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OLD-SCHOOL JOURNALISM - REPORTING YOU CAN TRUST



Issue #8 | July 2019

# THE CONSERVATIVE

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

## THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

by Jan Zahradil MEP, President of ACRE

“

For the next five years, we aim to serve as the peoples voice, acting as a counter balance between those who want a federal Europe, and those who want to destroy the Union. We will continue to defend the view that Europe works best when it does less, but it does it better.



With the election now out of the way, and the political groups now establishing themselves, we can now talk with some clarity about what the next five years will bring. Especially now that we have seen what the new coalition will look like.

To us, we believe that the new Commission Majority is a lost opportunity, not just for us, but for the people of Europe who voted for a leaner and more streamlined European Union. The establishment of the new coalition sees

power handed to those who want to use it to build a federal Europe. A coalition that will be led from the left, with any voting majority dependent on the support of the Greens and the socialists. As a result we will see a leftist agenda pushed more and more in the European Parliament.

For our part, we would have liked Europe to move in a different direction over the next five years. We were ready and willing, as an established political movement, to work with the European Peoples Party to deliver a centre-right majority,

which would have create a more business friendly Europe. That would have put the single market, rather than social policy, back at the centre of the European Union. That would have opened Europe up to new opportunities by pushing for further free trade agreements with the rest of the world.

We regret the decision that has been made, and most of all we feel sorry for the voters of those centre-right and conservative parties who have been just as let down by it. However for this decision also creates an opportunity. We will now be

in a position to act as the official opposition in the European Parliament. We'll hold this new coalition to account, and ensure that they do not use their new majority to take power away from member states. Equally we will work constructively where we can to deliver legislation that adds value for our citizens.

Our mission is, as it always has been since we were founded ten years ago, to ensure that the European Union remains a good servant to its member states, and to the people that live in them. That good governance

comes as a result of keeping power as close to the people as possible. And we remain committed to the view that our strength comes from a willingness to work together on issues of common interest, rather than being dragged into programmes we don't want.

And so, for the next five years, we aim to serve as the peoples voice, acting as a counter balance between those who want a federal Europe, and those who want to destroy the Union. We will continue to defend the view that Europe works best when it does less, but it does it better. ■

Spitzenkandidat

### JAN ZAHRADIL

Jan Zahradil was ACRE's candidate for the Presidency of the Commission, throughout the course of the campaign his team wrote a number of Campaign Diaries as he travelled across Europe spreading the conservative message, for the first time they are all available in one place.

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Conservative Icons

### JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN

by Roger Kimball

The activities of the European Union, for example, daily bear witness to the hopeless muddle of this anchorless liberalism. Maximum tolerance, it turns out, leads to maximum impotence.

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Conservative Music

### YOUTUBE: THE ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY OF OUR TIME

by Jay Nordlinger

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Photo: European Union 2019 - Source: EP

## THE ECR HAS PLENTY OF ROOM TO GROW

An interview with Professor Ryszard Legutko,  
Co-Chairman of ECR Group

THE CONSERVATIVE

What do you see as the main priorities for the ECR Group as the new mandate begins?

PROF. RYSZARD LEGUTKO MEP

Well to continue the job that we have been doing, trying to persuade our colleagues from

various countries to reform the European Union and it's clear that the relatively high turnout was a signal that many people in Europe expect the EU to be reformed. So we hope to gather together people and forces here in the parliament and exert pressure on the powers that be.

CONTINUED ON p.15





# The Great European Stitch Up

by Richard Milsom



## ACRE welcomes three new members

Welcome to the eighth edition of The Conservative, the number one newspaper for centre right news and opinion. A lot has changed since our last edition, the European Elections have been and gone and the new Commission is about to settle into their jobs.

Of course none of this went as smoothly as it should have. The mainstream parties have stitched up the European Parliament by creating an unholy alliance of Greens, Socialists, Euro-Federalists and a heavily neutered European Peoples Party. The left have taken advantage of the weakness of the Christian Democrats and have forced them to ignore the interests of the conservative faction of the EPP.

Of course this was all for the benefit of 'old Europe', as in the Commission, all of the top jobs have gone to Member States that border each other in the West. And all of the appointments have been carefully designed to protect the leaders of those Member States.

The appointment of Ursula Von Der Leyens, an impressive individual in her own right, rules her out as a potential successor to Angela Merkel as Chancellor of Germany. Very much to the favour of the CDU establishment in Berlin.

The appointment of Charles Michel as President of the Council rules him out of a second term as Prime Minister in Belgium, meaning that his 'Reform Movement' can nominate another candidate to replace him and break the deadlock over coalition building. And Christine Legarde being

appointed the head of the European Central Bank means that she will no longer be a challenger to President Macron in the next Presidential Elections.

Of course you might think that this is an entirely cynical reading of recent events, but then one also has to look at the case of the Presidency of the Parliament, in which neither the EPP nor the newly named Renew Europe (Mr Macron apparently thinks Liberal is a dirty word), ran candidates for the position, instead effectively offering a coronation for the Socialist Candidate, a totally unknown Italian MEP named David Sassoli.

This appointment didn't go without opposition, as more than 100 MEPs rebelled on the centre-right and voted for Conservative Candidate Jan Zahradil, allowing him to come in second with 162 votes. Many of these votes came from that same conservative wing of the EPP who have been blatantly ignored.

Back room politics is alive and well in the European Union, and thus the case for an alternative approach has never been stronger. The European Conservatives and Reformists stand ready to deliver that alternative and serve as the voice of those who are struggling to be heard. The Conservative Movement is ready to act as a constructive opposition and work towards ensuring that any new policies that come out of the Commission continue to follow the principle of subsidiarity, and don't create any more burdensome red tape for business. ■



The Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe, welcomed three new member parties to their political family at their annual council meeting in Brussels on the 27th of June. In front of their fellow conservatives and reformists from across the EU and the wider world, the Swedish Democrats, Forum for Democracy and Vox all signed up to become members of Europe's fastest growing political alliance.

This marks the first time that the Alliance has admitted members from Sweden, the Netherlands and Spain. Their Members of the European



## United Kingdom Conservative Party leadership election

The Conservative Party of the United Kingdom is in the middle of a leadership race, which will see party members electing not just their new leader, but also the countries new Prime Minister.

The leadership race started after Prime Minister Theresa May announced that she would be stepping down in the Summer to make way for a new leader, having failed to pass the EU Withdrawal Agreement through the House of Commons. She will formally step down on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July and the new Prime Minister will take over in the afternoon of that day.

Members of Parliament in Westminster were responsible for getting the race down to just candidates through internal ballots. At the start of the race, 12 MPs were in the running to be the new leader, but as the weeks went on, the race boiled down to just two

contenders. The former Mayor of London Boris Johnson and the current Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt.

Both men are respected within the party and appeal to different factions. Mr Johnson, unusually referred to by his first name 'Boris', is believed to be the favourite in the race, and represents the more Eurosceptic wing of the party, calling for a faster withdrawal from the European Union on harsher terms. Whilst Mr Hunt, a long term cabinet minister, is seen as the voice of the more liberal wing of the party.

Both candidates have taken part in a number of debates in front of both the general public and party membership, with the polls narrowing. Whilst at the start of the race it was clearly thought that Boris would be the next leader, poor performances in interviews and a minor personal scandal have meant that this race could be close fought.

The major issues that the new leader will have to deal with include the rise of the populist Brexit Party and the declining support for the party. Whilst at the same time having to sort out Britain's orderly withdrawal from the European Union, as well as setting a course for the future direction of the country.

Both potential leaders have set out different visions of what they want to achieve in office, however there are many common conservative themes that run between the two campaigns. Including the view that Britain must continue to be leading nation in the world, that the country must pursue a policy of freer trade and that the UK will remain ready to defend Europe through the NATO Alliance.

Both candidates have made clear that although the country is leaving the European Union, it will remain an open and influential force on the world stage. ■



former communist countries in Central Eastern European countries. He helped to set up the academic underground resistance to Communism. As a result he has also received awards in the Czech Republic, where he was given the Medal of Merit by former President Vaclav Havel. ■

## United Kingdom

### Trump's State visit

US President Donald Trump visited the United Kingdom on his first official state visit to the country. He was welcomed on arrival by Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt and then flown to Buckingham Palace by helicopter to have tea with Queen Elizabeth II.

An official dinner was held in which Queen Elizabeth II welcomed the President to the United Kingdom and spoke of the importance of the strong and lasting relationship between the two nations. The Queen also paid tribute to the sacrifice of British and American troops 75 years ago during the beginning of Operation Overlord.

The United Kingdom and United States have long enjoyed a close relationship, often referred to as the 'Special Relationship'. Both countries are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, both share intelligence through the five eyes security network, as well as both being members of NATO and the G8.

Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May hosted President Trump at Downing Street, where they held a joint meeting in the Cabinet Room. Both the Conservative Party and the Republican Party share an equally close relationship



as the two countries, both being members of ACRE and the International Democrats Union.

Prime Minister Theresa May gave the President Winston Churchills copy of the Atlantic Declaration, a document of historic significance for the relationship between the two countries. It would ultimately set out the future NATO Alliance.

The State Visit finished with the Queen, President Trump and the Prime Minister all attending the memorial event on the South Coast of England to mark 75 years since the start of the D Day landings and the liberation of Europe. ■

## Denmark

### Danish elections

On the 5th of June, Danes went to the polls for a second time in as many weeks, this time to vote in a general election. Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen called the elections early, as they weren't supposed to take place until Autumn.

Mr Rasmussen looks as though he will be handing power over, despite the fact that his centre-right Venstre Party did much better than expected, winning 23% of the vote and gaining 9 seats. Despite this strong showing, the so called 'Red Alliance' of centre-left parties did better.

The biggest losses on election night came from the conservative Danish

Peoples Party who lost 21 seats in the Folketing. They had already lost three seats in the European Parliament a week before, and as a result voters switched to alternative parties. They had previously been providing support to the government.

The election had mostly been fought on immigration lines, with the Social Democrats announcing towards the end that they would introduce much stricter controls on people entering the country from outside the EU, in particular in response to the migration crisis. Denmark has an opt-out on EU Social policy and so is able to implement much tighter controls on immigration and



Photo: Johannes Jansson / Reuters

other areas of justice and home affairs. The Social Democrats will now have to negotiate cabinet positions with their fellow 'Red Alliance' partners, which includes Green and far-left elements. The left in Denmark tend to be split on the issue of Europe, however the Social Democrats are on the more federalist end of the political spectrum.

The Conservative People's Party, a centre-right party and member of the International Democrats Union, also enjoyed a boost in the polls and won four extra seats. ■

## THE CONSERVATIVE



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## Australia

## Australian Conservatives win election

The conservative leaning Australian Liberal Party has managed to win a surprise election victory in what is possibly the closest election in living memory. The Party had been behind in the opinion polls, including the exit poll that came out on election night. However despite everything, the governing centre right coalition has managed to increase its share of seats in the parliament and will go on to form another government.

Liberal Party leader Scott Morrison will continue as Prime Minister, having successfully taken his party back from the brink with new energy and new ideas. When the results became clear on early Sunday morning, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May, Mr Morrison tweeted “How good is Australia! How good are Australians!”.

The campaign itself was mostly fought on economic issues, in recent years Australia has enjoyed strong economic growth and under the current Liberal Administration a budget surplus. The



Photo: Reginald Thom

country had been mostly immune to the negative effects of the great recession of 2008/09. Morrisons campaign had mostly been focused on the Liberals criticism of the Labor parties pledge to put up taxes, including the introduction of a controversial tax on pensioners.

Bill Shorten, the leader of the socialist Labor Party, announced his resignation shortly after it became clear that his party had in fact lost seats, rather than gained as they had originally anticipated.

However the election wasn't all good news for the governing coalition. Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott narrowly lost his Warringah seat, just outside Sydney. The party also failed to win an overall majority and will likely have to govern as a minority government or agree a confidence and supply arrangement with other centre-right parties in the Parliament. ■

## China

## 30 years since Tiananmen protests

June marked 30 years since the infamous Tiananmen square student protests. The protests resulted in the deaths of over 2,000 people according to the International Red Cross. The event was made most famous when a video emerged from the protest of a lone man standing in front of advancing Peoples Liberation Army Tanks. The image captured the imagination of people in the West who had been following the protests wondering if they, like other protests in Europe in 1989, would also lead to the collapse of a Communist Regime. Although that sadly never happened, the image of the so called ‘tank man’ is still used as a symbol of Chinese opposition to the Communist regime.

The anniversary was unsurprisingly not marked in mainland China. However a candlelit vigil was held in autonomous Hong Kong to mark the anniversary, as



well as other memorial services amongst Chinese communities living in the West. An inflatable display of the ‘Tank Man’ was erected in Taiwan.

Those who attended the Hong Kong found themselves subject to harassment by the Chinese state, including being suspended from the country's main social media app WeChat. Since the Student Protests of 1989, the Chinese state has become increasingly involved in the lives of their citizens. Most recently with the introduction of so called “Social Capital”,

which measures citizens value through their actions and rewards those who act in a way that the state deems appropriate.

The Communist Party has also taken much more repressive measures against the nations minorities. Most notably the Muslim minority in the North-Western province of Xinjiang, the Uyghurs. The Uyghurs are subject to brutal oppression and its reported that hundreds of thousands of them have been sent to Communist re-education camps, described by some as being modern day gulags. ■

## United States

## Democratic primaries begin

The race to become the next Presidential Candidate of the Democratic Party has begun with a series of debates. A record 27 candidates are hoping to win the nomination, so many that two separate TV debates had to be organised in order to give them all coverage.

The current favourite to carry the Democratic Parties flag into the 2020 elections is former Vice President Joe Biden from Pennsylvania, with Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders behind on 18% each.

Both Warren and Sanders represent the new, hard left democratic-socialist wing of the party. A faction that has drawn attention recently due to allegations of anti-Semitism, mirroring similar allegations in the British Labour Party. Biden by contrast appeals to the more moderate wing and has wider appeal beyond Democrat voters.

The first two debates saw the candidates clash over healthcare, defence and foreign policy. But none seemed to be able to produce a response to how they would win over the millions of voters who are still backing the presidency of Donald Trump.

Voting in the primaries isn't expected to being until February of next year. ■



Photo: Shutterstock.com

## D-Day 75 Years

## World leaders gather to mark 75 tears since D-Day

World leaders have gathered in the United Kingdom and France to mark 75 years since the beginning of ‘Operation Overlord’, more commonly referred to as D-Day. Queen Elizabeth II hosted a large event in Dover, attended by leaders from across the world, in which letters from soldiers were read, and surviving veterans of D-Day were remembered.

The event concluded with a fly past of current and period fighter aircraft, as well as a military convoy of ships carrying veterans and world leaders from the UK to Northern France, symbolically following the route travelled by the soldiers who took part in the landings.

The following day world leaders attended a memorial service in Normandy, hosted by French President Emanuel Macron. Spectacles included an airdrop by paratroopers using surviving jump planes from war, a display by US Army Rangers who scaled a cliff following in the footsteps of their forefathers, and a fly past by restored Spitfire fighters.

Operation Overlord was the beginning of the largest military operation of World War Two by the Western Allies in Europe. It marked the start of the



liberation of Europe from Nazi occupation and the beginning of the end of the second world war.

Over 4,000 troops of the 156,000 that were deployed died in the first day of Operation Overlord. The invasion was a joint effort by British, American and Canadian troops, however a large number of Free-French forces as well as Polish and Czech exiles joined the invasion fighting for the British. For those exiles, D-Day was the beginning of the liberation of their homelands.

The World Leaders who participated in the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events all signed the D-Day Proclamation paying tribute to those soldiers who fell in the war. ■



## India

## World largest democracy votes



Photo: Shutterstock.com

India's General Election has seen the comfortable return of incumbent Prime Minister Narendra Modi with an increased majority for his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Mr Modi was initially forecast to lose his majority, but has surprised both pollsters and the media by winning an overall majority of seats in the Lok Sabha.

Mr Modi had limited success in his first mandate when he tried to reform the countries sprawling bureaucracy and root out corruption. A plan to remove certain bank notes from circulation led to a run on the currency and economic hardship for those lower down the economic hierarchy, in a country that is almost exclusively a cash based society.

However he saw some success when it came to increasing the level of employment in the country. More Indians are in work now than they were when Modi first entered power in 2014. Unemployment

has long been an issue for India, as an estimated 1 million more workers enter the work force every month, with an estimated 8 million people coming of employable age each year.

Mr Modi has also enjoyed some success on the international stage. Despite tensions running high with India's Western neighbour, Pakistan, Modi has presented himself as an international statesman. He has made state visits to the United Kingdom, Israel and the United States. Mr Modi has also worked on boosting relations with China and Japan, the two other regional powers in Asia.

The BJP have set out in their manifesto for the next few years an ambitious plan to improve the country's ailing infrastructures and offer more support for rural workers. They have also stated that they will set out a plan to improve the ease of doing business in the country. ■

## Ukraine

## President to hold NATO membership vote



Photo: Kyivstar.com

The newly elected President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has promised to hold a referendum on NATO membership, despite threats from Russia.

Mr Zelenskyy, who was elected in April with 73% of the vote, beating incumbent Petro Poroshenko, has announced the referendum as a way of showing to the west that he is serious about maintain Ukraine's ambition of being a European country.

In an interview with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty President Zelenskyy said “I said that we need to inform each Ukrainian about what NATO is like, which is not so terrible, and when Ukrainians are ready, we will definitely bring this issue to a referendum, and Ukraine

will definitely be in NATO.”

Ukraine's ambitions to join NATO could fall that first hurdle. One of the terms of NATO membership is that a member state is in control of 100% of its internationally recognised territory. Since 2014 the Crimean peninsula has been illegally occupied by Russia. Equally the country is currently fighting a proxy war against Russia in the Eastern part of the country. Russian occupation has also been an obstruction to Georgia's membership of NATO, as Russia supported two break away states in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Mr Zelenskyy has been very clear that he has not abandoned Ukraine's ambition to join NATO and that he is still committed to EU integration. ■

## North Korea

## Trump in historic visit to North Korea

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, following the G20 summit in Japan, President Donald Trump visited the Korean Peninsula in a historic visit to the Demilitarised Zone between the two countries. During this visit he met with Chairman Kim of North Korea, who invited him across the demarcation line in what was a brief but historic visit to the Communist North.

No sitting US President has ever visited the so called Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, the communist state that came about as a result of the end of World War Two. President Trump said during a joint press conference that “It was great. Look, I mean, the world is watching, and it's very important for the world.”

The two Koreas have technically been in a state of war since 1950, and maintained a fragile truce. However there have been signs of rapprochement between the two countries. South Korean President Moon visited the demarcation line himself earlier this year and was welcomed across by his North Korean counterpart.



Photo: Dan Scavino

Much of what has taken place during the last few months has been a direct result of an ongoing humanitarian crisis within the North. The country has been subject to wide scale famines and diseases related to malnutrition. The Communist regime in charge of the country is believed to be one of the most repressive on earth.

President Trump said of the meeting: “But we've developed a great relationship. I really think that, if you go back two and half years, and you look at what was going on prior to my becoming

President, it was a very, very bad situation — a very dangerous situation for South Korea, for North Korea, for the world.”

“And I think the relationship that we've developed has meant so much to so many people. And it's just an honor to be with you, and it was an honor that you asked me to step over that line. And I was proud to step over the line. I thought you might do that; I wasn't sure. But I was ready to do it. And I want to thank you. It's been great. It's been great. A very historic meeting.” ■

## New Direction report

## THE BATTLE FOR WESTERN CIVILISATION AND THE ORIGINS OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

‘Western Culture’ (and its near synonym, ‘Western Civilization’) is today, in Britain, Europe, the US and other English-speaking countries, a contentious phrase, and in many university and intellectual circles, a toxic one.

Why has it fallen into such disrepute? Why do men and women, many of whom are fervent admirers of the writings of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare, who stand awe-struck before the Parthenon or St Paul's, and spend their happiest evenings listening to Beethoven quartets, Tosca or the Ring, rather than trumpeting the value of the Western Culture to which all these works belong, prefer to urge that it should have a smaller place in syllabuses, broadcasts and public discussion?

The main reason is that discussions about cultural traditions, properly the province of historians of philosophy, science and the arts, became entangled by pundits with the grand (and probably ultimately ill-formed)

questions about ‘the rise of the West’ and about what is called ‘Western Culture’ or ‘Western Civilization’.

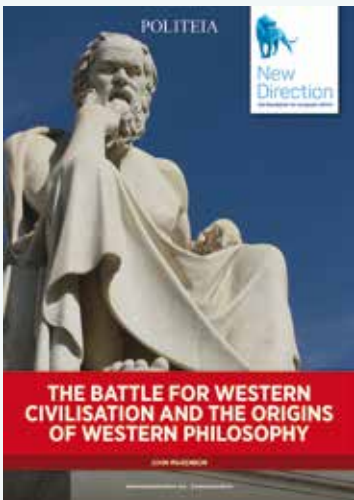
The words ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ have a narrow sense and a wide one. In the narrow sense, ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ refer just to intellectual and artistic products and activities, such as literature, the visual arts, architecture, philosophy and the sciences, and perhaps also applied sciences and arts, such as engineering, medicine and law.

In the wider sense, ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ refers to all human activities: in this wider sense, then, a culture or civilization means talking about, for instance, per capita GNP,

life expectancy, air quality, transport networks, systems of government and much, much else, besides the sciences and arts.

This distinction is of central importance for all that follows, and to make sure it does not become hidden,

‘Western Culture’ and ‘Western Civilization’ with a capital ‘C’ is used to convey their wider meaning, whereas



‘western culture’ and ‘western civilization’ (lower case ‘c’) are used to designate their narrow-sense meaning.

In part one of this timely report by New Direction, the author, John Marenbon a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and honorary Professor of Medieval Philosophy argues that the present antagonism to the idea of Western Culture is in part a reaction by today's intellectuals and academics to the claims that had been made for it by a previous generation, and are still defended by some of them.

Part Two of the report looks at western philosophy arguing that the geographical boundaries of western philosophy are far broader. ■



You can download report at www.newdirection.online



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10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER**

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# European Parliament



# Elections

In this issue's special we take a look at the European Elections that have just passed, the changes made to the ECR Group Top Team and the new faces who have joined us in the European Parliament for the next mandate. We also analyse what these elections mean for the centre-right in Europe and the European Politics in general.



## NEW LEADERSHIP



**EUROPEAN  
CONSERVATIVES  
AND REFORMISTS  
GROUP**

The European Conservatives and Reformist Group in the European Parliament has elected its new leadership. Italian MEP Raffaele Fitto has been elected as the new co-Chairman of the ECR Group to replace British MEP Syed Kamal. Law and Justice MEP Professor Ryszard Legutko will continue to serve as co-Chairman alongside Mr Fitto.

As well as the new co-chairmen, the Group also elected a new board of Vice-Chairmen. These include Dutch MEP Derk Jan Eppink, Flemish MEP Assita Kanko and Latvian MEP Roberts Zile. The Vice-Chairmen represent the diversity of the new ECR Group and highlight the broad range of opinions held by member parties.

Croatian Conservative Party member Ruža Tomašić and Czech Civic Democrat member Jan Zahradil have both been re-elected to the Groups Bureau, and will now serve alongside Jorge Buxade from the Spanish Vox Party and Helmu Geuking from the German Family Party.

The new leadership will determine the future direction of the European Conservatives and Reformists, as we enter a new mandate.

### CO-CHAIRMEN



Raffaele Fitto



Ryszard Legutko

### VICE-CHAIRMEN



Derk Jan Eppink



Daniel Hannan



Assita Kanko



Peter Lundgren



Hermann Tersch del  
Valle-Lersundi



Roberts Zile

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Kosma Zlotowski

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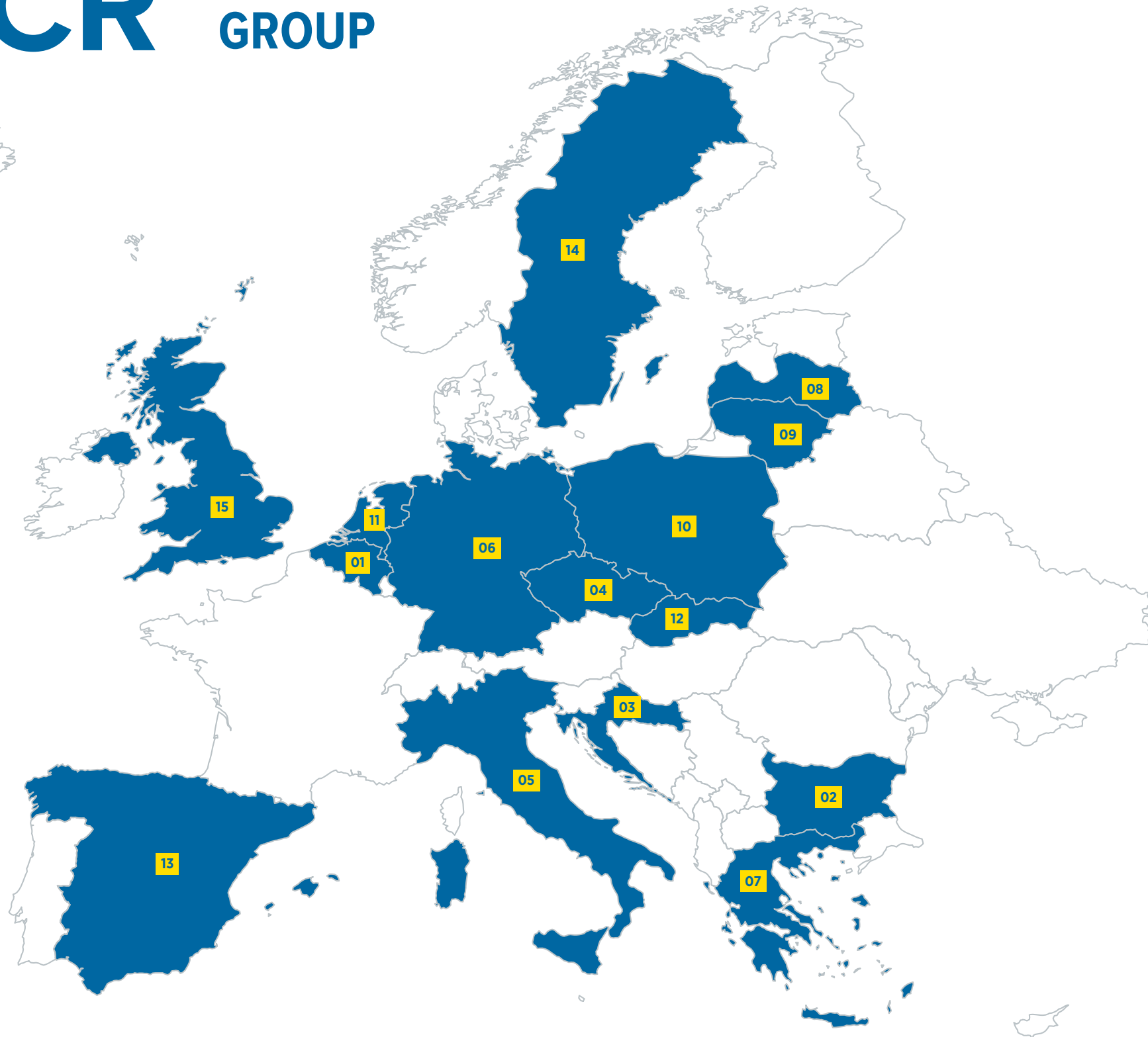
Helmut Geuking



Jorge Buxade



# EUROPEAN CONSERVATIVES AND REFORMISTS GROUP



# 14.345.961

people vote for our Member Parties in the European Elections. To them we say thank you! Together we will build a Europe that works in the interest of all our member states, no matter how old or new, big or small.







# A HOUSE DIVIDED

The European Elections have produced some of the most divisive results in the history of the European Parliament. The major parties have broken down and are losing their influence to those that were once on the fringes. Between them, centre-right European Peoples Party and the centre-left Socialists and Democrats lost nearly 100 seats.

The biggest winners of election nights where on the two fringes of the debate when it comes to the future of Europe. The liberal euro-federalist Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) won 37 seats, mostly thanks to Emanuel Macron, whilst the far-right populists led by Matteo Salvini and Marine Le Pen grew from the smallest to fourth largest group.

The surprise of the night was the so called Green Wave, that saw the European Green Party gain 22 seats, mostly from success in Germany and France.

However the Greens still failed to win many seats outside of Western Europe.

The biggest delegations now reflect the divide in Europe. Slavini and Le Pen both won around 22 MEPs each, whilst Macron and the German Greens won

equally large delegations. In the United Kingdom, Nigel Farage and his Brexit Party became the largest party with both the Conservatives and Labour Party losing seats.

The new Parliament will now have to reconcile how policy can be made with

This will create problems for those on the right of the Liberals and the EPP as the balance is very much in favour of those on the left. Equally, with a smaller EPP and S&D, it is more likely that national delegations will have more power over the direction of policy, as rebel voters could swing more decisions.

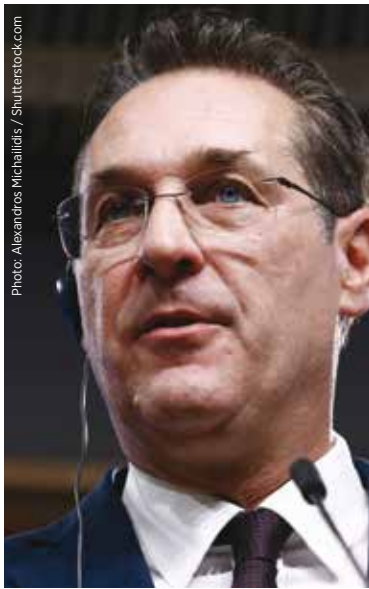
There is also a likelihood that the battle for top jobs will be more fierce with so many coalition partners now vying for a say. It would be easy to imagine that the Greens could try and push their weight about more in order to get the results they want.

Ideologically, the decision of the EPP and some members of the ALDE to go into coalition with the Greens and S&D, seems odd, especially given that many of the national delegations in the EPP returned more hard line conservative members.

As a result of this alignment of EPP, S&D, ALDE and Greens, the European Conservatives and Reformists, who turn 10 this year, will be the official opposition and have much more a role in constructively scrutinising the work of the other groups and the Commission. ■

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Ideologically, the decision of the EPP and some members of the ALDE to go into coalition with the Greens and S&D, seems odd, especially given that many of the national delegations in the EPP returned more hard line conservative members.

such a divided house. The pre-existing Grand Coalition no longer holds a majority over the Parliament, and instead the EPP, S&D, ALDE and Greens have all been forced to sign an agreement together in order to try and get policy through.



## AUSTRIA

### The problem with populists

The Austrian European Parliament election campaign has led to the collapse of the national coalition between Chancellor Sebastian Kurz's centre-right ÖVP and the right wing FPÖ. This was due to the fact that FPÖ party leader Heinz-Christian Strache was filmed in a villa in Ibiza almost two years ago, when offering government contracts to a lady who had been posing as the niece of a Russian oligarch. The scandal led to the resignation of Strache as vice-chancellor and early elections have been called by Chancellor Kurz for September.

Strache has been party leader for 14

years, during which he forged links to leading nationalist politicians across Europe. His party had also signed an agreement of cooperation with the party of Russian President Putin, so the video wasn't a good look. Whether it will prevent further cooperation with FPÖ after September is another question. Contrary to common knowledge, the first to reach out to the FPÖ to share power weren't Chancellor Kurz' conservatives but instead the social democrats, after a regional election in Burgenland in 2017.

After the scandal, the new leader of the FPÖ, Norbert Hofer, struck a more pragmatic tone at a press conference, in a bid to

remain acceptable as a partner for power. Chancellor Kurz called his coalition with the FPÖ a mistake, however adding that there was no other choice, according to him. He also told German tabloid Bild Zeitung that the coalition has achieved more in one year than Merkel in her full term.

In the election, the FPÖ did less bad than expected, only losing around 2.5 percent points, and consolidating in third place. Kurz's conservative ÖVP emerged as the big winner, gaining almost 8 percent points, attracting voters from both the FPÖ and the social democrats. The Greens remained status quo, but gained in comparison with national elections in 2017,

thereby attracting quite a few social democratic voters.

The consensus across the political spectrum in Austria is that Kurz will win the September elections with an even bigger margin. The intense debate about migration and the EU seems to have also boosted turnout in Austria, which was increased from 45 to 59%. Truly the lesson from Austria, where Chancellor Kurz can claim a lot of credit from coordinating with Balkan countries to shut their borders, thereby ending the migration chaos in 2016, is that when the mainstream adapts by ending chaotic migration, the appeal of extreme nationalism is reduced. ■



## BELGIUM

### Conservatives dominate in Flanders

Belgium has not only been holding elections for the European Parliament but also for its federal and regional parliaments. The country is divided along Flemish-Francophone linguistic lines and most of the attention has gone to the national elections.

In the European Parliament elections, there was a great victory for the hardcore Flemish nationalist party Vlaams Belang, as it tripled its number of EP seats from 1 to 3. The N-VA lots 1 of its 3 seats, while the hard left PTB, which holds Eurosceptic positions, securing its first MEP. ALDE leader Guy Verhofstadt was re-elected, but secured less votes than the centre-right Flemish nationalist N-VA's leading candidate, Geert Bourgeois, with Verhofstadt also securing almost 200,000 votes less than five years ago, when he

secured more than 500,000 votes. Turnout was up to 89%, but Belgians are obliged to turn up, even if in practice nobody gets prosecuted for not doing so.

The federal election campaign in the Dutch-speaking North of the country was dominated by fierce rivalry between N-VA, which is part of ECR, and the greens, which were accused of intending to send a massive tax bill to the middle classes. The green plan to abolish arrangements whereby people are paid in kind by being able to use a "company car" was hammered, as the party struggled to explain how it would avoid that average employees would in this way lose 500 euro net salary per month.

The election results saw only modest successes for the Flemish greens, as the N-VA fell back to 25%, however

consolidating itself as the leading force in Belgian politics. The big winner of the day was the more hardcore Flemish nationalist Vlaams Belang party, which gained 12.5 percent points in Flanders, becoming the second biggest Flemish party.

In Francophone Belgium, a whole different picture emerged. There, outgoing liberal Prime Minister Charles Michel had followed the same strategy of N-VA, accusing the other parties to endanger the middle classes, with their zeal for new taxes. His party lost around 5 percent points, doing slightly better than some polls had predicted.

All the other Francophone parties are left-leaning however, with the hard left PTB even gaining 13% of the vote. It will be extremely challenging to form a federal government coalition, as the centre-right

mainstream in the Flemish region, will need to be reconciled with a leftwing majority of close to 80% in Francophone Belgium. Close to half of Flemish voters have supported parties either supporting a unilaterally declared independent Flemish secession (Vlaams Belang) or an independent picture emerged. There, outgoing liberal Prime Minister Charles Michel had followed the same strategy of N-VA, accusing the other parties to endanger the middle classes, with their zeal for new taxes. His party lost around 5 percent points, doing slightly better than some polls had predicted.

The N-VA has opened up to governing at the federal level with its adversaries, but only under the condition that Belgium is turned into a "confederation." This may be less unrealistic than it looks like. Before the election, the leader of the Francophone socialists, former PM Elio Di Rupo, has said the current arrangements on how much money is attributed to either the federal and decentralized policy levels should be renegotiated. ■



## GERMANY

### Merkel's Europe problem

In Germany, the rightwing eurosceptic Alternative for Germany emerged after German Chancellor Angela Merkel's centre-right CDU formation agreed to Eurozone bailouts, which was a breach of the vow to German voters that giving up the national currency would never mean having to pay for transfers to other countries.

The party did quite well in 2014, obtaining \* percent of the vote, and after that, its popularity was boosted as a result of the chaotic migration inflow but it has since lost some support, as the migration crisis has faded. The party's performance has been

weakening in the last year, as the migration crisis calmed, and in the 26 May election, it obtained \* %.

The German economy has been doing excellent for years, riding on the courageous labour market reforms enacted by former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. German car manufacturers have been enjoying golden years, but perhaps the artificially undervalued euro has been turning them asleep a little bit, as they seem to be struggling to remain competitive.

Notably, just before the election, the German government had to downgrade its tax revenue forecasts for the first

time in five years, creating some economic uncertainty.

While the greens were rising to second place, boosted by the debate about climate change, the German social democrats have been suffering in the last year in the polls, which culminated in a failed leadership bid by former EP President Martin Schulz, just before the EP election.

The lead candidate of the liberal FDP, Nicola Beer, defended plans to form one group with French President Macron, as these had raised eyebrows, given the FDP's opposition to Macron's plans for more Eurozone transfers, saying "fundamentally it's about showing the courage

to come up with visions for Europe and to realise them", even if she added that "of course we don't agree on everything with Macron, for example on European financial policies".

CSU MEP Manfred Weber has been chosen as the EPP's "Spitzenkandidat", but EU leaders look opposed to going with the process again. An interesting rumour that Chancellor Angela Merkel may try to occupy one of the EU's "top jobs" herself was boosted by EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, when he stated that "I can hardly imagine that Angela Merkel would shrink into obscurity". ■



## NETHERLANDS

### The Timmermans Effect

One of the greatest surprises of the election, was the sudden resurgence of the Labour Party in the Netherlands. Most pundits had written it off as being a dead party after their wipe-out in the last general election. Yet, despite opinion polls suggesting otherwise, they managed to come in first place.

Opinion polls beforehand had been placing both the Forum for Democracy and the VVD, governing party of Prime Minister Mark Rutte, neck and neck for first place. Yet seemingly out of nowhere the Labour Party took the top position.

This has widely been attributed to European Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans, who was standing as the lead candidate for the Socialists in the European Elections. Like other candidates he travelled to many member states across the EU, but a quick browse of his official website will show that he spent a great deal of time in the Netherlands itself.

The so called Timmermans Effect demonstrates that really the entire Spitzenkandidat process can be exploited for national gain, that is if the candidate is willing to do it right. We have already

seen that there was no Weber effect in Germany.

The results in the Netherlands produced an interesting picture of a divided country, in particular with middle and working class voters opting to vote for the new Forum for Democracy, over conventional parties. There is a growing distrust with the EU in the Netherlands and an overall frustration that the EU didn't do more to prevent their main ally from leaving. The clash between the FVD and the VVD is one of pragmatism over Europe, both attract similar voters form the centre right, liberal

conservative portions of the population. The FVD has benefited from the fact that the VVD has not responded to peoples concerns over Europe. Equally the FVD has managed to win over former PVV voters, who found the party to be too extreme. The PVV, who would have joined Le Pen and Salvini, failed to win any seats at all.

The Netherlands also saw the impact of the so called Green Wave, with the Green Left gaining a seat and increasing their share of the vote by 3%, perhaps also a side effect of having one of the Greens two Spitzenkandidaten. ■





FRANCE

## A Tale of Two Cities

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was an age of wisdom, it was an age of foolishness.” So goes the famous opening lines of Charles Dickens ‘A Tale of Two Cities’, a historic novel set during the French Revolution that’s main theme is the division of society.

The theme of division also played heavily in the European Election results in France. The country has been heavily divided in recent months, with a wave of violent protests striking major towns and cities. People are divided over the Presidency of Emanuel Macron, and over their view on what sort of future exists for the European Union.

The results played out this drama, with the ‘National Rally’ of Marine Le Pen coming in first place and the ‘European Renaissance’ List of Emanuel Macron coming in second, each reaching 23% of the vote and 23 MEPs. France’s two largest delegations to the European Parliament represent different ideological traditions, those who want to pursue an ever closer union, and those who want to destroy the Union.

As has been the case across the rest of Europe, the establishment parties fell in France. The conservative Les Republicains lost 12 seats, whilst the Socialists lost 7. The Greens and the far left both also made more moderate gains. ■



CROATIA

## Tomašić comes top

ACRE Womens board member and Croatian MEP Ruža Tomašić won the largest number of preferential votes in the European Parliament race. Ms Tomašić won almost 70,000 personal votes.

The ruling HDZ won 22.72% of the vote and 4 seats in the European Parliament. The SDP, the main opposition party, also won 4 seats in the parliament, with 18.71% of the popular vote. The SDP will gain the fourth seat after the United Kingdom leaves the EU. The Croatian Sovereignists coalition, the independent list of Mislav Kolakušić, the Živi Zid party, and the Amsterdam Coalition won one seat each. The voter turnout was 29.9%, up from 25.2% in the 2014 election.

Prime Minister Plenković admitted that he expected more votes. The

BULGARIA

## The emergence of a “Two Party” system

Bulgaria’s early politics after re-establishing itself as a fully independent country outside of the communist system saw a number of fragmented political parties emerging. Parties would come and go as quickly as their leaders, without really establishing themselves. This has recently been coming to an end with the emergence of both a strong centre-right and centre-left, mirroring the politics of the United Kingdom or America.

These European elections were no exception, in fact they reinforced this entrenchment of a new political

establishment in Bulgaria. Both the centre-right GERB, led by Prime Minister Boyko Borisov and the centre-left Socialist Party emerged as clear leaders, taking a plurality of Bulgaria seats in the European Parliament.

Despite this, the two party system hasn’t completely established itself. The Turkish Minority Movement for Rights and Freedoms won 3 seats and the conservative VMRO increased their share of the vote on 2014 and won 2 seats. VMRO is currently in coalition government with the GERB and share a close political relationship. ■



the parliament ahead of the slate leader, Tihomir Lukanić. The Amsterdam Coalition’s main candidate, Valtor Flego, won a seat in the parliament. ■

CYPRUS

## The politics of division

Cyprus is one of the few countries in the EU that only sends the minimum number of MEPs to the European Parliament. Of the six members elected, two went to the centre-right Democratic Rally, two went to the Communist Party, and two went to smaller Social Democratic Parties. These results were identical to 2014.

The major breakthrough of these elections however was the election of the first Turkish Cypriot MEP in history. Niyazi Kizilyurek, a 59-year-old university professor, was among six MEPs elected. This comes despite the fact that Turkish Cypriots have been denied a vote in European Elections, even though under the terms of

their membership of the European Union, two of the six seats should be allocated to the Turkish minority in the North of the long divided island.

Many politicians from Northern Cyprus did the rounds of MEPs offices before the European Elections asking for support in ensuring the Republic of Cyprus stuck to its word and allowed Turkish Cypriots to vote and stand. These meetings with EU institutions were met with a lukewarm response, and no commitment was made to ensure that Turkish Cypriots could stand. Despite this Mr Kizilyurek will go to Brussels as the first Turkish Cypriot MEP, despite being elected by the Republic. ■

CZECH REPUBLIC

## The Outsider

Much attention has been paid by this newspaper to the campaign of Czech citizen Jan Zahradil’s campaign to become the new Commission President. His campaign focused on the fact that he was an outsider to Brussels establishment.

This outsider mentality seems to continue to be a theme in the results in the Czech Republic in the European Elections. The main winner on election night was the ANO party, led by populist Prime Minister Andrej Babis who has attracted attention more recently for mass protests against his government over allegations of corruption.

However the real story of the night was the resurgence of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), who managed to double their vote share on 2014, as well as their seats. Mr Zahradil will be joined in the new European Parliament by



two new colleagues, including a former Defence Minister.

Other big winners were the Pirate Party, who managed to win 3 seats and the far right Freedom and Direct Democracy Party who won 2 seats for

the first time and will be joining Salvini and Le Pen in the new extremist group. The biggest losers of the night where the communists and Christian democrats who all lost vote share and seats. ■



ESTONIA

## Reform still on top

The Classically Liberal Reform party managed to hold its first place position, increasing its share of the vote. The boost came from the fact that they have been in opposition in Estonia since March, despite being the most popular party in the country. They ran a campaign focused on the idea of ensuring that the European Union worked for the Estonian people, without taking too much power away from the Baltic country.

The far right EKRE entered the European Parliament for the first time during

these elections as well. They have had a steep rise in support in recent years, fuelled by both the threat from Russia and the migrant crisis. They will sit with other populist parties in the European Parliament.

The conservative leaning Pro Patria lost their seat, however will be back after Brexit as they managed to win the extra mandate that will be given to Estonia as part of the restructuring of the European Parliament. They ran a campaign that called for a rethinking of the role of the EU in the lives of ordinary people. ■

ITALY

## Rise of the Right

Perhaps the biggest winner of election night across the entire of the European Union was Matteo Salvini. His Lega party won 24 seats, taking their total up to 29, making them the largest single party in the European Parliament. He has promised to create his own group with the support of the Alternative

fur Deutschland and Marine Le Pen.

However, election night also delivered promising results for the centre right as well. Fratelli d’Italia entered the European Parliament with 6 members, including the return of Raffaele Fitto.

The establishment parties all suffered in the elections. Silvio Berlusconi’s

Forza Italia lost 6 seats and over 8% of the vote. Whilst the Democratic Party lost 12 MEPs, a change of 18% of the vote. Equally the populist Five Star Movement went from 17 MEPs down to 14, despite strong support in the south of the country. It is unclear what political group they will now join in the European Parliament. ■



GREECE

## Bad night for Tsipras

Since he took a huge blow in the European Parliament elections, where his Syriza coalition fell back in terms of vote share -despite not losing any seats- Mr Tsipras called for a snap election in Greece. As a result he was unceremoniously ousted as Prime Minister after losing to the Centre-right New Democracy on the General Election that took place on July 7th.



The new entry to the European Parliament was Kyriakos Velopoulos of the Greek Solution party. He won 4% of the popular vote which entitled him to a seat in the European Parliament where he

now sits with the European Conservatives and Reformist Group. In last week’s general election his newly formed party performed equally good, securing 10 seats in Greece’s Parliament. ■

LITHUANIA

## Wasted votes?

One of the most surprising things about the results of the elections in Lithuania, was the fact that 22% of the vote went to parties that failed to reach the threshold to get in. Meanwhile the top party in the country, the Homeland Union, only won 18%. A further 5% of the total votes were spoilt of invalid ballots.

Despite this there was some movement in terms of seat allocation. The conservative Homeland Union won 3 mandates, the Social Democrats won 2 and the Lithuanian Peasant and Green Union won 2. All of these marked an

increase in their representation.

The other surprise of the night was the election of independent MEP Austra Maldeikiene, a former economist. She had previously served as an MP and run for President, and been a member of the controversial Order and Justice Party, however she has stated she will try and join the ALDE Group in the European Parliament.

Valdemar Tomaševski managed to comfortably win his seat for a third mandate and he will return to the European Conservatives and Reformist Group. ■



FINLAND

## More of the same

Fresh of the back of recent and controversial Parliamentary elections, Finns voted to maintain the status quo in the European Parliament. Only two seats changed hands with the Centre Party losing one seat and the Green League winning one, as well as gaining an extra mandate after Brexit.

The conservative leaning Finns Party managed to hold on to both of their seats and saw a slight increase in their share of the vote. The other parties that saw an increase were the Social Democrats and the Green League. Both cashing in on their recent electoral success in the General Elections and a boost for the new government. ■

DENMARK

## The Establishment fights back

Denmark was in the middle of a General Election campaign when citizens went to vote in the European Elections. The results saw the liberal conservative Venstre come in first place. A surprise for many given that they were falling behind in opinion polls in both the General and European Elections. ■



LATVIA

## National Alliance gets boost

The National Alliance, led by Roberts Zile received a boost when they managed to increase their representation in the European Parliament to 2 MEPs. The party is currently in coalition in Latvia and have recently been polling in second place in national elections. Dace Melbarde, the former Minister of Culture, will join

Mr Zile in the European Conservatives and Reformist Group.

The centre right Unity Party fell back significantly, losing two MEPs. Whilst the Russian minority Harmony Party came in second place, also gaining an extra mandate. They will continue to sit with the EPP and S&D respectively. ■



saw an increase in their vote share. The Alternative Democratic Reform Party narrowly missed out on winning a seat, despite getting 126,000 or 10%. ■

HUNGARY

## The Hungarian exception

Whilst the centre-right struggled in other parts of Europe, the Fidesz Party of Victor Orban managed to grow, winning 52% of the popular vote and 13 MEPs. Mr Orban has been enjoying increased support in Hungary in recent months, despite receiving heavy criticism from both the European Union and his own European Peoples Party. The party was suspended from the EPP ahead of the election, and yet has returned as one of its largest delegations.

Some analysts have argued that the opposition parties would be on par



with the Fidesz-KDNP coalition had they run jointly. While such an idea was initially entertained, it was derailed by disagreements.

The centre left Democratic Coalition won two more seats than last time, defying expectations that they would lose support. The new Momentum party managed to win two seats as well, despite having failed to get into the National Parliament last year. The far-right Jobbik lost one seat. ■





Photo: Alexander Michailidis / Shutterstock.com

**MALTA**

## Small island with big problems

Malta has been through a lot in recent years. It has been on the front line of the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean, it has held both the Presidency of the European Council and Commonwealth simultaneously and it has been rocked by a number of political scandals following the death journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia.

Despite all this trouble, the Maltese people swung their support behind Prime Minister Joseph Muscat and gave his Labour Party an extra MEP at the expense of the centre-right Nationalist Party. Muscat's Labour Party won 54% of the popular vote, the highest of any party in the European Parliament, however in Malta that only equates to 141,267 votes. ■



Photo: Esteban Martinez Guener / Shutterstock.com

**SPAIN AND PORTUGAL**

## The Iberian exception

Whilst left wing and social democratic parties across the rest of Europe suffered poor results, Iberia seemed to offer a strange counter narrative. In both Portugal and Spain, leftist parties did much better than expected. In Portugal the Socialist Party gained a seat and increased its share of the vote, with the Left Bloc and PAN parties also gaining more seats. Meanwhile in Spain the Socialist Party increased their share of the vote by almost 10% and won an extra 6 seats, making them one of the biggest parties in the Parliament. This was fresh of the back of a strong result in the General Election that removed the centre right from power in early May.

Centre Right Parties fared less well in the elections. In Spain the Peoples Party lost 6% of the vote and 4 seats, whilst in Portugal neither EPP member made any gains. The classically liberal Citizens party in Spain gained an extra seat, which was less than expected. Whilst the new conservative Vox Party won 3 seats and entered the European Parliament for the first time since their founding.

Various regionalist parties did well, including the election of exiled President of Catalonia Charles Puigdemont and one of his ministers. There has been some controversy surrounding his election as it is unclear if he will be able to take his seat or not as he currently lives in exile in Belgium. ■

**SLOVAKIA**

## Liberal surge

The classical liberal Freedom and Solidarity Party, led by former MEP Richard Sulik won an extra mandate in the European Parliament. They will now be represented by former Minister of Education Eugen Jurzyca and journalist Lucia Duris Nicholsonova. They will sit in the European Conservatives and Reformists Group.

The big winners of election night were the new liberal parties, Progressive Slovakia and Together-Civic Democrats, who won 4 seats. Another less welcome surprise was the rise of Peoples Party Our Slovakia, a neo-Nazi party that has had a sharp rise in support in recent months, which hasn't gone without criticism. Slovakia is due to have a general election in 2020, and based on the current results the opposition would likely win, bringing SAS and other liberal conservative parties to power. ■



Photo: Rafal Zambrzycki

**POLAND**

## Law and Justice wins big

The governing Law and Justice Party saw a big vote of confidence in their leadership of the country when they came first in the European Parliament Elections. The Party managed to win 45% of the vote, with 6 million votes. This was despite stiff opposition from a coalition of the unwilling made up of Donald Tusks Civic Platform, the liberal Modern Party, the socialist Democratic Left Alliance, the Christian democrat Polish Peoples Party, and the Greens.

Within a week of the coalition losing the election, it began to fall apart with the Polish Peoples Party withdrawing first. This means that despite winning 22 MEPs, 5 less than when they stood separately last

time, they will all end up in different groups. The new Wiosna Party won 3 MEPs without being part of the coalition and will now sit with the S&D group.

The Law and Justice Party will now be one of the biggest single parties in the European Parliament, with some high profile MEPs, including former Foreign Minister Anna Fotyga, former Prime Minister Beata Szydlo and former Deputy Speaker of the Parliament Adam Bielan.

This result also puts the party on a good footing for the general elections that will take place in September, in which they are currently expected win an increased share of the votes and seats in the Sejm and form a stronger government. ■



**SWEDEN**

## Opposition victory

In Sweden, the European Election results saw Sweden's opposition parties receive a boost. The Swedish Democrats, Christian Democrats and Moderate Parties all saw increases in vote share and seats. Whilst those parties that had switched allegiances after the last election to join the left wing government were punished. The Greens, Feminist

Initiative and Liberal Parties all lost seats, whilst the Social Democrats and Left Party failed to make any gains.

This could be seen as the start of a new emerging coalition in Sweden that would put the Christian Democrats, Swedish Democrats and Moderate Party in government. The next general election isn't due in Sweden until 2022. ■

**ROMANIA**

## Government loses ground

The governing Socialist party has taken a beating in the European Elections, losing ground to the opposition National Liberal Party and anti-corruption USR-PLUS alliance. To add to their troubles they are likely to be expelled from the S&D Group over breaches of the rule of law in Romania. A string of protests crippled the country last year after the government made changes to the legal code that would have effectively made the government immune to prosecution over corruption. At the same time they released a number of their activists and members from prison, who had been arrested for corruption.

The results are not necessarily good for the country, with a great deal of opposition coming from Romanian expats living in the rest of the European Union. There were reports on election days of lines outside Romanian



embassies and consulates stretching out into the thousands as people cast their ballot to send a message to the government back home. ■

**SLOVENIA**

## Governing party enters EP for the first time

Despite increasing their share of the vote, the conservative Slovenian Democratic Party lost a seat. This has more to do with the electoral system than a reflection of the view of the people. A new, liberal populist party, that leads the coalition government in Slovenia, won 15% of the vote and 2 seats, entering the European Parliament for the first time.

Their socialist coalition partners also gained a seat and increased their share of the vote by 8%. The Slovenian Democratic Party, still managed to come first in the elections, and is still polling ahead of all other parties. Their leader Janez Jansa, tweeted after the election that he regretted that the EPP had decided to join a coalition with the left, and said instead that EPP and ECR should come together and work on a conservative platform in the next mandate. Mr Jansa is a close ally of Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orban. ■



Photo: European Peoples Party



# THE ECR HAS PLENTY OF ROOM TO GROW

An interview with Professor Ryszard Legutko, Co-Chairman of ECR Group



Photo: European Union 2019 - Source: EP

Polish MEP Professor Ryszard Legutko was voted in for a second term as the European Conservative and Reformists Groups Co-Chairman, we sat down with him in his office to find out what his priorities are for the group in the next mandate, and what he sees as the problems with the new ‘Grand Coalition’

CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE

**THE CONSERVATIVE**  
And do you think that the other groups will listen?

**PROF. RYSZARD LEGUTKO MEP**  
No, and I had a sample of it during the last conference of presidents meeting, where the leaders of the major groups who will form the ruling coalition, we will carry on regardless, and nothing changed. So no.

**THE CONSERVATIVE**  
Given that is it now note easier to expand, especially when you take into account that members of the European Peoples Party and Eurorealist members of the Liberals will have issues with supporting Socialist and Green policies?

**PROF. RYSZARD LEGUTKO MEP**  
I would hope so, but it is very complicated. Because there are factors related to national politics and certain international commitments. So it's difficult. There are groups, there are parties, there are delegations that one would think intellectually or conceptually should work together, but somehow they do not see eye to eye for various reasons. In politics as you know there is a lot of irrationality, you cannot overcome. But these are facts. One could imagine if you are a theorist you could look at the programme of the political parties and its very easy to construct from the parties and MEPs that are here a new group that would be the largest in the European Parliament. But that is just a theory, in

“

We hope to gather together people and forces here in the parliament and exert pressure on the powers that be.

practice it's impossible. But hopefully this group will increase as the mandate goes on.

**THE CONSERVATIVE**  
So do you see room for cooperation with those parties in other groups that are sympathetic to our positions?

**PROF. RYSZARD LEGUTKO MEP**  
Yes I hope so, and I think more so now more than previous mandates. We are still waiting to see how many groups there will be and how big they are. We should somehow join forces on particular issues.

**THE CONSERVATIVE**  
And what are some of those areas?

**PROF. RYSZARD LEGUTKO MEP**  
Those issues that relate to sovereignty. That's where the European Institutions transcend the competency. There are probably some areas that would be more difficult to work on such as Foreign Policy and energy. In the last weeks of the previous mandate we had this coalition on the mobility package that was quite large, we still failed, but

only because the EP decided to violate the rules, not for the first time or the last time, and put forward rejected proposals. But yes, there are certain areas we could see a coordinated effort. Even some EPP parties are willing to work with us.

**THE CONSERVATIVE**  
And thinking about the governing coalition itself, do you see it having much longevity as a political force.

**PROF. RYSZARD LEGUTKO MEP**  
Longevity by definition is long. I don't know what the opposite is, but I think it will last for soe time. They are too much afraid of losing the monopoly of power, the main factor that seems to keep them together. It's not something that I think will change. It's an ad hoc construction to preserve the status quo?

**THE CONSERVATIVE**  
So if this governing coalition will continue to last, then that will effectively make the ECR Group the official opposition in the European Parliament. Will the ECR be a constructive opposition like in the last mandate?

**PROF. RYSZARD LEGUTKO MEP**  
Well, it's a difficult question. Because contrary to what you might hear in the EU institutions, there's no tradition of compromise in European politics. If European politics has always been in the hands of one political coalition. So when they have the majority they don't bother to make compromises with anyone. So whether you are constructive or destructive, or say no or 'yes but...' they couldn't care less. But in some particular problems they might be willing to cooperate. When national interests come into play, that offers possibility for some kind of compromise. And if you look at the image of our group, we are not as tainted as the groups to the right of us such as Le Pen or Farage. And that also matters.

**THE CONSERVATIVE**  
Finally, what do you see as the future of the ECR Group?

**PROF. RYSZARD LEGUTKO MEP**  
I believe that 63 members from 15 countries is a solid base. Our idea is to remain a loose confederation of parties based on a few core ideas. I still believe we can keep this model and become a larger group. We have some great ideas from fine people, so we need to work on building respect. I think there is movement in Eastern Europe to be supportive of the EU but at the same time to be dissatisfied with the way it is functioning, and there is a certain rapprochement between the governments. And that may translate to cooperation here, even if we are in different groups ■





# Jan Zahradil

## CAMPAIGN DIARY

### HIGHLIGHTS

*Jan Zahradil was ACRE's candidate for the Presidency of the Commission, throughout the course of the campaign his team wrote a number of Campaign Diaries as he travelled across Europe spreading the conservative message, for the first time they are all available in one place.*



#### 01 Retune the EU campaign launched

ACRE's lead candidate Jan Zahradil officially launched his Retune the EU Spitzenkandidat campaign on 28th November 2018 in Brussels.

The band Exiled in Brussels whose members are the Chairman of the ECR Group Syed Kamall (bass guitar and vocals) and Vice-Chairman Roberts Zile (guitar) opened the event with a song Crossroads by a blues musician Robert Johnson. When asked why he chose this particular song, Jan Zahradil explained that people always talk about the EU being at a crossroads: "now we really are at a crossroads, because there will be no EPP and Socialist majority in the European Parliament after the next elections."

In his address, Jan Zahradil presented his campaign manifesto highlighting his primary priority - the Great Review of the entire "acquis communautaire". "The EU has completely stopped examining where it has gone wrong and overreached," explained Jan Zahradil. "A Commission led by me would focus on assessing regulation that already exists, removing what is no longer necessary, what is overdue, redundant or inefficient, and improving what can be made to work better."

The full manifesto can be downloaded at [acreurope.eu/janzahradil](http://acreurope.eu/janzahradil).

#### 02 Federalists met the ACRE's lead candidate

ACRE's lead candidate Jan Zahradil debated the President of the Union of European Federalists Sandro Gozi in one of the first Spitzenkandidat debates in Brussels. The debate in the Brussels Microsoft headquarters, moderated by journalist Chris Burns, focused on the future of Europe but also discussed migration

and the EU budget. One issue both politicians agreed on was that the Single Market benefits the EU.

Jan Zahradil told the invited audience that the ECR was the leading pro-European reform party with a plan to ensure the EU is scaled back to become more flexible, prosperous and respectful of national governments.

#### 03 ACRE's President welcomes a new party

ACRE's President Jan Zahradil welcomed a new party Fratelli d'Italia into the conservative family.

Fratelli d'Italia, a national conservative party led by Georgia Meloni, officially joined the ACRE at "La Convenzione Blu Council Meeting & Summit" on 22nd February 2019 in Rome.

Zahradil welcomed the new ally, stressing the important role that Italy will play in the European elections. He also emphasised how important Fratelli d'Italia would be in the next European Conservative Group in the Parliament.

#### 04 The EP debate on the Future of Europe is a theater

During the February European Parliament plenary session in Strasbourg, ACRE's lead candidate and member of the ECR Group Jan Zahradil called out his fellow MEPs for not being able to convey a balanced debate on the Future of Europe.

At present, in each Strasbourg plenary session a debate with a member state prime minister or a head of state on the Future of Europe takes place. However, the majority of the speakers belong to the EU federalist EPP, Socialists and Liberals who all want the same thing - more Europe.

When somebody with a different point of view takes the floor such as the Italian



Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte on 12th February, a majority of MEPs almost 'booed' and 'jeered' him.

"This is not a debate, this is only an imitation of a debate," said Jan Zahradil to the chamber.

#### 05 Jan Zahradil delivered a key note speech at the ODS Idea Conference in Prague

As well as being ACRE President and lead candidate for the Commission Presidency, Jan Zahradil also leads the Czech Civic Democratic Party in the May European elections.

On Saturday 16th March, he delivered a keynote speech at the party's Idea Conference in Prague outlining his Spitzenkandidat priorities but also stressing that the ODS strongly opposes any idea of the Czech Republic leaving the EU: "We do not support any referendum about the Czech Republic leaving the EU. But we do

not support the EU turning into a federal superstate. We want a flexible and multi-speed EU."

"It is my honour to represent the Czech Republic and Central and Eastern Europe in the Spitzenkandidat race," concluded Jan Zahradil, who is the first ever candidate for the Commission Presidency coming from Central and Eastern Europe.

#### 06 Business Briefing with Jan Zahradil

"It's not politicians who create jobs and growth. It's businesses. Our role as politicians is to create the right regulatory and economic conditions which means keeping rules simple, fair and stable," said ACRE lead candidate Jan Zahradil to industry representatives during his Business Briefing on 20th March in the Brussels Residence Palace.

He also revealed to the audience his plan to conduct 'The Great Review' if elected President of the European Commission. The ACRE lead candidate believes that the biggest self-assessment since the foundation of the EU is necessary and long overdue. The regulations and directives that are no longer needed and inefficient need to be removed and the next European Commission must focus instead on becoming less bureaucratic and more efficient.

The ECR's Vice-Chair Roberts Zile and the UK Minister of State for Exiting the European Union, Lord Callanan, also spoke at the event.

#### 07 ACRE Liberty Summit in Sofia, Bulgaria

The ACRE's Liberty Summit organised in Sofia, Bulgaria on 22nd March, discussed Bulgaria's political and economic reforms and developing a truer democracy where the rule of law could replace

crony capitalism, corruption and poverty, and in their place provide the structures for the stability and prosperity of the Bulgarian people.

"It's been 30 years since the fall of communism and the western societies are still not able to fully understand our very unique historical experience and the complexity of our societies," ACRE President and lead candidate Jan Zahradil told the audience in Sofia.

On Saturday he also met the Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov with whom he had a chance to discuss the economic growth of Bulgaria, the protection of borders and future of Europe.

#### 08 Faith and Freedom Summit

ACRE's lead candidate Jan Zahradil delivered a key note speech at the Faith and Freedom Summit that took place on 2nd April in Brussels. The Summit brought together leaders from religion, politics, government, academia, activism and the not-for-profit sector from Europe and beyond, in order to propose and develop initiatives that would put Freedom of Religion and Belief in Europe back in the spotlight.

The Summit aimed to drive an open discussion on the topic and the need to reinforce the existing mechanisms protecting freedom of religion and belief in the European Union.

#### 09 Blue Green Summit and why conservatives are the best conservationists

The ACRE Blue Green Summit 2019 took place on 3rd April in the Brussels Solvay Library, and presented a great opportunity to counter the view that environmental policies are exclusively on the lefts agenda.

“

#### Why Retune the EU?

In music the audience cannot possibly enjoy the performance if the instruments are out of tune. And it is the same in politics and in the EU. When the institutions are out of tune with the people they are supposed to represent, it cannot work. That is why we need to retune the EU to get it in harmony with the wishes of the people.

Jan Zahradil opened the Summit saying: "Here in Brussels, the response to environmental issues is often to turn to regulation. The Green movement seems to have completely lost its way intellectually. The EU, its Member States, and markets must all work together if we are to develop effective solutions for sustainability."

A water technology engineer by profession, Jan Zahradil also warned that the issue of climate change, which absolutely dominates the public discourse on environmental issues, overshadows any other environmental problems we have such as water scarcity and draughts.

#### 10 Jan Zahradil's Road to Europe

On 4th April ACRE lead candidate for the Commission Presidency Jan Zahradil spoke in the Spitzenkandidaten Series debate Road to Europe organised by the Financial Times and European economic think tank Bruegel. The topics covered issues such as sustainable growth, Eurozone and European economy, trade and Competition and industrial policy.

Jan Zahradil campaigned for the EU budget to be restructured and focused on infrastructure, innovation and research and also stressed that the EU needs to become the world leader in trade.

"European institutions need to become servants of the member states rather than their master," concluded Mr Zahradil.

#### 11 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.

#### 12 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.

#### 13 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.

#### 14 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.

#### 15 Debate with Die Tageszeitung in Berlin

Die Tageszeitung, is the biggest left wing German daily and on 6th April ACRE lead candidate Jan Zahradil participated in its 'tazlab' discussion forum which is organised every year, this time on the future of Europe.

Jan Zahradil talked about the fight against fake news and the rise of "populism" in Europe. He recalled that dissatisfaction with the way the European Union works has been significantly growing in Europe, and if we do not listen to people and their concerns, there will be serious consequences. The ACRE President also reminded everyone that "European identity" is perceived differently in each country and that that needs to be respected.

#### 16 Bauma fair in Munich

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#### 17 Brussels business breakfast

On 10th April ACRE lead candidate Jan Zahradil met with senior people from the world of industry and trade in Brussels to discuss how the EU can become more business friendly and competitive.

EU tour on 25th - 26th April. He delivered a key note speech at the ACRE Riga Meeting 2019 organised together with ACRE member party, The National Alliance, and discussed foreign policy with the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Latvian Parliament Rihards Kols.

Jan Zahradil also met the Agriculture Minister Kaspars Gerhards with whom he spoke about the Common Agriculture Policy and the issues of underfunded farmers Latvia is dealing with. With Ināra Mūrniece, Speaker of the Latvian Saeima they agreed that Central and Eastern Europe countries together with Baltic States must be more listened to in the EU because they bring to the table a unique historical experience and a different perspective.



#### 20 The Spitzenkandidat debate in Maastricht

The first big Spitzenkandidat debate of all lead candidates except EPP's Manfred Weber took place in the city of Maastricht on Monday 30th April. Organised by the University of Maastricht, the debate was moderated by Politico Europe's Ryan Heath and Rianne Letschert, rector of Maastricht University, and focused on 3 main themes: Digital Europe, Future of Europe, and Sustainable Europe.

ACRE lead candidate Jan Zahradil was the only speaker campaigning for a real EU reform against further centralisation and politicisation of the Commission.

"My country joined the EU 15 years ago together with 9 others. But even after these 15 years we are still different and we need to respect that. We need to find a new balance between EU solutions and national solutions. I call this a flexible Europe and I believe it is the only way forward out of the current deadlock," said Jan Zahradil in his final pitch. The debate can be watched on Politico Europe YouTube channel. ■







# JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN

Together with Rousseau, John Stuart Mill supplied nearly all of the arguments and most of the emotional fuel – the octane of sentiment – that have gone into defining the progressive vision of the world. His peculiar brand of utilitarianism – a cake of Benthamite hedonism glazed with Wordsworthian sentimentality – has proved to be irresistible for the multitudes susceptible to that sort of confection. It is also a recipe that has proved to be irresistible to those infatuated with the spectacle of their own virtue.

By far the most concentrated and damaging attack on Mill's philosophical dispensation is *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* by the lawyer, judge, and journalist Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, Leslie Stephen's older brother and hence – such is the irony of history – Virginia Woolf's uncle. Published in 1873, the last year of Mill's life, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* aroused, as Leslie Stephen observed at the time, "the anger of some, the sympathy of others, and the admiration of all who liked to see hard hitting on any side of a great question". A later commentator noted that Stephen made "mincemeat" of Mill. But it didn't matter. For nearly one hundred years *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* disappeared almost without a trace. After 1874, it was not, as far as I know, republished until Cambridge University Press brought out a new edition in 1967. Written directly after Stephen completed a stint as Chief Justice of Calcutta, the book is full of the justified confidence



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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*.  
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“Signs announcing a “commitment to diversity” that one sees at college campuses and businesses are so nauseating precisely because they are little more than badges declaring the owner's virtue. The odour of political correctness surrounding them is the odour of unearned self-satisfaction.

of flourishing empire. Stephen saw the great good that the English had brought to India in health and education, in maintaining civic order, in putting down barbaric customs like suttee. He recognised clearly that following Mill's liberal principles would make carrying out that civilising mandate difficult if not impossible. And he decided forthrightly that the fault lay with Mill's liberalism, not with civilisation.

The refusal to criticise results in a moral paralysis. That paralysis is the secret poison at the heart of Mill's liberalism.

As Stephen explains in his opening pages, the book is an effort to examine “the doctrines which are rather hinted at than expressed by the phrase ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.’” Stephen notes that although the phrase had its origin in the French Revolution, it had come to express “the creed of a religion” – one “less definite than most forms of Christianity, but not on that account the less powerful”. Indeed, the motto “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” epitomized “one of the most penetrating influences of the day,” namely the “Religion of Humanity” – the secular, socialistic alternative to Christianity put forward in different ways by thinkers like Auguste Comte, Jeremy Bentham, and John Stuart Mill. “It is one of the commonest beliefs of the day,” Stephen wrote, “that the human race collectively has before it splendid destinies of various kinds, and that the road to them is to be found in the removal of all restraints on human conduct, in the recognition of a substantial equality between all human creatures,

and in fraternity in general.”

Stephen shows in tonic detail why these beliefs are mistaken and why, should they be put into practice, they are bound to result in moral chaos and widespread personal unhappiness.

The phrase “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” suggests the immense rhetorical advantage that Mill's brand of liberalism begins with. One can hardly criticise the slogan without arousing the suspicion that one must be a partisan of oppression, servitude, and dissension. “Liberty,” Stephen notes, “is a eulogistic word.” Therein lies its magic. Substitute a neutral synonym – “permission”, for example, or “leave” (as in “I give you leave to go”) – and the spell is broken: the troops will not rally. It is the same with equality and fraternity. The eulogistic aspect of liberalism means that its critics are practically required to begin with an apology. So it is hardly surprising that Stephen stresses at the beginning of his book that he is “not the advocate of Slavery, Caste, and Hatred” and that there is a sense in which he, too, can endorse the phrase “liberty, equality, fraternity.”

Stephen begins by pointing out that Mill and other advocates of the Religion of Humanity have exaggerated the advantages and minimized the disadvantages that these qualities involve. For one thing, taken without further specification “liberty, equality, fraternity” are far too abstract to form the basis of anything like a religion. They are also inherently disestablishing with regard to existing social arrangements; that indeed is one reason they exert so great an appeal for the radical sensibility. Take

Mill's doctrine of liberty, which boils down to the exhortation: Let everyone please himself in any way he likes so long as he does not hurt his neighbour. According to Mill – at least according to the Mill of *On Liberty* – any moral system that aimed at more – that aimed, for example, at improving the moral character of society at large or the individuals in it – would be wrong in principle.

But this view, Stephen notes, would “condemn every existing system of morals.”

*Strenuously preach and rigorously practise the doctrine that our neighbour's private character is nothing to us, and the number of unfavorable judgments formed, and therefore the number of inconveniences inflicted by them can be reduced as much as we please, and the province of liberty can be enlarged in corresponding ratio. Does any reasonable man wish for this? Could anyone desire gross licentiousness, monstrous extravagance, ridiculous vanity, or the like, to be unnoticed, or, being known, to inflict no inconveniences which can possibly be avoided?*

As Stephen dryly observes, *pace* Mill, “the custom of looking upon certain courses of conduct with aversion is the essence of morality.”

As Stephen points out, Mill's doctrine of liberty betrays a curious stereoscopic quality. One moment it seems to license unrestrained liberty; the next moment, it seems to sanction the most sweeping coercion. When Stephen says that “the great defect” of Mill's doctrine of liberty is that it implies “too favorable an estimate of human nature,” we know exactly what he means. Mill writes as if people, finally awakened to their rational interests, would put aside all petty concerns and devote themselves to “lofty minded” relationships and the happiness of mankind in general. “He appears to believe,” Stephen writes with barely concealed incredulity, “that if men are all freed from restraints and put, as far as possible, on an equal footing, they will naturally treat each other as brothers, and work together harmoniously

for their common good.” At the same time, Mill's estimation of actually existing men and women is very unfavorable. “Ninety-nine in a hundred,” he tells us, act in ignorance of their real motives. He is always going on about “wretched social arrangements,” the bad state of society, and the general pettiness of his contemporaries.

Mill vacillates between these two caricatures. The friction between the two produces an illusion of benevolence; that illusion is at the heart of Mill's appeal. Yet what Mill describes is an ideal that, in proportion as it is realised, tends to grow into its opposite. In his book *Utilitarianism*, Mill writes that “as between his own happiness and that of others, justice requires [everyone] to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator.” Stephen comments: “If this be so, I can only say that nearly the whole of nearly every human creature is one continued course of injustice, for nearly everyone passes his life in providing the means of happiness for himself and those who are closely connected with him, leaving others all but entirely out of account.”

And this, Stephen argues, is as it should be, not merely for prudential but for moral reasons.

*The man who works from himself outwards, whose conduct is governed by ordinary motives, and who acts with a view to his own advantage and the advantage of those who are connected with himself in definite, assignable ways, produces in the ordinary course of things much more happiness to others... than a moral Don Quixote who is always liable to sacrifice himself and his neighbours... On the other hand, a man who has a disinterested love of the human race – that is to say, who has got a fixed idea about some way of providing for the management of the concerns of mankind – is an unaccountable person... who is capable of making his love for men in general the ground of all sorts of violence against men in particular.*

“The real truth is that the human race is so big, so various, so little known, that no one can really love it.” It would be nice if someone would inform Jean-Claude Junker of this homely fact.

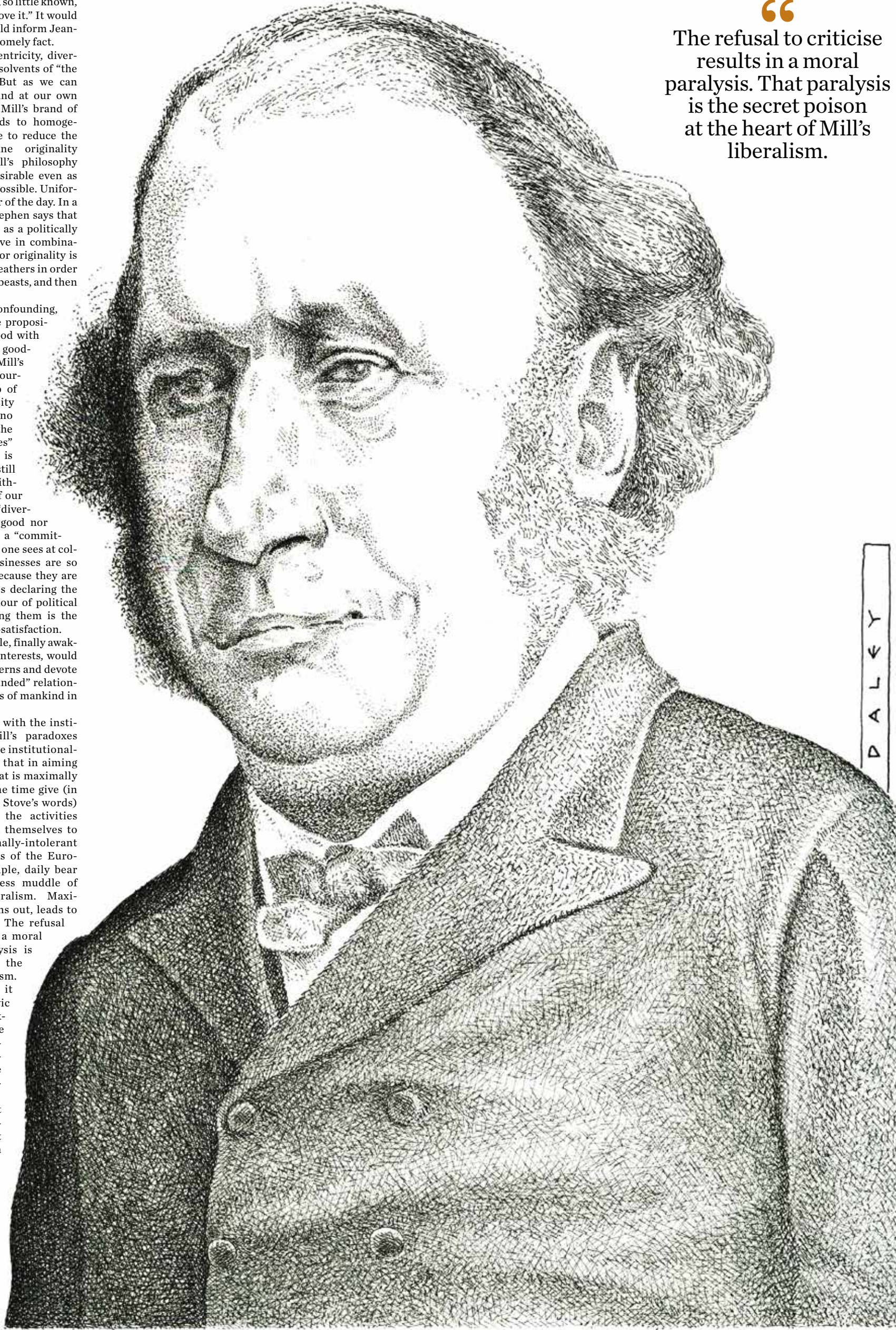
Mill champions eccentricity, diversity, and originality as solvents of “the tyranny of opinion.” But as we can see from looking around at our own society, the spread of Mill's brand of equalizing liberty tends to homogenize society and hence to reduce the expression of genuine originality and individuality. Mill's philosophy declares originality desirable even as it works to make it impossible. Uniformity becomes the order of the day. In a memorable analogy, Stephen says that Mill's notion of liberty as a politically “progressive” imperative in combination with his demand for originality is “like plucking a bird's feathers in order to put it on a level with beasts, and then telling it to fly.”

Furthermore, by confounding, as Stephen puts it, the proposition that “variety is good with the proposition that goodness is various,” Mill's teaching tends to encourage a shallow worship of mere variety, diversity for its own sake with no regard for value of the specific “diversities” being celebrated. This is obviously a lesson we still have not learned. Notwithstanding the slogans of our cultural commissars, “diversity” itself is neither good nor bad. Signs announcing a “commitment to diversity” that one sees at college campuses and businesses are so nauseating precisely because they are little more than badges declaring the owner's virtue. The odour of political correctness surrounding them is the odour of unearned self-satisfaction.

Mill writes as if people, finally awakened to their rational interests, would put aside all petty concerns and devote themselves to “lofty minded” relationships and the happiness of mankind in general.

Today, we are living with the institutionalisation of Mill's paradoxes – above all, perhaps, the institutionalisation of the paradox that in aiming to achieve a society that is maximally tolerant we at the same time give (in the philosopher David Stove's words) “maximum scope to the activities of those who have set themselves to achieve the maximally-intolerant society.” The activities of the European Union, for example, daily bear witness to the hopeless muddle of this anchorless liberalism. Maximum tolerance, it turns out, leads to maximum impotence. The refusal to criticise results in a moral paralysis. That paralysis is the secret poison at the heart of Mill's liberalism. Among other things, it saps the springs of civic education by weakening our allegiance to tradition and customary modes of feeling and behaviour, the rich network of inherited moral judgment.

Stephen noted that Mill's “very simple principle” – the principle that coercive public opinion ought to be exercised only for self-protective purposes – was “a paradox so startling that it is almost impossible to argue against.” Mill might indeed have had the last laugh. But it turned out, as James Fitzjames Stephen knew, that the joke was on us. ■



“The refusal to criticise results in a moral paralysis. That paralysis is the secret poison at the heart of Mill's liberalism.

D A L E Y





Next weekend in

by Barnaby Whiteman

# BORDEAUX

## When to go?

Spring tends to be dry and on the colder side, but May especially is a great month to see the city in bloom. The Cathedral of Saint Andrew is surrounded by blossom trees that are best enjoyed in the spring months. A recommendation of locals for this time of year is the Guily Fish Spa, whose relaxing treatments are the perfect way to prepare your skin for the summer sun!

From May until June this year, Bordeaux will once again celebrate Fête le Fleuve, a festival that celebrates the city's River Garonne with water sports, rides on the river and fireworks to mark the end of the festival. Those travelling in the summer months should be wary of the heat – temperatures can soar into the 30s in August – but with beaches nearby and parks to enjoy, it is a great summer city. If you have come to Bordeaux to sample some of France's best wines, the second and third weeks of June are best avoided. Every other year, Bordeaux hosts Vinexpo, where wine specialists come to trade and taste, so vineyards often close their doors to tourists. A brilliant summer Bordeaux tradition is Dansons sur les Quais, where free dance evenings are hosted every evening for five weeks! Head to the Jardin Botanique to share a dance experience with locals and tourists alike.

September and October are still warm in Bordeaux, but can experience rain, too. The long evenings make it the perfect time of year to visit the nearby Pyla Dune coast, which is much quieter once the summer tourists have left. By November temperatures have fallen quite significantly, but vineyards and museums are still open to the public. As with many other European cities, Bordeaux has a fantastic Christmas market. It is in a great central location, just off Place de la Bourse. The market boasts more than one hundred wooden stalls selling regional specialities – everything from Armagnac spirits to blown glass to homemade chocolate!



## Where to go?

Whilst a wine tasting might be the first thought that comes to mind when visiting Bordeaux, do not miss out on the beautiful city centre. Here you can find the Flèche Saint-Michel tower, which dates back to the 15th century and is one of the tallest medieval stone towers in France. For those with a head for heights, you can climb to the top of this 114m tower for stunning views across the city.



A must-see in Bordeaux is the Saint Pierre district: the birthplace of the city and the historic heart of Bordeaux. Here you can see Place de la Bourse, one of the best examples of classical French architecture in the city. It is famously situated in front of the Miroir d'eau, a pool that magnificently reflects the Place. As beautiful as it is during the day, Saint Pierre truly comes alive at night! It is a perfect spot in the city for young people – it is abundant with trendy bars and cafés. Try visiting Le Plana for an outdoor eating experience.

For those with a taste for wine, Bordeaux could not be a better place to sample some of the finest French wines. The most popular tour from Bordeaux goes to Medoc Château Castéra, where visitors can enjoy a tour of the château, lunch and a walk around the estate.



## Where to stay?



Those with a taste for luxury will find nowhere better than La Grande Maison for their stay in Bordeaux. This beautiful 19th-century mansion sits at the end of a sweeping drive, and is surrounded by landscaped grounds. La Grande Maison has a valet service that will bring you from the airport to the hotel, making your journey easy and hassle-free. The hotel offers unique Bordeaux experiences, including jet-skiing on the Garonne and an exclusive helicopter tour. The crowning jewel in this magnificent hotel is its two-star Michelin restaurant, run by Head Chef Pierre Gagnaire. The gastronomic dining experience available at La Grande Maison makes it the ideal location for a special occasion.

For a more affordable stay, try the Hôtel la Cour Carrée. This old town house has been sensitively renovated and is now a stylish, modern hotel, perfectly located within the city centre. The Hôtel la Cour Carrée will accommodate any kind of visit, offering single rooms, twin rooms and suites that sleep up to six people – perfect for families!



## What to do?



### 1 See the views from the stone bridge, Pont de Pierre

Walk along the Garonne and escape into the cafés and boutiques on the riverside. Find the Pont de Pierre for views of Bordeaux.



### 2 Take a day trip to Saint-Emilion

A 40-minute drive from Bordeaux, this beautiful rural village boasts stunning views over the River Dordogne and a chateau with numerous wine-tasting options. Definitely a location for wine lovers!



### 3 Visit the CAPC Museum of Modern Art

Created in 1973, this museum is located in a 19th century warehouse. The CAPC has permanent pieces as well as temporary exhibitions that reflect a particular theme. It is a must-see for any lover of contemporary art.



### 4 Explore the River Garonne by boat

What better way to see a city than by boat? The Bordeaux Tourist Office offers various river cruises that will suit families, couples and friends who want to experience the city on the water.



### 5 Wander around the Jardin Public

Bordeaux's public park trumps parks in other cities – here you can find a library, an arboretum and the Museum of Natural History. It is the perfect place for a picnic and a walk on a sunny day!



### 6 Watch the sunset at Dune du Pyla

Just an hour away from Bordeaux is the Pyla Dune coast, which boasts white sand beaches and amazing fish cuisine. It is worth staying here until sunset, where beautiful scenes and colours await you!



# YouTube THE ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY OF OUR TIME

Not long ago, I was talking about nationality, and how names can fool you. I related a memory: When I was a kid, I assumed that John Ireland, the composer, had been Irish. Come to find out, he was English (and of Scottish descent). Though Anatole France, rest assured, was French.

Today, other than the hymn My Song is Love Unknown and the anthem Greater Love Hath No Man, which may be familiar to churchgoers, John Ireland is known for one piece, basically: his song Sea Fever, a setting of the poem of John Masefield. After talking about nationality and so on, I went to YouTube, looking for Sea Fever. My eyes fell on something else by Ireland: Decorations, a suite of three pieces for piano. They are fine, Impressionistic pieces, and they deserve to be programmed.

I had never known about Decorations. I do now – and I have YouTube to thank.

Is YouTube the greatest invention since the wheel? I suppose you would have to say the internet is, for YouTube is part of the internet. But YouTube, to me, stands out.

I was making a trip to Norway. Before setting out, I wanted to listen to some Grieg. So I went to YouTube and my eyes fell on the Holberg Suite, in a piano version. (Usually, you hear this suite in its chamber-orchestra version.) The pianist was Maria Grinberg – and from the first notes, it was clear that she was an intelligent and dynamic pianist. Where had she been all my life?

“Once I asked Riccardo Muti, the Italian conductor, “Do you ever go on YouTube binges?” “No,” he said, somewhat uncomprehending. But YouTube binges are among the healthier binges that people engage in.”



Jay Nordlinger

is a senior editor of National Review and the music critic of *The New Criterion*. He is the author of *Peace, They Say: A History of the Nobel Peace Prize* (Encounter Books). His latest book is a study of the sons and daughters of dictators: *Children of Monsters* (also Encounter). He lives in New York.

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She was a Russian pianist, living from 1908 to 1978. She was almost never allowed out to the West, and she was kept under a bushel at home, being out of favour with the authorities. But she lives on in YouTube. I wrote an article about her, borrowing my title from Broadway: “I Just Met a Girl Named Maria.” I received a note from a Russian arts journalist, who said: “Thank you! My piano teacher, who worshiped Grinberg, took me to the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory for a recital of the great lady’s.” The journalist will never forget Grinberg, and neither will I, now that I know her.

For weeks, I binged on Grinberg. Once I asked Riccardo Muti, the Italian conductor, “Do you ever go on YouTube binges?” “No,” he said, somewhat uncomprehending. But YouTube binges are among the healthier binges that people engage in.

The other week, I went to a Schubertiade, ie, a concert whose programme offered various pieces by Schubert. The first one was the Fantasy in F minor, for

the Fantasy in F minor, on YouTube, there were many comments. The first of them said, “I grew up with this CD.” “Grew up with?” That’s the sort of thing I might say about, for example, Wilhelm Kempff! But everyone has to start some time.

I tend to use YouTube for the musical, but, of course, there are worlds of other material. In July 2017, President Trump declared a certain week “Made in America Week.” I was writing about it and had a memory: years before, on television, there was another Made in America campaign, starring such celebrities as Bob Hope. I went to YouTube, and there it was: the very ad I had remembered. (The year was 1985.)

Furthermore, I remembered an ad in which people sang, “Look for the union label,” a song urging solidarity with organised labour. New words went with Jerome Kern’s old tune, Look for the Silver Lining. Anyway, I flicked my fingers: and there was the ad, on YouTube (1981).

What else can YouTube throw up? Well, I was thinking of Alicia de Larrocha, the late pianist, and in particular

piano duet. Later, I wanted to check a few things in it, so I went to YouTube. There were many, many recordings on offer. One of them was by James Levine and Evgeny Kissin, live in Carnegie Hall. I attended that concert, actually, and reviewed it. It was only in 2005. And the concert was turned into an album. Under



Poster's adapted from those used by the UK's Conservative Party c1877-2007. New Direction is a not-for-profit organisation and is partly funded by the European Parliament. The European Parliament assumes no responsibility for the opinions expressed in this publication. Sole liability rests with the author.





25<sup>th</sup> July 2019

## New Direction 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

The New Direction Foundation for European Reform, the main think tank of the European Conservatives and Reformists Movement, marked a decade of work. They marked this landmark anniversary with a dinner at the Museums of Fine Arts in Brussels historic Sablon district.

Over 250 people attended, including diplomats, Members of the European Parliament, Ministers and directors of a number of high level think tanks, including the Martens Centre, the Centre for

European Policy Studies and the AJC Transatlantic Institute.

The evening opened with a speech by New Direction President Tomasz Poreba, who paid tribute to the foundations founder Margaret Thatcher, and to its first President, British MEP Geoffrey Van Orden.

The main event of the evening was a speech by the famous conservative philosopher Sir Roger Scruton, who spoke of the need for foundations like New

Direction to continue their work in order to challenge the establishment and defend tradition. Sir Roger was introduced by the recently re-elected ECR co-chairman Ryszard Legutko.

Guests were also treated to a performance by a quartet of talented young musicians from the Conservatoire Royal Bruxelles, who played a melody of Dvorak and Borodin, whilst surrounded by some of the finest art in Belgium, spanning several centuries.



26<sup>th</sup> July 2019

## ACRE Summer Gala Dinner

On Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> of June, in the beautiful setting of the Chateau de Grand-Bigard just outside of Brussels, the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe played host to its friends and allies, from party leaders to MEPs and diplomats to businesspeople. The gathering which took place in the beautiful gardens of the ancient castle, was made all the better with the warm weather.

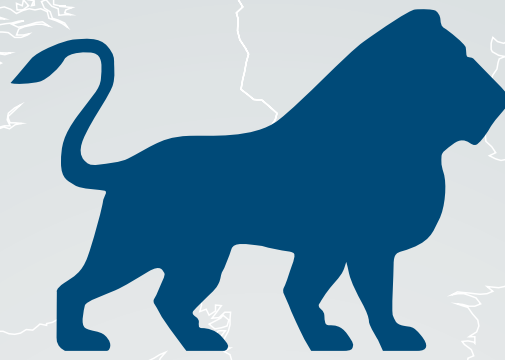
Guests were treated to a performance by a live jazz band and speeches by senior conservative politicians. The keynote speech was delivered by former UK Defence Minister Gavin Williamson who talked about the long lasting close relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union even after Brexit. Other addresses by former ECR Group Leaders Lord Martin Callanan and

Jan Zahradil, as well as by the newly elected co-chairman Raffaele Fitto. The event marked 10 years of the Alliance and it's work to hold Europe to account.

Speeches were also given by leader of the Forum for Democracy, Thierry Baudet, whose party joined ACRE the following day. And Daniel Hannan MEP, the first Secretary General of the organisation at its founding.







# ACRE

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