the most natural language possible for discussing the subject at hand. (He manages the same trick with Plato and Aristotle.) This is a testimony to Pieper’s rhetorical skill, the highest rhetorical achievement being to make itself invisible.

It also says something about the naturalness of the categories that Aquinas used to discuss moral questions. Pieper first made his name with a series of essays on the so-called Cardinal Virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. These terms can seem dated to modern ears. Yet in his book *The Four Cardinal Virtues* (1965) Pieper shows with beguiling straightforwardness that, by whatever names we choose to call them, they are indispensable to the common realities of life.

I pretended to be puzzled, not to understand. “Were the Jews being evacuated? Or where did you drive them?”

“No, they were driven into the forest. And there they were shot.”

“And where did you collect them?”

“The Jews used to wait in the market square. They thought they were being resettled. They had suitcases and parcels with them. But they had to throw them onto a big pile. And straight away the Ukrainian militia went after the things.”

“And then you drove them to the forest. But the shooting – you were told about it later; it’s only hearsay.”

Then the boy got very angry in the face of so much distrust and stupidity. “No! I saw it myself. I saw them being shot!”

“And what did you say about that?”

“Oh well, of course you feel a bit funny at first...”

And then? And then, presumably, moral anaesthesia takes over and you stop thinking about it. In one sense, Pieper’s



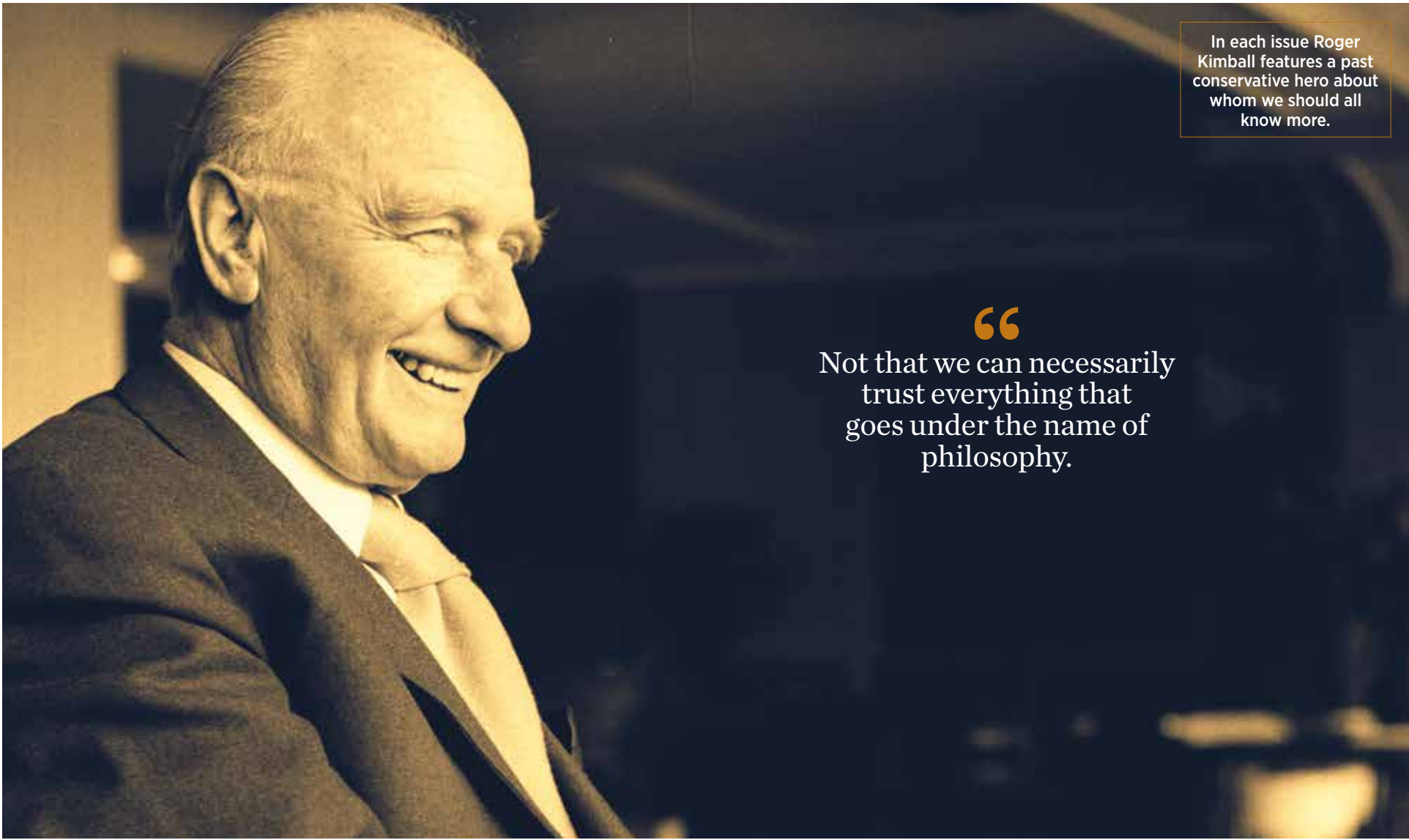
Roger Kimball

is editor and publisher of *The New Criterion* and President and Publisher of Encounter Books. He is a frequent contributor to many publications in the US, Europe, and Australia and writes the *Roger’s Rules* column for *PJ Media*. He is author of several books, including, most recently, *The Fortunes of Permanence: Culture and Anarchy in an Age of Amnesia*.

@rogerkimball

work aims to provide an antidote to such moral insensibility. Philosophy, of course, is a futile weapon against tyranny, a point underscored by Stalin when he contemptuously asked how many divisions the Pope commanded. But philosophy is not at all futile in helping to create a moral climate intolerant of tyranny, which helps to explain why in the end the Pope prevailed over the tyranny of Communism.

Not that we can necessarily trust everything that goes under the name of philosophy. In his introduction to *Leisure, the Basis of Culture*, Eliot remarked that philosophy had somehow lost its way – philosophy, that is, in an older meaning of the word, as a source of insight and wisdom. Philosophy in this “ampler sense” had been overtaken by technical specialities, of which logical positivism was a conspicuous example. (In retrospect, Eliot suggested, logical positivism will appear as “the counterpart of surrealism: for as surrealism seemed to provide a method of producing works of art without imagination so logical positivism seems to provide a method of philosophising without insight and wisdom.”) Pieper’s chief importance was to provide a compelling counterexample. “In a more general way,” Eliot wrote, Pieper’s “influence should be in the direction of restoring philosophy to a place of importance



In each issue Roger Kimball features a past conservative hero about whom we should all know more.

“

Not that we can necessarily trust everything that goes under the name of philosophy.

“

We are not now in the exigent state of Europe in the late 1940s. But more than ever we live in a world ruled by the demands of productivity. Every human enterprise is subject to the scrutiny of the balance sheet.

than ever we live in a world ruled by the demands of productivity. Every human enterprise is subject to the scrutiny of the balance sheet. Rest, vacations and breaks are acknowledged necessities, but only as unfortunate requirements for continued productivity. Consequently, free time is not so much a leisured alternative to work as its continuation. The world is increasingly rationalised, as Max Weber put it. Now we face the prospect of a leisure-less culture of “total work”, a world that excludes the traditional idea of leisure in principle. Pieper found the perfect motto for this attitude in a passage quoted by Weber in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*: “One does not only work in order to live, but

of nature”. Three centuries of scientific and technological progress have done a lot to prove Descartes right. Pieper’s question is what happens when that technological model of knowledge is taken to be definitive of human knowing. Presented with a rose, we can observe and study it, or we can merely look and admire its beauty. For the intellectual worker, only the former is really legitimate. Wonder is a waste of time. It produces nothing, nor does it further understanding. Descartes hoped to explain extravagant natural phenomena such as meteors and lightning in such a way that “one will no longer have occasion to admire anything about what is seen”. Far from being a prelude to insight, wonder was an impediment to the technology of knowledge.

Of course, we should not wish to do without the blessings of that technology. We live in a world shaped by the Cartesian imperative, and the first response of any sane person must be “Thank God for that”. But our first response needn’t be our only response. Pieper’s point is that the discursive knowledge – whose end is the analysis, manipulation, and reconstruction of reality – is not the only model of human knowing.

It is a measure of how far the imperative of total work has taken hold that the opposing classical and medieval ideal – that, in Aristotle’s phrase, we work in order to be at leisure – seems our unintelligible or faintly immoral. Even purely intellectual activity is rebaptised as “work” in order to rescue it from the charge of idleness. The image of intellectual work and the intellectual worker presents us with a vision of the world whose ideal is busyness.

René Descartes promised that, by using his scientific method, man could make himself the “master and possessor

for every educated person who thinks, instead of confining it to esoteric activities which can affect the public only indirectly, insidiously, and often in a distorted form.”

Well, Pieper did provide the example. But it cannot be said that he provided the restoration that Eliot hoped for. With some notable exceptions, philosophy – or the activity that goes under that alias in the university today – is every bit as impoverished and lost in bootless specialisation as it was 60 years ago. More so, perhaps, if for no other reason than that there are so many more people calling themselves philosophers today. Logical positivism was sterile. But at least it made sense.

If Pieper is right, the current disarray of philosophy should come as no surprise. For philosophy in that ampler sense depends on leisure. It is not primarily a mode of analysis but an attitude of openness: it is a contemplative attitude of beholding. It is one of the ironies of contemporary academic life that what is called “theory” in the world of Lit Crit means more or less the opposite of what the word *theoria* meant for the Greeks. Today’s “theory” involves the willful imposition of one’s ideas upon reality. In its original sense, however, theory betokened a patient receptiveness to reality. Philosophy, the theoretical activity par excellence, not only depends upon leisure but is also the fulfilment or the end of leisure. Consequently, the obliteration of leisure naturally leads to the perversion of philosophy.

It also leads to a perversion of culture, at least in so far as culture is understood not as an anthropological datum but as the repository of spiritual self-understanding: “the best,” in Matthew Arnold’s phrase, “that has been thought and said in the world.” Leisure guarantees the integrity of high culture, its freedom from the endless round of means and ends. It was Pieper’s great accomplishment to understand the deep connection between leisure and spiritual freedom.

Of course there are many obstacles. As Roger Scruton has noted, “leisure has

had a bad press. For the puritan it is the source of vice; for the egalitarian a sign of privilege.” There is also the related problem of simple pragmatism. If “maximising profits” is a kind of categorical imperative, how can genuine leisure, not simply periodic vacations from labour, be justified? What is the use of something that is self-confessedly useless?

Defending leisure is always an audacious undertaking. It was particularly audacious in 1947 when Germany was desperately trying to mend its ravaged physical and moral fabric. Especially at such times, leisure is likely to seem a luxury, a dispensable indulgence that distracts from the necessary work at hand. Pieper acknowledges the force of this objection. “We are engaged in the re-building of a house, and our hands are full. Shouldn’t all our efforts be directed to nothing other than the completion of that house?”

The answer is that the task of building or rebuilding is never merely a problem of engineering. If it were, human life could be reduced to a problem of animal husbandry. Something more is needed: a vision of society, of the vocation of humanity. And the preservation of that vision is intimately bound up with the preservation of leisure. Even at a time of emergency such the aftermath of World War II – perhaps especially at such times – the task of rebuilding requires a hiatus in which we can reaffirm our humanity. The name of that hiatus is leisure. “To build our house,” Pieper writes, “implies not only securing survival, but also putting in order again our entire moral and intellectual heritage. And before any detailed plan along these lines can succeed, our new beginning, our re-foundation, calls out for a defence of leisure.”

We are not now in the exigent state of Europe in the late 1940s. But more

imperviousness, “the hard quality of not-being-able-to-receive; a stoniness of heart that will not brook any resistance”. Pieper’s brief on behalf of leisure is not an attack on work as such. “What is normal,” he acknowledges, is work, and the normal day is a working day. But the question is this: can the world of man be exhausted in being the “working world”? Can a human being be satisfied with being a functionary, a “worker”? Can human existence be fulfilled in being exclusively a work-a-day existence? Or, to put it another way, from the other direction, as it were: Are there such things as liberal arts?

In *The Idea of a University*, Pieper points out, Newman translates *artes liberales* as “knowledge possessed of a gentleman,” that is to say, knowledge born of leisure. An index of the spiritual plight that Pieper describes is the collapse of liberal arts in our society. More and more, so-called liberal arts institutions are vocational schools at best; at worst they are circuses of narcissism. The *scholē*, the leisure, has effectively been drained out of school, as “job training” becomes the sole justification for education.

Again, Pieper does not dispute the importance of training. We cannot do without “the useful arts” – medicine, law, economics, biology, physics: all those disciplines that relate to “purposes that exist apart from themselves”. The question is whether they exhaust the meaning of education. Is education synonymous with training? Or is there a dimension of learning that is undertaken not to negotiate advantage in the world but purely for its own sake? “To translate the question into contemporary language,” Pieper writes, “it would sound something like this: Is there still an area of human action, or human existence as such, that does not have its justification by being part of the machinery of a five year plan? Is there or is there not something of that kind?” To answer yes is to affirm the province of leisure. It is to affirm the value of uselessness, the preciousness of a dimension free from the realm of work. ■





Next weekend in by Barnaby Whiteman

# MADRID

## When to go?



Madrid is the perfect city to visit any time of the year. Its climate will not let you down and the city's vibrant atmosphere continues all year round.

However, if you do find the summer heat unbearable – and Madrid reaches extremely high temperatures in the summer – I would encourage you to visit off peak, when not only can you still almost be assured of comfortable weather, but if you book long enough in advance, you should be able to find a significantly reduced rate for accommodation and cheap flights. I would not hesitate to book a trip to Madrid in late February, but I would suggest the best months to go are during the spring (March-May) and autumn (September-November).

Of course, if you love the sun and are looking for a hot summer city break, this may be the best place for you, and I cannot think of a more beautiful place to get an authentic Spanish city experience combined with some Spanish sunshine.

There is one other factor you may want to consider for a trip to Spain – its festivals. The famous Madrid Carnival sees the city come to life with colour and music. The carnival takes place every year on the last



new moon of winter, and events continue for a week. Another festival that would give you a first-hand insight into Madrid's culture is the festival of San Isidro. This festival, which usually takes place in mid-May, is in honour of Madrid's patron saint, San Isidro Labrador. The city's squares, including the famous Plaza Mayor, are filled with entertainment and activities.

## Where to go?

Spain's capital has so much to offer, including fine food, drink, art, history and entertainment.

It seems a mistake not to take the time to visit the Museo Reina Sofia while in the city. This museum houses one of the most important artworks ever produced, so important a tapestry of the painting hangs at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York. Guernica, painted by Pablo Picasso in 1937, exposed the horror of war after the bombing of the Basque town at the behest of General Franco. The sheer scale and size of the painting is remarkable, as is the content which shows children and civilians dying, but its legacy makes this painting truly unique. The museum also contains a range of works by other influential artists such as Juan Gris and Paul Klee.



As you walk around the city, be sure to take in the sights. In the open square of Puerta del Sol, you can spot the Statue of the Bear and the Strawberry Tree. This famous statue depicts the famous design on coat of arms of Madrid. Also used in Atlético Madrid's logo, it makes for an excellent photo to take home as a souvenir of your time in the city.

Finally, described by Madrid's tourist board as the "green lungs of the city", El Retiro Park lives up to its reputation. With 15,000 trees across 125 hectares, the park has various sights and activities to offer. One feature worth visiting is the Palacio de Cristal. Although originally designed to house tropical plants, this glass structure is now used for contemporary art exhibitions. Modelled on London's Crystal Palace, the architecture and design of the glasshouse is incredible. Please be sure to check opening times in advance.



## Where to stay?

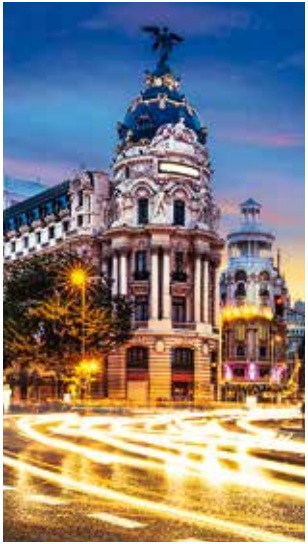


Whether you are looking for luxury or after a last-minute budget holiday, Madrid can accommodate you in comfort.

If you want a sophisticated stay and are willing to pay for it, Only YOU Boutique Hotel Madrid may be the hotel for you. Set in a magnificent 19th century building, the location is ideal and, should you wish to venture further out, there is a metro stop less a minute away. The hotel has won several awards, including Best Boutique Hotel in the World in the Design category.

For a cheaper hotel, you may want to consider Hotel Gran Versailles Madrid. This four-star hotel often has rooms for affordable prices. Again, it is in a great location so do not feel that you have to pay excessive amounts to be central.

For those who are not fussed about staying in a hotel, Airbnb is probably a good place to start. If travelling off season, the prices are low for lovely homes or apartments. Madrid's metro is easy to use and very reliable so do not worry if you are further out of the city than you would have wanted – if you are near a metro stop then you are near the centre.



## What to do?



**Admire the art at the Museo del Prado**  
Recognised as having one of the world's most eclectic collections of European art, the Prado Museum has some phenomenal works. Perhaps most notorious is *The Garden of Earthly Delights* by Hieronymus Bosch (pictured).



**Visit El Rastro Market**  
Do not miss the historic flea market which is held every Sunday. This market dates back to the Middle Ages and offers a huge variety of curiosities. It is also very well connected by public transport.



**Go rowing on Retiro Park Pond**  
Surrounded by performers, including musicians, magicians and fortune tellers, Retiro Pond is the ideal location to relax and take in the surroundings of the park. Boats are available to rent at a very reasonable price, and if you do not feel up to rowing, motor boats may also be rented.



**Check out the National Archaeological Museum**  
This museum contains a treasure trove of Roman artefacts, all kept in remarkable condition. It also has a sizeable collection of Egyptian and Medieval objects and statues.



**Walk along Gran Vía**  
This famous street offers a fine insight into the cultural hub of Madrid. Lined with shops and entertainment venues, it boasts a mix of luxury and high-street shops.



**Explore the food and drink in San Miguel Market**  
Enjoy the local produce from Madrid in a covered market. Offering fresh fish, meat, fruit, vegetables, cheeses and so on, the market also has bars so you can enjoy the extraordinary smells and flavours with a drink in hand.



# MACRON'S VIEWS ON BREXIT ARE LEAVING A SOUR TASTE

The final straw was another speech by President Macron. Jupiter was explaining how the nations of Europe should order their affairs to align with his brilliance, and in passing he had another swipe at the naughty Brits for daring to Brexit.

"Right, that's it," my friend announced, pointing at Macron on the television screen. "Enough is enough," he said. "As long as that *homme* is President of France, I will not purchase French wine."

My friend is someone who loves France so much that he has holidayed there almost every year for four decades. He has criss-crossed the country in his car countless times, spending a decent portion of his annual income on staying in French hotels and consuming French cuisine on the way to visiting French vineyards, each of which he leaves having purchased several cases of wine.

Yet he is so angry with the conduct of Macron and the tone of the President's remarks during the Brexit process that he has against all expectation switched to buying New Zealand, Chilean and American wine instead of the French wine that he adores, and I adore.

Relax, please. I do not propose here to get into the question of tariffs levelled on wine from outside the European Union and the impact they might have on price. In Britain a vast industry of lawyers and trade experts dealing with such questions has proliferated since voters decided – almost three years ago – to leave the EU. Mention tariffs and wine in the UK or anywhere near it and someone will appear waving a spreadsheet showing that dropping the tariff of 6.5p to 8p on a bottle of Australian Chardonnay will result in the imposition of costly extra checks at the border and the end of the British economy and possibly the termination of the entire universe.

The question of tariffs or prices in general is immaterial to my friend, just as the risk of some economic disruption post-Brexit was thought immaterial, or deemed acceptable, by many Leave voters in the UK who concluded that a higher principle, self-government, was at stake in the 2016 referendum. My friend is running a one-man boycott regardless of whether or not it costs him a little more, or he stands in the end to save a pound or two.

This is not primarily about money. Instead it is a question of culture, manners, loyalty, and the souring of friendship across borders. Presidential rudeness can have an impact.

In one sense the French can afford to be insouciant. Figures published earlier this year show that French wine and spirits exports exceeded sales of 13bn euros last year for the first time. Sales are booming in President Trump's America thanks to strong economic growth. A quarter of French wine and spirits exports go to the US.



But not all is well. Sales to China fell because the Chinese economy is slowing. Reuters reported that French wine and spirits exports to China fell 14.4 per cent last year, to 1 billion euros, after increasing almost 25 per cent in 2017. That's an unreliable and frothy market.

In contrast, the British have been a steadier market of unflashy consumers and concerned citizens worth being consistently nice to. The UK is the second largest importer of French wine. Some 1.3 billion euros of alcoholic produce made its way from France to Britain in 2018, according to the Federation of Wine and Spirit Exporters of France.

Amid Brexit fears about potential disruption to supply chains, trade bodies told Reuters that as many as 200 lorries a day are crossing from France to the UK, carrying booze for stockpiling in warehouses in case there is a no-deal Brexit. The stockpiling assumes the British will buy as much French stuff, even if the Brexit talks result in a bitter stand-off with the French government.

I should add that my friend boycotting France is not an extreme Brexiteer. His brand of Brexiteering is of a moderate shade. Here is someone who likes Europe, and its wine, a lot but who voted to leave the European Union on the basis that a relatively new political construct, the European Union, is not the same thing as the cultural and geographical entity that is Europe. Like many Britons he hoped and expected that after a brief interlude the EU and its largest powers – France and Germany – would strike a friendly and

“

Presidents of countries that want the British to continue buying their wine, and much else, after Brexit should try being pleasant for a change.

The winemaker Michael Brakovich, New Zealand's first Master of Wine, took over the family property in 1982 and set about steady improvement, until he was producing wines that are ranked among the best in the world. Prices are rising as words spreads and demand increases, but you can still find one of the cheaper Kumeau River bottlings for under 20 euros.

and the British seafaring tradition that made foreign names familiar, and then the Commonwealth connection. It cannot simply be that, though. Mass consumption of wine in Britain only took off in the 1970s after we joined the EEC.

The reality is that there is not much indigenous English wine to buy, so we must look about and be international. On the shelves of their supermarkets and in wine merchants the British seem to like seeing a range of wines from a wide geographical spread.

The British will never stop consuming French produce – it is too good, and the friendship between peoples transcends transient politics. But my friend's valiant boycott is a reminder that sentiment can shift in a market economy; consumers do have power. That means presidents of countries that want the British to continue buying their wine, and much else, after Brexit should try being pleasant for a change. ■



Iain Martin

is a commentator on politics and finance. His latest book *Crash Bang Wallop: the inside story of London's Big Bang and a financial revolution that changed the world* is published by Sceptre. He is based in London.

@iainmartin1





# Jane Austen PRIDE AND PREJUDICE



**James Delingpole**  
is a conservative columnist and novelist who has written for publications including the *Daily Mail*, *Daily Express*, *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Spectator*. He is also the executive editor of Breitbart London. His latest book is *Watermelons*.  
@jamesdelingpole

**J**ane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is one of the best-loved romances in English literature. But this probably has more to do with the sundry glossy film and TV adaptations than it does with anything Austen wrote.

Reading the book now it's quite hard to put out of your mind scenes like the one in Andrew Davies's adaptation for the BBC, where Colin Firth as the hero Mr Darcy bursts out of a lake, a wet shirt clinging to his manly torso; or to think of heroine Elizabeth Bennet without remembering the poutingly pretty but woefully miscast Keira Knightley in the slushy 2005 movie version.

Yes, of course there is romance and even a degree of passion in Austen. But because these books were written in the early 1800s by a genteel spinster, any sexual undercurrents are quite properly suppressed; when they do burst forth, it is most definitely not with the author's approval. When, for example, Elizabeth's flighty little sister Lydia runs off with the dashing army officer Wickham, it is a major disaster which brings shame on all involved.

What most concerns Austen, as she makes clear in her famous opening sentence – "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in a possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" – are the workings of a strict social order governed by class and money.

You can laugh at its absurdities – as Austen frequently does, with her cruel, brilliant and hilarious wit. But you can't escape its remorseless regimentation. If – like Elizabeth Bennet and her four sisters – you are born into an upper-middle-class family with no fortune to inherit, then your only hope of a halfway-decent future is to marry someone rich. (As Austen didn't, by the way. It's what makes her books so poignant. They're a clever, talented, disappointed woman's wish-fulfilment fantasy).

This is the main attraction of her hero Mr Darcy. Sure, he is reasonably handsome and tolerably mannered, but his real appeal – as Austen keeps reminding us – is that he has an annual income of £10,000. In today's money, this is getting on for £1 million a year.

Also, of course, he has a really big one. A house, that is, called Pemberley, over which Austen drools at some length. Everything about Pemberley is perfect: the amiable, devoted housekeeper; the tasteful furnishings; the excellent trout-fishing for gentleman visitors; the special windows that open up right from the floor; the various wooded prospects in the park. What makes these descriptions all the more wistful from our heroine Elizabeth's point of view is that they will never now be hers: thanks to her prejudiced misunderstanding of proud Mr Darcy, she has flatly rejected his earlier marriage offer and done herself out of a fortune.

To modern readers these mercenary considerations might seem distasteful. But that's because we live in a less constrained age where women aren't so dependent on men for a comfortable life and where men, with a bit of hard work, luck or dishonesty, can start from scratch and end up with houses as big as Darcy's.

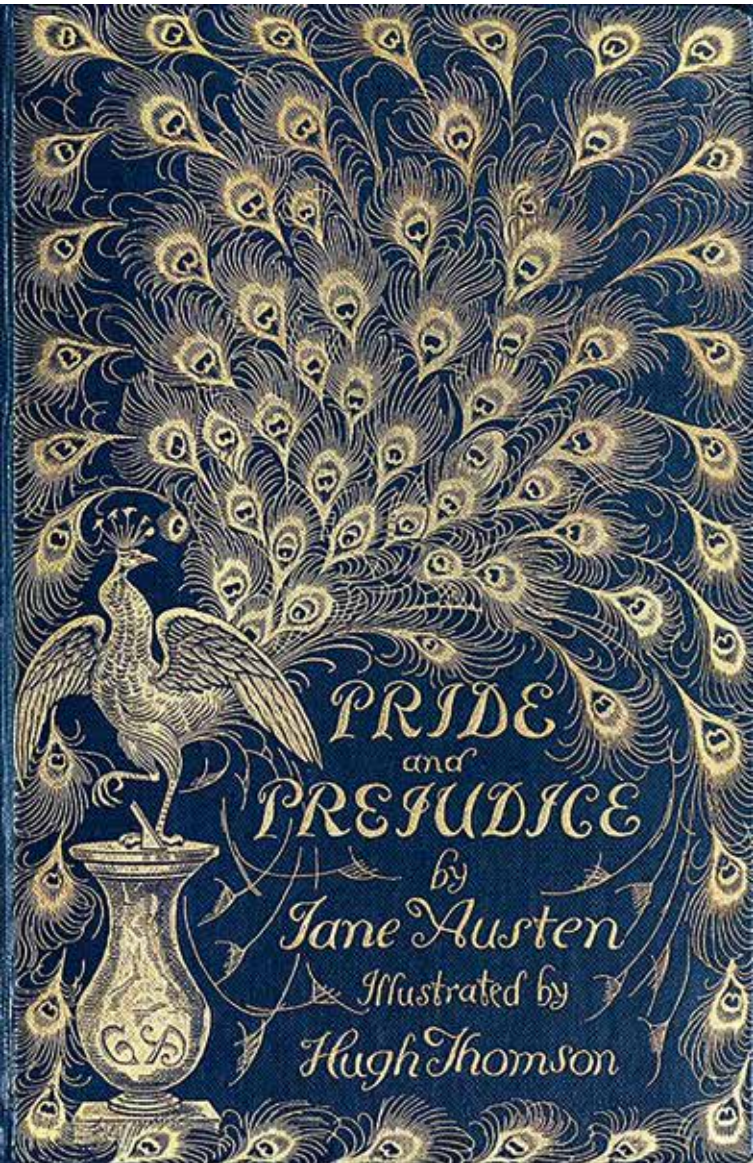
To modern readers these mercenary considerations might seem distasteful. But that's because we live in a less constrained age where women aren't so dependent on men for a comfortable life and where men, with a bit of hard work, luck or dishonesty, can start from scratch and end up with houses as big as Darcy's.

In England in the 1800s such opportunities weren't really available. Today we love Jane for her empire line

“

The genius of Jane Austen is that she also works quite brilliantly as she is often seen today: as a creator of feisty, sparky heroines, a sublime comedian and spinner of gloriously romantic yarns

dresses, gentlemen in tight britches vaulting on to horses, stone-built rectories with cottage gardens, genteel sparring in the drawing room over cards, dashing officers at balls. But had we not been born rich we would have felt like prisoners, as most of Austen's characters effectively are.



Poor Charlotte Lucas. In the book, Elizabeth thinks the less of her best friend for marrying the ridiculous Mr Collins, the social-climbing vicar she herself has rejected. But this is unfair and typical of the pride and prejudice with which Austen has apportioned her complex, not wholly likeable heroine. Charlotte is plain, 27 years old and her father a mere knight with an insufficient fortune: if she doesn't marry someone, anyone, soon, she is likely to end up an impoverished old maid.

Austen's way of dealing with all this social horror is to make light of it with

her wit and her weapons-grade irony. The snobbish, bullying Lady Catherine de Bourgh is a monster but we can bear, just about, the wholly unearned social power that her money and station have granted her by having a jolly good titter with Elizabeth about how utterly frightful she is. In truth, though, it doesn't make her ability to tyrannise her social inferiors any less real.

The genius of Jane Austen is that she also works quite brilliantly as she is often seen today: as a creator of feisty, sparky heroines, a sublime comedian and spinner of gloriously romantic yarns. But read her again – and re-read her, endlessly, as she deserves – and you'll be reminded that she is much cleverer, more ambiguous, and a lot tougher than a merely amusing writer of high-end chick-lit. ■



&



On the 10th of March, ACRE held a conference in Sofia, Bulgaria on The Future of Europe Traditionalism, Christian Values, and Patriotism. The event was organised by the vice chair of ACRE member party VMRO, Angel Dzhambazki MEP. The round-table discussions brought together respected Bulgarian conservative intellectuals, scholars and members of government as well as numerous Members of the European Parliament from across the continent. The participants shared their thoughts on the pressing issue of the upcoming European Parliament elections as well as insights into what we can expect from the next European Parliament. It was clear from the discussion that conservatism, Christianity and traditional values, and patriotism will be represented much stronger in the next five years.



crossword & sudoku

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
						15					16			
14														
17					18						19			
20										21				
					22			23	24	25				
26	27	28	29			30					31	32	33	
34						35						36		
37					38			39	40	41				
42						43	44	45	46		47			
48			49	50							51			
				52						53				
54	55	56						57			58	59	60	61
62						63	64	65						
66						67					68			
69						70					71			

- ACROSS**
- Enid's st.
  - Eng. lesson
  - Film ratings org.
  - Moonwalker Armstrong
  - Italy's Via
  - Sinusoid swimmers
  - Simple
  - Sketched
  - Group in "The Da Vinci Code"
  - Protrude
  - Targets of a manhunt, perhaps
  - Multiple-choice answer
  - Not attached
  - Word before blue or purple
  - Front yard
  - Brief endearment
  - Devonshire county seat
  - Drink a toast to
  - OH city, for short
  - Took
  - Harder to locate
  - Hikers' carryalls
  - Lichen-covered
  - Teen hangout, once
  - Hydra or coral
  - Lifting
  - Hook's fear, for short
  - Laid waste to
  - "Folktronica" singer Orton
  - Meteorological conditions
  - Fire under
  - Explorer Hernando de
  - What "beso" may mean
  - Pasty-faced

- DOWN**
- cat (playground game)
  - Seaweed type
  - Stead
  - Handouts
  - Wind direction indicators
  - Type of illusion
  - Numbers cruncher
  - Show on TV
  - Part of BART
  - Her looks were petrifying
  - Computer language
  - Get up
  - "It's the End of the World" Know It" (R.E.M. tune)
  - Swimmer who channeled her energy?
  - Fr. neighbor
  - She was married to Frank, Mickey and Howard
  - Pussy foot
  - Fifth of funf
  - Hoover competitor
  - Venom
  - Carriion consumer
  - Corrode, with "away"
  - Becomes fuzzy
  - Mandolin relatives
  - All possible
  - Street
  - Deodorant spot
  - Thai's neighbor
  - With "L", a Corleone hatchet man
  - Appreciative abbr. (var.)
  - Hindu retreats
  - Hitchcock classic
  - Soak
  - Desert rest stops
  - Pollutants banned in the '70s, briefly
  - Popular Nabisco cookie

				8			2
			7				5
	3				9		4
		2		1			9
				9			
7	8	9	6		2	5	3
1		7			3		8
		6	4	2			7
						3	

		3		4	2	8
				5	2	9
4						
9	4				8	6
		7	4			
8	9	6			1	4
	6					2
2			8	9	6	3





ACRE

ALLIANCE OF CONSERVATIVES  
AND REFORMISTS IN EUROPE

# EUROPE'S FASTEST GROWING POLITICAL MOVEMENT

THE CONSERVATIVE

  
ACRE  
WOMEN'S  
MOVEMENT

  
EDMUND  
BURKE  
AWARD

  
LA CONVENZIONE  
BLU

  
BLUE  
GREEN  
SUMMIT

 PROJECT  
MAJA



THE  
LIBERTY  
SUMMIT 