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WHATS NEW

Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for November 2nd, 2018

To see what we've added to the Electric Scotland site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm>

To see what we've added to the Electric Canadian site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

Electric Scotland News

I was having a wee email exchange with Helen about piping and here is her reply....

Hi Alastair,

Oooh, that's a good question. You would certainly be able to tell a Glenfiddich Solo Piper from one of the Amateur leagues, mostly by how well tuned the instrument is, and finesse.

I'm not sure we could do a series of videos like this, as we wouldn't want to dishearten any player by not labelling them "good" or "bad", but for example, this is one from last year's Glenfiddich - the de fact world solo piping championship - this is the principal Roddy MacLeod: <https://vimeo.com/241832556>

This is a soloist who wouldn't be at nearly the same competition level: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrFoPv11BxA>

The differences between top and bottom you would be able to pick out, with tuning, crispness of execution of movements, starting and stopping for example. But between top of Grade 2 and Grade 1 Pipe Bands the margins can be very small, and differences so slight that its only through listening and honing your ear to it that you can tell - I have been trying to learn this for 10 years and still don't understand!

Its a tricky one, probably not one we would provide videos on as people playing the instrument with enthusiasm is something we encourage - even if it is just for fun etc so labelling good/bad wouldn't be something we could do. But when the videos for the Glenfiddich this year are released, I would encourage you to listen to them all as these are the best of the best for 2018 and you can start with the best, and then see if you can distinguish other pipers from there.

Thanks for your email, this is something we really hadn't considered before.

Helen

Helen Urquhart
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The National Piping Centre
30-34 McPhater Street

<https://www.thepipingcentre.co.uk/>
www.pipinglive.co.uk

So I hope you enjoy the piping in these video links.

I might just add that all 10 competitors for 2017, the best of the best, can be listened to at:

<https://vimeo.com/album/4847519>

And while I am at it, one for the ladies I expect, as I posted up a video link of the 4SCOTS playing in Inverness and they had 2 male Highland Dancers which were great and also two police officers trying a wee dance. You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/5360-4SCOTS-Flashmob-OFFICIAL-VIDEO>

I got a phone call from Lee in Scotland to tell me that her brother Clifford, the author of the book, "The Historical Handbook to Scotland", has passed away. He was 55 and just dropped dead with a massive heart attack while chatting with her. She worked at giving him CPR for 5 minutes until the emergency services arrived but it was too late sad to say. Lee told me that their mother passed away just two weeks later and they have been buried side by side.

He used to phone me to discuss his latest book he was working on and we would chat for a couple of hours spending time talking about almost everything under the sun. He was a delightful person and I'll certainly miss chatting with him.

Here is the video introduction to this newsletter...

<https://youtu.be/yKnvVb0gYks>

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

Note that this is a selection and more can be read in our [ScotNews](#) feed on our index page where we list news from the past 1-2 weeks. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines. I might also add that in newspapers such as the Guardian, Scotsman, Courier, etc. you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish.

History of Pictish stones rewritten by breakthrough research

The history of Pictish symbol stones in Scotland is being rewritten with new research finding the mysterious monuments were being created hundreds of years earlier than previously thought.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/history-of-pictish-stones-rewritten-by-breakthrough-research-1-4820355>

Finlay Johnston wins Glenfiddich Piping Championships

A piper from Tiree has won the world-famous Glenfiddich Piping Championship. See also video of the event at <https://www.thepipingcentre.co.uk/play/livestream/watch-now>

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-46008648>

Hamilton takes fifth title as Verstappen wins in Mexico

Lewis Hamilton celebrated his fifth Formula One world championship and joined an elite trio of greats

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-motor-f1-mexico/hamilton-takes-fifth-title-as-verstappen-wins-in-mexico-idUKKCN1N20PX>

Why today's budget marks a turning point in British politics

The Budget marks a political and economic turning point for Britain

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/why-todays-budget-marks-a-turning-point-in-british-politics>

And you thought the deep-fried Mars Bar was indulgent!

Scottish takeaway unveils a pizza topped with CHEESY CHIPS

Read more at:

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/food/article-6291341/Scottish-chip-shop-Livingston-sells-cheesy-chips-pizza.html>

Search for an ending
Kenneth Roy;s remarkable report from hospital

Read more at:
<http://www.scottishreview.net/KennethRoy453a.html>

Scottish Portrait Awards winners announced in Edinburgh
Daniel Murray, a portrait artist from Poolewe, took the award for Fine Art, whilst Lucas Chih-Peng Kao received the Richard Cowan SPA for Photography.

Read more at:
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-46044384>

Geoffrey Cox, the Devonian lawyer who holds May's fate in his hands.
How bizarre that the British press, which has devoted millions of words to every twist and turn of Brexit, has yet to publish a single profile of Geoffrey Cox, the Attorney General.

Read more at:
<https://www.conservativehome.com/highlights/2018/11/profile-geoffrey-cox-the-devonian-lawyer-who-holds-mays-fate-in-his-hands.html>

Governor General to honour remarkable Canadians at Rideau Hall
Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada, will present honours to Canadians in celebration of their exceptional achievements.

Read more at:
<http://www.gg.ca/en/node/13237>

Electric Canadian

Canada and its Provinces
Added Volume XX. The Prairie Provinces Part II. which you can read at:
<https://electriccanadian.com/history/canadaprovinces.htm>

The Engineering Journal
Added the volume for 1960.at: <https://electriccanadian.com/transport/industrial/index.htm>

Mining Review
Added the volume for 1918 at: <https://electriccanadian.com/transport/mines/mining.htm>

Newfoundland
A history of the island of Newfoundland containing a description of the island, the Banks, the fisheries and trade of Newfoundland and the coast of Labrador by Anspach, Lewis Amadeus (1819) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/newfoundland/newfoundland.pdf>

Reminiscences of the North-West Rebellions
With a record of the raising of her Majesty's 100th Regiment in Canada and a chapter on the Canadian Social & Policial life by Major Bolton, commanding Boulton's Scouts (1886) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/reminiscencesof.pdf>

Peeps at Many Lands: Newfoundland
By Ford Fairford containing twelve full page illustrations in colour (1912) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/newfoundland/newfoundland02.pdf>

Old and New Mackinac
With copious extracts from Marquette, Hennepin, La Hontan, Alexander Henry, and others By Rev. J. A. Van Fleet, M.A. (Third Edition) (1880) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/oldnewmackinac.pdf>

Conrad Black

Why we created the National Post

<http://www.conradblack.com/1433/why-we-created-the-national-post>

The Trump Demeanor

Belligerent public discourse is nothing new, and does not cause violence

<http://www.conradblack.com/1434/the-trump-demeanor>

Electric Scotland

Isle of Arran

Added three videos to our Isle of Arran page which you can view at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/arran/>

A New Medley of Memories

By the Right Rev. Sir David Hunter-Blair, Titular Abbot of Dunfermline (1922) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electricScotland.com/books/pdf/newmedleyofmemories.pdf>

Lord High Admirals of Scotland

Got in a note from Nick of the Clan Wood Society on this subject which I've added to the foot of our Sir Andrew Wood page at:

https://electricScotland.com/history/other/wood_andrew.htm

Sir John McIntyre

Added a link to this Scottish born Australian politician and businessman which you can read at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McIntyre_\(politician\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McIntyre_(politician))

Military and Religious Life in the Middle Ages

And at the period of the Renaissance By Paul Lacroix (1874) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricScotland.com/history/middleages/MilitaryAndReligiousLife.pdf>

Manners, Customs, and Dress during the Middle Ages

And during the Renaissance Period by Paul Lacroix (1876) (pdf)

You can read this at: https://electricScotland.com/history/middleages/Manners_Customs_and_Dress_During_the_Mid.pdf

MacKay's Complete Tourists' Guide to Oban and Vicinity

Walks around Oban and Tours to Staffa, Iona, Glencoe, Loch Awe, Ben Cruchan, Ben Nevis, Etc. by Alexander Mailer Faicharg with Maps and Illustrations, Time Tables, Postal and Other Information New and Enlarged Edition for 1897 (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricScotland.com/travel/tours/obantourism.pdf>

150-year Anniversary of the launch of the clipper ship 'Thermopylae'

She is said to have been the fastest clipper ship ever built, and she had the honor of racing home against the Cutty Sark, and getting home first. This was due to the great seamanship of her master and crew and also to the quality of her build.

You can read this towards the foot of the page at: <https://electricScotland.com/history/aberdeen/aberdeenshipbuilding.htm>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in the November 2018 issue section 1 which you can read at: <https://electricScotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

4SCOTS Flashmob Official Video

Great Piping and Highland Dancing which you can view at:

<http://www.electricScotland.org/showthread.php/5360-4SCOTS-Flashmob-OFFICIAL-VIDEO>

Robert Fergusson

From the Famous Scots series by A. B. Grosart (1898) (pdf) which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/poetry/robertfergusson.pdf>

Fletcher of Saltoun

From the Famous Scots series By G. W. T. Omand (1897) (pdf) which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/dtog/fletcherofsaltoun.pdf>

The Story

I am bringing you this story as this is at the heart of my decision to leave the EU.. I believe we can do much better outside the EU BUT we do need to be determined to be successful and this story outlines what must happen if we are to benefit from leaving the EU. It is also why I am very much against the Chequers deal and Prime Minister May's decisions on the whole Brexit process.

PLAN A+: CREATING A PROSPEROUS POST-BREXIT UK

In the UK we tend to see Brexit through only a UK or EU lens. But Brexit is a major global event. Never before has a G7 nation embraced independent trade and regulatory policy after forty years.

This plan for the UK therefore starts by thinking about the UK's global future, as opposed to just its future in Europe. We believe that there is a huge opportunity for the UK as a result of re-engaging with the world on trade and economic policy issues in a way it was unable to do as a member of the EU, at a time where its voice is so necessary.

But if we squander this opportunity, then the UK and the world will miss this unfrozen moment and the new normal of limited economic growth will prevail to the detriment of future generations.

This Plan starts with an analysis of the reference to a Brexit Prize in the Prime Minister's Lancaster House speech. This Prize comes only from an independent trade and regulatory policy. Without that there are no gains from Brexit, which only becomes a damage limitation exercise.

The size of this prize depends on three key contexts.

First, the state of the global trading system which is in crisis. There has been no completed round of international trade negotiations of any seriously liberalizing significance since the Uruguay Round, a third of the life-time of the GATT, an unprecedented situation which has led to obvious consequences – the stalling of global trade growth in 2015, the increase in global regulatory protectionism, the slowing of measures of actual wealth creation such as industrial output.

Second, the direction of travel of EU regulation is increasingly anti-competitive and prescriptive.

Third, the direction of travel of global regulation is also negative. The EU is spreading its regulatory system around the world, and China is taking global standards, applying Chinese characteristics and pushing these on its neighbourhood. The result constrains wealth creation globally, but it also means that a successful UK independent trade policy could yield significant gains. If these contexts were different the scale of the prize on offer would be different and smaller.

The quest for the perfect economic model to determine exactly what are the gains of an independent trade and regulatory policy is a fool's errand – no trade negotiation is determined by an economic modeller with a laptop. Indeed where the gains are potentially the greatest for a services based economy like the UK's – the reduction of behind the border barriers and anti-competitive market distortions, the gains are hardest to model.

What we can do is have a sense of the significance of these gains, and it is well-known that the reduction of behind the border regulatory barriers can have much greater impacts on GDP than border barriers alone.

In this paper, I have articulated a four pillared approach to trade policy; what we do unilaterally, bilaterally, plurilaterally and multilaterally which have enormous interaction effects which we have ignored at our peril.

The government's choice to separate the EU track from the rest of the world track has meant that in this multi-dimensional chess board on which we are playing, we have sought to placate the EU with one move and sacrificed our queen on the other boards, without knowing it. Our supplicant approach to the EU – essentially bowing to any request they make because of their interpretation of the duty of sincere cooperation – has led us to a government white paper which in my view and the view of trade policy experts takes our independent trade policy off the table.

I have just returned from the US where I was told in no uncertain terms by the United States Trade Representative that the White Paper's approach would absolutely preclude a free trade agreement with the UK. The countries in the Trans-Pacific Partnership have

said the same.

Our ability to gather allies to put pressure on the EU which is regarded by the world as an outlier on global regulation (quite the reverse of the gold standard as suggested in the White Paper) has been severely imperiled, and the once deep reservoir of good will for the UK is running dry as our trading partners grow ever more confused by our approach.

Meanwhile, the EU is making the case in foreign capitals as we speak that the UK will not have the authority to be a credible trade partner as it claims, denting the strongest argument that Brexit is a major global event where a G7 country can make a contribution to the direction of travel of the global trading system by being a more liberalizing force in the world.

This paper shows examples in where this bifurcated approach has led to negative consequences for the UK. We must change now, and we must have a single mind over all our independent trade policy including our negotiations with the EU so trade-offs can be made, and we can read across negotiations from one area to another.

UK Trade Policy Recommendations

We should lower tariffs unilaterally where we can, and we should embrace a more pro-competitive regulatory system at home. In this paper, I have suggested improvements that can be made to the UK's domestic economy with newfound regulatory autonomy. We should offer to the EU a comprehensive free trade agreement with the maximum regulatory recognition given that we will be completely aligned on day one of Brexit, with a management of differences mechanism going forward.

We can do this by offering actual negotiating text for the EU which I believe they would welcome – it is critical to do this in order to get to a framework for the future relationship as required in the Withdrawal Agreement.

The EU cannot negotiate with speeches and white papers. Text would allow us to move forward. Such text should also include a Customs and Trade Facilitation Chapter with an Irish Border Protocol which would deal with the critical issues of minimizing customs clearance costs and mitigating any hardening of the Irish border.

Both sides' goal should be to not harden the Irish border in ways that damage the Good Friday Agreement and the peace process. While there is no single silver bullet for the Irish border, there are a series of steps we can take to minimize the hardening of that border. These are listed in the paper and are designed to deal with the reality of trade across the border which is high frequency, low volume trade, where most RoI and NI trade is with mainland GB.

The goal should be to move traders to trusted trader schemes as much as possible, so that customs clearance moves from being tied to goods, to being tied to the trader itself (from transaction to systems based).

We can also use trusted third parties to do in facility inspections (so-called drive through borders), as they do elsewhere in the world. Finally, we can use Special Economic Zones both to stimulate economic growth as well as to ease any hardening of the border. Many people have addressed the Irish border issues, but we must acknowledge the politics and the emotion around these issues – there are pragmatic people in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and third parties who were involved in the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) who can play an important role in ensuring that the solutions which do exist receive a fair hearing. It is crucial that any backstop – despite the illogic of the concept -- cannot take away the EU's incentive to negotiate an advanced FTA, but I do suggest that since the backstop has to be agreed between the UK and the EU, it could comprise a basic FTA between the EU and UK with zero tariffs, as well as the mitigants suggested above.

The paper includes a number of mitigants to lower the cost of customs clearance. I am clear that these are mitigants – the small increase in frictions at customs which we can mitigate must be set against the real economic gains that the UK can muster both for itself and for global supply chains if we are able to arrest the direction of travel of global behind the border and regulatory barriers.

Customs clearance costs are falling in any event, whereas global regulatory barriers are increasing. It would certainly not make sense to take our independent trade and regulatory policy off the table solely because of customs clearance costs for some supply chains. Instead, in the paper, I advance customs solutions involving a best in class customs and trade facilitation chapter, and use of technologies such as trusted third party inspections.

For the major supply chains, a highly advanced version of a trusted trader system, (building on and improving schemes like Canada's CSA Platinum Plus programme, where for 100 companies, customs is made more like filing a tax return) is possible. It is even possible to have a specific auto or aviation pact in the customs and trade facilitation chapter to the extent that these supply chains would not already benefit from the mitigants proposed, including more effective back to back Inward Processing Relief.

The UK and EU will be completely aligned on the day of Brexit, and so we should start with the maximum regulatory recognition possible.

There should be a management of differences mechanism where one party cannot unreasonably withdraw recognition, and there is no reason the UK and EU should not have a best in class regulatory coherence chapter, a sample of which is included in the document.

We should start off with this ask, knowing that as a floor, there is a compilation of agreements that the EU has already agreed with other parties so they would have to justify to their citizens why they can't do this with their biggest trading partner.

But we must not lose sight of other agreements we would want to sign. I highlight the US especially, but also India and China. Indeed any forward progress on the US deal in particular will concentrate the minds of our friends in the EU. USTR officials legitimately say that it seems at least to them that the White Paper was written almost specifically to take a US agreement off the table.

Plurilaterally, we recommend actual application to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

The Department for International Trade should be credited for their success in convincing the CPTPP partners that UK accession would be beneficial to the agreement, and that there are benefits to the US of an FTA with the UK. We note that a US agreement and NAFTA accession are not mutually exclusive. Indeed many US entities are calling for UK NAFTA accession as a counterweight to the threats of the US to leave it. CPTPP accession and a US FTA alone would constitute a significant percentage of global trade.

We can use our WTO transition to our advantage in the negotiations with the EU by signaling our liberalizing intent, through our agricultural import quota (TRQ) negotiations and our production subsidy (AMS) offers. We can exploit the fact that the EU is an outlier in the minds of most other WTO members, and that far from having gold standards as the White Paper suggests, it has more restrictive regulations and standards, outside the global trading norm.

We must be able to show other countries that we will be an ally in international organisations and standard setting bodies. This in turn will help us in our negotiations with the EU because they will feel similar pressure from all sides. One fundamental flaw in our strategy so far has been to allow ourselves to be trapped on the EU's terrain – which began when we rashly accepted their negotiating mandate, instead of submitting FTA text immediately after Article 50 in line with the Lancaster House speech.

Finally a major problem in our approach has been to assume that we cannot make these initial moves or opening bids until we know exactly how negotiable they are with the EU without understanding the dynamic nature of that negotiability. How negotiable a particular proposal is depends on how other aspects of UK Trade and Regulatory Policy are being advanced, and negotiability is only ever really tested at the sharp end of a negotiation itself – you move when your move is most likely to be effective.

That is why we must use time better. The EU has played us against time, and created an environment where we feel we will be forced to accept their views because we “don't have time”. But since time has been deliberately used here, we must instead make time our friend, by accelerating our negotiations and action steps where we are in control of them, both as a hedge against EU reluctance to move, but also as an intrinsic good in itself.

The good will of other countries towards us comes not from some altruistic love of the British but because they see a potential ally in the steps to improve the global trading and regulatory system. But if the UK is merely a mini-version of the EU on the global stage, we will simply become irrelevant to them, and we will end up with a bad deal from the EU.

The EU regard Chequers as an opening bid, which they can negotiate concessions on – customs union for goods, and single market rules is quite possibly the only way they can ultimately go. To avoid this outcome, we must put FTA text on the table and pivot to the other pillars of our trade policy strategy.

If we continue on the present course, Brexit will be a small damage limitation exercise which will weaken the UK, and be largely unnoticed by the rest of the world.

However, if the UK were to adopt a bolder, more ambitious approach – one that sees us as a major player in global trade, one which takes our departure from the EU seriously but sees it as part of a much broader picture of taking a leading role on the world stage, then we can look forward to a brighter, more prosperous, free trading future for both the UK and the wider world.

I hope this plan helps us along that path.

Thank you.

END

Note: The full 150 page report is available at:

<https://iea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/PLAN-A-final-document.pdf>

And that's it for this week and hope you have a great weekend.

Alastair